

(Martin, 2021a)

Covid-19: Prime minister 'frustrated', pleads for Kiwis to 'follow the rules'

Hannah Martin · 22:59, Feb 27 2021



Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has pleaded with New Zealanders to "please follow the rules", as Auckland is set to move back into [coronavirus alert level 3 lockdown for seven days](#).

The snap move into lockdown, effective from 6am on Sunday, comes after a 21-year-old man – the older sibling of a Papatoetoe High School student – tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday, the link to which has [not yet been established](#).

The man, Case M, visited the GP on Friday, and went to the gym after having his Covid-19 test – which Ardern described as "frustrating", visibly frowning with a sharp intake of breath during an impromptu Saturday night press conference.

"We cannot exist in an environment where we set rules and they [are] breached consistently," Ardern said.

That would leave the country unable to contain Covid-19, she said.

The Papatoetoe High School student in Case M's household tested negative for Covid-19 on three separate occasions and has no symptoms, Ardern announced.

Director-General of Health Dr Ashley Bloomfield advised Case M developed symptoms on Tuesday, before being tested on Friday, meaning they had been infectious since last weekend.

During that time they had gone to a number of "high-risk", "well populated" places, including a supermarket, gym and Manukau Institute of Technology.

Given the time that had passed, it was possible there may be close contacts who were already unwell, she said.

There was "no doubt" guidelines and rules "have not always been followed", she said.

"People who should have been in isolation weren't."

Despite the communication, "what was expected has not occurred here", she said.

Going to school? Stop! Scanner time

Scan a nearby Covid-19 QR code to stay safe

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

A graphic with a yellow and black diagonal striped header. Below the header, the text "Going to school? Stop! Scanner time" is in bold blue. Underneath, "Scan a nearby Covid-19 QR code to stay safe" is in bold blue. To the right of this text is a QR code. Below the QR code is a blue virus icon. At the bottom, there are two black buttons: "Download on the App Store" with the Apple logo and "GET IT ON Google Play" with the Google Play logo.

Arden said this had created "multiple high-risk situations".

"I say that not to place blame. Our system has always had multiple layers, because we know humans make mistakes. We also know though, we will not succeed if we turn on one another."

However, she reminded people it was not yet clear how this person had become infected – which was another complicating factor.

"It's not just we have rule breaches here, we also have some unanswered questions that may not lay at the feet of those involved, so let's just be fair on that now."

She told media the individuals in both recent cases were supposed to be operating at "essentially an alert level 4".







Ardern reminded the public they are not being asked to do anything more than necessary to keep people safe, and pleaded with New Zealanders to "please follow the rules on behalf of everyone".


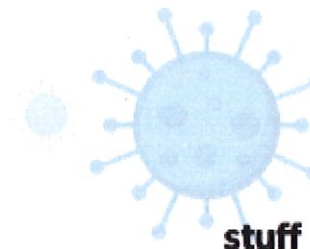
"We just need to hang in there," as vaccines roll out, she said.

Essential coronavirus information

Auckland at level 2

Rest of NZ at level 1

- Full coverage 
- Get the daily newsletter 
- Latest NZ case numbers 
- Keeping NZ in business 
- Neighbourly: community support 
- Official Government Covid-19 page 



Ardern advised Government had the ability to take enforcement action "if we need to" in the event of people not following the rules.

But this had to be balanced with ensuring people are still comfortable coming forward if they have symptoms, she said.

"We still need an environment where people will speak up and come forward and be tested."

If people are ashamed and vilified, they won't come forward, Ardern said.