

Information for Responsible Campers

Safe and Responsible camping is permitted at Alert Level 2

Responsible campers can stay at open freedom camping sites, holiday parks and commercial camping grounds, and Department of Conservation camping grounds, providing that they appropriately manage their health and safety, and that of the local residents within the community.

People who have tested positive for COVID-19, are COVID-19 symptomatic or are waiting on a COVID-19 test must self-isolate at their ordinary place of residence – and are not able to stay at responsible camping sites.

Responsible campers are expected to abide by Government social distancing guidelines

This includes physical distancing of two metres from people you don't know, with one metre physical distancing in controlled environments like workplaces, unless other measures are in place.

Campers must also travel and stay in groups of 10 people or less.

Campers also need to take responsibility for their health and hygiene when using shared facilities. This means ensuring you have cleaning and hygiene products with you, along with minimising contact with people you don't know.

People who are at risk of experiencing more severe illness should they contract COVID-19 (such as those with underlying medical conditions and seniors) are encouraged to take additional precautions if choosing to stay at a responsible camping site.

Further information on social distancing practice can be found at <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-system/alert-level-2/#life-and-business-at-alert-level-2> and <https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19/how-were-uniting/physical-distancing/>.

Travelling within New Zealand at Alert level 2

People are able to travel outside of their region to a responsible camping site if they:

- Are not COVID-19-positive, symptomatic or awaiting COVID-19 test results
- Undertake it in a safe way (such as abiding by social distancing guidelines)
- Keep a record of where they go, when they go there and who they spend time with
- Have not arrived in New Zealand from overseas in the past 14 days
- Have not individually received (from a Medical Officer of Health) a direction under s 70(1)(f) of the Health Act 1956.

This travel includes travel by domestic air services, ferries, trains and public transport.

Further information, including information on the current restriction by transport, can be found at <https://www.transport.govt.nz/about/covid-19/transport-and-travel-by-alert-level/> and <https://covid19.govt.nz/individuals-and-households/travelling-and-moving-around/travel-within-new-zealand/>.

Contact Tracing

Where possible responsible camping grounds should keep records of customers to enable contact tracing. Campers should be prepared to provide personal information (such as a contact phone number), when requested by a campground owner.

Not all freedom camping sites may be open

Each individual council is able to determine whether they should open their camping sites, in line with their obligations to manage visitors' health and safety, and the health and safety of their staff. As part of opening, councils may also provide signage about safe practices on site and appropriate use of facilities that campers should comply with.

People looking to camp should plan ahead and check Councils' websites, or contact their local council or i-SITE, to ensure that a campsite is open and has capacity to take them.

Other camping grounds that are open

Information on what holiday parks and commercial camping grounds are open can be found at www.holidayparks.co.nz.

Information on what DOC campgrounds are open can be found at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/camping/>. People staying at these sites are still expected to take responsibility for their health and the health of others, and adhere to social distancing guidelines. Further information on staying at a DOC campground is available at www.doc.govt.nz.

Responsible campers are responsible for any waste they generate

As some camping site facilities may be closed at Alert Level 1 and 2, people may wish to consider where and how they travel. For example, those people who are not travelling in certified self-contained vehicles (to NZS 5465:2001) and who wish to camp, may need to stay at a commercial camping ground, holiday park or Department of Conservation campground.

Responsible campers are still responsible for any waste they generate – and any instances of illegal waste disposal may result in a fine.

Campers can dispose of any waste generated during their stay at a local council dumping station, which may open at Alert Level 2, or when they return at their ordinary place of residence. Campers should check in advance as to whether a dumping station is open, as some dumping stations may not be open at Alert Level 2.

Responsible camping FAQs

Am I able to go camping if I am unwell, or display any COVID-19 symptoms?

People who are unwell should defer their travel until they are well again, in order to protect theirs and others' health and safety. Those who are displaying COVID-19 symptoms and have not yet been tested for COVID-19 should stay home and may wish to ring Healthline on 0800 358 5453 for further advice.

What happens to me if the Alert Levels shift up while I am camping?

In the event of this occurring, people should cut their trip short and check the Government COVID-19 website (<https://covid19.govt.nz/>) for further information as to their responsibilities.

People should consider how they can return home quickly to self-isolate when planning any form of holiday.

How do I know if the vehicle I am using is self-contained?

Some councils' responsible camping sites are only open to certified self-contained vehicles. These are vehicles that have been certified to NZS 5465:2001 by an issuing authority (such as the New Zealand Motor Camping Association, or a registered plumber).

The requirements of a fully self-contained vehicle can be found at

<https://www.standards.govt.nz/sponsored-standards/self-containment-of-motor-caravans-and-caravans/>