



(Andelane &amp; Longley, 2021)

## CORONAVIRUS

## Coronavirus: Latest on COVID-19 community outbreak - Friday, November 26

26/11/2021  Lana Andelane  Mark Longley

Watch: Friday's press conference. Credits: Video - Newshub; Image - Getty Images

The Government is investing \$1 billion in a new testing and contact tracing strategy to support New Zealand's transition to the COVID-19 Protection Framework, but there are concerns about the efficacy of rapid antigen tests.

On Thursday, the Government announced a new billion-dollar package focused on supporting cases of COVID-19 in the community as New Zealand learns to live alongside the virus. The package includes increased support for people completing home isolation, \$300 million in Pharmac funding to purchase new medicines that can treat COVID-19, and a focus on broadening the availability of testing alternatives. Rapid antigen tests will be available for the public to purchase at pharmacies from December 15, and businesses will be able to source the tests from December 1 to use in their workplaces.

But a Kiwi study has found rapid antigen tests are nowhere near as accurate as traditional RT-PCR tests when it comes to detecting the virus, missing almost 50 percent of positive cases.

There were 178 new cases of COVID-19 to report on Thursday and one additional death - a patient in their 50s - bringing the death toll to 42.

### What you need to know

- There were 173 new cases of COVID-19 to report on Friday - 154 in Auckland, 15 in Waikato, two in Northland, two in Bay of Plenty, one in Lakes and one in Canterbury.
- Seventy-eight people are in hospital, seven of whom are in intensive care or high dependency units.
- Auckland's border will open on December 15, allowing fully vaccinated Kiwis to travel to and from the region - people can also present a negative test received within 72 hours prior to departure.
- All of New Zealand will move to the traffic light system on December 2 at 11:59pm.
- Workers covered by the My Vaccine Pass mandate - staff working at businesses that are required to use vaccine certificates to operate - must have their first jab by Dec 3 and be fully vaccinated by Jan 17.
- New Zealand's international borders will begin to reopen from January - from January 17 fully vaccinated Kiwis can return home from Australia without MIQ.
- The Government is investing more than \$1b in testing, tracing, investigation and support for cases in the community, with a \$300m boost to Pharmac to buy new medicines to treat COVID-19 and wider use and availability of rapid antigen testing in December.
- Participating pharmacies will be assisting with the rollout of My Vaccine Passes for people who prefer face-to-face help as the call centres are overwhelmed with demand.
- Vaccination will be made mandatory for the New Zealand Police and the New Zealand Defence Force.
- Keep up-to-date with the latest locations of interest [here](#).

**4:49pm** - New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing has issued guidelines for jockeys, owners and racing fans for the summer season.

The My Vaccine Pass will be essential for anyone wanting to get on course as racing clubs move to operate race and trial meetings as events under the COVID Protection Framework.

There will still be some restrictions though, and we ask those attending race meetings to be mindful of these. They include, but are not restricted to:

Clubs will limit entry points to the course to allow security staff to check all those

entering have the My Vaccine Pass;

Under 'Red' mask wearing indoors is required (when not seating and eating/drinking);

People are also asked not to attend, or run the risk of being turned away, if they have cold or flu symptoms.

4:37pm - Maitua Licensing Trust staff who try and enforce COVID-19 regulations such as mask wearing are being sworn at and called Nazis Stuff is reporting.

The trust runs hotels and bottle shops in the Gore district and the unacceptable behaviour of some customers is making staff quit.

"People just need to lay off, just lay right off. We have staff being called Nazi's because they're asking people to wear masks, and that is completely unreasonable," Trust president Horace McAuley told Stuff.

"The abuse is the most difficult part of all of this for us to manage, and people are leaving hospitality simply because of that, and we're not going to tolerate it."

4:17pm - There are new locations of interest in Rotorua including a supermarket. Click [here for the full list](#).

3:52pm - A post on the Official Rythm and Vines Instagram page has annoyed some concert-goers who are waiting for more information on the festival.

"Our team is getting ready to deliver the best show on earth and are on the lookout for volunteers. We have some spots for those looking for experience, or just want to earn a ticket for a little bit of work," the post said.

Users posted in the messages they would prefer news about the lineup instead.

"A post about what's happening would be nicer" said one comment.

"Wonder when they will announce if it's going ahead? Thought it was meant to be last week 🙄" - read another.

Ticket holders are annoyed they don't even know if the festival will go ahead, let alone who they will see on the stages.

"I realise they're waiting to see if we're at 90% vaccination rate so we can go to Amber, but people need to know so they can sort out accommodation etc. people need a bit of warning not a last minute decision! They haven't even announced the line up!"

3:27pm - Deputy Prime Minister Grant Robertson says he is not worried about losing police after mandating COVID-19 jabs despite about 14 percent of cops being unvaccinated.

Both police and Defence Force staff must have had their first dose by January 17 and the second dose by March 1, under new vaccination orders announced by Workplace Relations Minister Michael Wood on Friday.

Robertson told reporters on Friday the Government is not worried about losing cops.

"Oh, not particularly," he said.

"As we've seen with the health and education workforces, we've ended up at the 98-99 percent level with those and there do need to be ongoing conversations with those police staff who are affected by this mandate.

"But I'm confident as we've seen with those other workforces we'll get to similarly high levels with the police."

2:55pm - Newshub can reveal Director-General of Health Dr Ashley Bloomfield advised the Government that "the rest of New Zealand could move to alert level 1" back in September.

The Government dropped a number of documents related to the COVID-19 outbreak and their response on Friday, revealing behind-the-scenes advice from the Ministry of Health that informed Cabinet's alert level decisions.

In a document dated September 12, Dr Bloomfield advised Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and her Cabinet that Auckland could shift to alert level 3 while "the rest of New Zealand could move to alert level 1".

"I consider that the outbreak in Auckland is becoming contained," Dr Bloomfield wrote in his advice. "Cabinet could agree to move the rest of the country to alert level 1, pending no escalation in Auckland's COVID-19 risk."

The Government did not shift the rest of the country to alert level 1. While it would have been welcome news, the rest of New Zealand was kept at alert level 2.

The Government did, however, shift Auckland down to alert level 3.

"Evidence suggests that the outbreak within Auckland is becoming contained to clearly identifiable communities but there remains a risk of undetected cases," Dr Bloomfield wrote in his advice.

He recommended Auckland move to alert level 3 on September 16. The Government didn't move Auckland into alert level 3 until September 21.

[Read more here.](#)





## Director-General of Health Ashley Bloomfield proposed 'rest of New Zealand move to Alert Level 1' in September

The Director-General of Health at the time considered the outbreak in Auckland "contained".

--- Newshub / Nov 26, 2021

**2:40pm** - Porirua City Council will require all staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 from January 17.

Vaccination passes will also be required at all council premises when the traffic light framework comes into force.

"We consulted with staff on whether to make COVID-19 vaccinations compulsory for all staff, and the majority of feedback was strongly in favour of this move," chief executive Wendy Walker said.

"People told us they wanted to feel safe at work, and to protect family members who can't be vaccinated, like children and the immune-compromised. They also told us that they want to role model safe practices for the community we serve.

"We know these are challenging and unsettling times and our goal is to work through any issues and retain our staff in a safe workplace."

**2:25pm** - A school in East Auckland is remaining open despite a student testing positive for COVID-19.

It's understood the risk of transmission is considered to be low.

Farm Cove Intermediate School in Pakuranga sent an email to parents and caregivers on Friday to announce that a student had been infectious at school on Monday, according to the [New Zealand Herald](#).

The email said students and staff who had been in close contact with the case have been given public health advice.

Those with symptoms are advised to get tested and stay off-site, the email said. Anyone without symptoms is still able to attend.

**2:15pm** - It's the last weekend to get fully vaccinated in time for Christmas, with more than 20 festive events happening across the city.

"With just 29 days to go, this is the last weekend for people to ensure they can be fully vaccinated for Christmas, so Tāmaki Makaurau is once again turning it on with vaccination events right across the city," a spokesperson for the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC) said on Friday.

All community vaccination centres are open for walk-ins for first and second doses, with a large number of festive pop-up events to encourage uptake.

At the 'All I Want for Christmas is My 2 Vaccines' event in Manurewa, the first 200 cars that turn up on Saturday and on Sunday will receive a free Christmas hamper.

There will be live entertainment, free hotdogs and sports gear giveaways over in Ōtara at the Cook Island Sports Collective event on Saturday.

Twenty-five Catholic churches are also coming together for a big pop-up event in Māngere, involving youth groups and 120 volunteers at the Maeola Community Centre.

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei will be at a Waka Ama event in Mt Wellington.

NRHCC vaccination programme director Matt Hannant says with the Auckland border opening up on December 15, people will be counting down the days until they can be reunited with whānau for Christmas.

"Let's make this Christmas as safe as possible for our loved ones by getting both doses in time for the festivities. This is the last weekend to ensure that you'll be fully vaccinated before the holiday season.

"If it's been more than three weeks since your first dose, now is the time to get your second, so you can make the most of getting out and about with a vaccine pass from next Friday."

Hannant says there are plenty of opportunities for people to go out and get vaccinated this weekend, with a number of pop-up events happening all over the city. They include:

- St Mary's Church Campervan and Drive-through - Sun 28 Nov, 8am - 11:30am, 2134 Gt North Road, Avondale
- Avondale Community Fair - Sun 28 Nov, 12:30pm - 4pm, 59 Rosebank Road, Avondale
- Glenview Community Hub - Sat 27th, 12:30pm - 4pm, 340 Blockhouse Bay Road, Avondale
- Niuean 3rd Event - Sat 27 Nov, 9am - 5pm, LDS Church, 15 Robertson Road Chapel, Māngere
- Cook Island Sport Collective - Drive-through - Sat 27 Nov, 9am - 5pm, 244 East Tamaki Road, Ōtara
- Ian Shaw Park - Waka Ama - Sat 27 Nov 9am - 4pm, Ian Shaw Park, Panama Road, Mt Wellington
- LDS Chapel - Lunn Ave - Sat 27 Nov, 9am - 1pm, LDS Lunn Ave Chapel, Mt Wellington
- Massey Ave Car Park - Sat 27 Nov, 9am - 2pm.

The vaccination buses and campervans will be parked up at the following locations:

- Papatoetoe New World Campervan - Sat 27 Nov, 11am - 1pm, 65 Saint George Street, Papatoetoe
- All I want for Christmas is my 2 Vaccines (Bus) - Drive-through - Sat 27: 9am - 6pm, Sun 28: 12pm - 8pm, Northcrest Carpark, Manurewa Town Centre
- Round 2 - Free Church of Tonga (Bus) - Sat 27 Nov, 8:30-5pm, 47 Favona Rd, Māngere
- Rosebank Campervan and Drive-through - Sat 27 Nov, 8am-11:30am, 93-123 Riverdale Road, Avondale
- Avondale Community Gardeners Pop-up (Campervan) - Sat 27 - Sun 28 Nov, 8am - 4pm
- Tokaitoko Church - Pop Up - (Campervan) - Sat 27 Nov, 9am - 3pm, 148 Coronation Road, Māngere Bridge
- Catholic Church Event (Campervan x2) - Sat 27 Nov, 9am - 4:30pm, 16 Waokauri Place, Māngere
- Al Madinah School and Zayad College Campervan - Sat 27 Nov, 10am-4pm, 8 Westney Road
- Volante Reserve Campervan - Sat 27 Nov, 1pm - 3pm, Valante Avenue, Manurewa
- Oruawhoro Marae (Campervan) - Sat 27 - Sun 28 Nov, 9am - 3pm, 2 Oruawhoro School Road, Oruawhoro
- Volta Park Bus - Sun 28 Nov, 10am - 2:30pm, Volta Park - Templeton Road, Clendon.

People can also walk in at any community vaccination centres this weekend, or head along to one of the 200-plus GP clinics and 130-plus pharmacies delivering vaccinations across Auckland. Full details of opening hours and sites can be found at [vaccinateforauckland.nz](#)

delivering vaccinations across Auckland. Full details of opening hours and sites can be found at [vaccinateforauckland.nz](https://vaccinateforauckland.nz).

From today, people aged 18 and over who had their second dose at least six months ago can get their booster dose. They can book their appointment online using the Book My Vaccine website or by calling 0800 28 29 26. Boosters will be available at all community vaccination centres, and vaccinating GPs and pharmacies.

**Also, people can now pre-book to get the AstraZeneca vaccine, which is available from Monday, November 29.** Here's a link to an interactive map showing the list of vaccination sites across Tāmaki Makaurau that are offering the AstraZeneca vaccine: [vaccinateforauckland.nz](https://vaccinateforauckland.nz)

**2pm** - There is one new location of interest as of 2pm - Mobil Te Ngae in Ngapuna, Rotorua.

For the relevant date, times and public health advice, [click here](#).

**1:40pm** - Here are the regional updates on today's cases from the Ministry of Health:

#### Today's cases

Today we are announcing new community cases in Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Lakes and Canterbury. The case we're reporting in Canterbury today came in after our 9am cut-off and will be officially added to the case numbers on Saturday.

There are no additional cases to report today in Wairarapa, Wellington, Hawke's Bay, MidCentral or Taranaki.

One previously reported community case has been reclassified to a border case - the net increase is 172 cases.

## Regional updates

We're asking anyone in the following regions with symptoms – no matter how mild – to please get tested, even if you're vaccinated. Please remain isolated until you return a negative test result. And if you're not vaccinated, your DHB or local health provider will have plenty of opportunities to make this happen.

### Northland

There is one new case to report in Northland today. The case is a child who is linked to an Auckland case, who has been isolating.

A case in Ruakaka reported on Thursday has now been linked. Anyone living in or near Ruakaka with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 is urged to get a test.

In response to the Ruakaka case, a pop-up testing site is opening this afternoon at the Ruakaka Racecourse.

The pop-up site is open at the following times:

- 9am until 3pm today
- 9am until 3pm Saturday
- 10am until 2pm Sunday
- 9am until 3pm Monday.

Testing and vaccination sites open in Northland can be found via the [Northland DHB](#).

New locations of interest in Northland continue to be added.

### Auckland

Today, there are 154 new cases to report in Auckland.

There continues to be daily reviews of testing numbers and locations to ensure good coverage of at-risk areas.

Health staff are now supporting 4,058 people to isolate at home around Auckland - this includes 1,070 cases.

### Waikato

There were 15 cases confirmed in Waikato overnight - six in Huntly, four in Hamilton, three in Te Kūiti, and two in Ngāruawāhia.

All cases have been linked to known infections.

There were further locations of interest identified on Thursday across Hamilton, Huntly and Te Kūiti; these have been added to the [Ministry of Health's website](#).

There are seven pop-up and dedicated testing sites operating across the region today in Hamilton, Ōtorohanga, Thames, Huntly, Ngāruawāhia and Te Kūiti. For more information, visit the [DHB's website](#).

In the Waikato, health staff are now supporting 129 cases to isolate at home.

### Bay of Plenty

Today we are reporting two new cases today in Bay of Plenty.

One of the cases is based in the Tauranga area and is a close contact of a confirmed case. They are already in isolation.

The second person returned a positive result after receiving a test in Tauranga, and so is being included in the Bay of Plenty case numbers. However, they usually reside in Waikato. The person will be transferred safely back to their home.

The spread of COVID-19 in the Bay of Plenty is another reminder to get tested if you're feeling unwell and get your first dose of the vaccine if you haven't already. Details of testing stations in Bay of Plenty can be found on [Healthpoint](#).

### Lakes

There is one new case to report in Lakes, based in Rotorua. The case is a close contact of a previously reported case and has been in isolation.

There is good testing capacity across the region with dedicated community testing centres in Taupō, and Rotorua. See [Healthpoint](#) for locations and opening times. Testing is also available at a number of medical centres and Haurua Māori health providers.

### Canterbury

Today we are reporting one new case in Canterbury, however as the case was reported after the 9am cut-off, it will be officially added to the case tally on Saturday.

This person has been classified as a low risk to public health. They are a household contact of a confirmed case and are already in a managed isolation facility.

Details on where Cantabrians can seek a test are available via [Canterbury DHB](#). People can also check if their GP is offering testing by phone call or via [Healthpoint](#).

### Wastewater