

# REAL ESTATE - SALES

## Guidelines for operating under COVID-19 Alert Level 3

### COVID-19 IS A HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK.

The real estate profession is committed to working with the Government and our communities to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As a profession, we are united against COVID-19 and will do our utmost to protect our workers, the wider community and New Zealand.

Licencees hold positions of trust and responsibility in our communities. We have legal and ethical obligations to ensure that we actively manage the health and safety risks around COVID-19. Our goal is to eliminate the risk of transmission, by incorporating the following 5 controls, on the right hand side, into the way we work:

More information relating to each control is available by clicking on the pictures.

REINZ has prepared the attached guidelines to help real estate agencies apply these controls at Alert Level 3. Underpinning these guidelines are the following key principles:

**1**

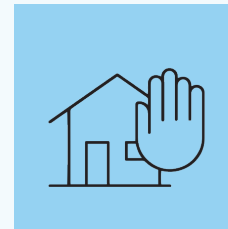
The risk of spreading COVID-19 must be eliminated. If it cannot be eliminated it must be controlled. Ensuring staff work remotely wherever possible, maintaining physical distancing, disinfecting surfaces, practicing good hygiene and keeping records for contact tracing are paramount.

**2**

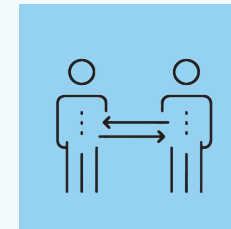
Real estate agencies must find alternative ways of working to implement and maintain controls.

**3**

Salespeople and staff must remain actively involved in conversations around health and safety to ensure that processes and procedures remain robust. Ongoing communication and feedback to ensure continuous improvement is key to our success.



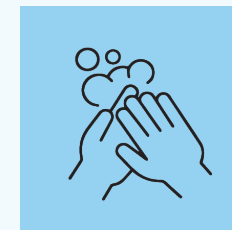
Self-isolating



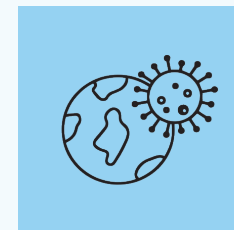
Physical distancing



Disinfecting surfaces



Practicing good hygiene



Contact tracing

**PLEASE CLICK ON THE BOXES ABOVE FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## Guidelines for operating under COVID-19 Alert Level 3



The REINZ guidelines are not exhaustive. Individual businesses and operations should adapt these guidelines to their specific circumstances but the overall principles should still be applied in all cases. These guidelines sit alongside your usual health and safety controls.

In order to operate under [Alert Level 3](#), all real estate agencies must have a COVID-19 safety plan in place that sets out how they'll operate safely. Under Alert Level 3, all real estate work must still occur remotely wherever possible.

The details of your safety plan must be communicated to all real estate agents and staff within your agencies **before** starting work under Level 3. Your plan must also include processes for how you will deal with a suspected or actual case of COVID-19 at your workplace. More information and a template safety plan is available [here](#). These guidelines can form part of your safety plans, amended to suit your business.

Worksafe has 7 questions that are associated with developing a plan.

1. Are there any risks arising from restarting your business or a business activity that has been shut down during alert level 4, and how will you manage these?
2. How will you ensure all workers know how and are able to keep themselves safe from exposure to COVID-19?
3. How will you gather information on the wellness of your workers to ensure that they are safe and well to work?

4. How will you operate your business in a way that keeps workers and others safe from exposure to COVID-19?
5. How will you manage an exposure or suspected exposure to COVID-19?
6. How will you evaluate, and continuously review, whether your work processes or risk controls are effective?
7. How do any changes impact on the risks of the work you do?

Please also read the New Zealand Government guidance [here](#) and the six key steps to slow the spread of the virus [here](#).

These guidelines are for the purpose of providing the real estate profession with a practical framework for carrying out real estate agency work under Alert Level 3. It is consistent with detailed guidance produced by the Real Estate Authority. The REA guidance is available on their website.

	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<b>Offices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Licencees and staff <b>must work from home</b> where possible. They may only attend the office if they are essential to the business, if it is not possible for them to work remotely, and if the workplace is safe</li> <li>▪ <b>Offices must remain closed to the public.</b> Display notices in front window advising public that office is closed</li> <li>▪ Check in regularly with staff/licencees to ensure they're well</li> <li>▪ Provide information to staff/ licencees to ensure they can self-check for COVID-19 before they enter the workplace</li> <li>▪ Ensure you have a process in place to handle the situation where someone with COVID-19 is or has been in the office and communicate this process clearly to staff/ licensees</li> <li>▪ Display COVID-19 symptom and hygiene information (hand hygiene and good cough/sneeze etiquette) in office and provide hand sanitiser</li> <li>▪ <b>Maintain a register</b> of any licencees and staff who enter the office including time they entered and left, name, address, phone number and email addresses. Ensure people entering and exiting the office complete the register</li> <li>▪ Ensure your register requires staff/ licensees to confirm that they have not been unwell, self-isolating or in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the previous 14 days before entering the office</li> <li>▪ Minimise the number of people in the office at any one time. Consider, for example, rosters for those who must attend office because they cannot work remotely</li> <li>▪ Ensure workspaces are set up to maintain a minimum 1m distance between those in office. Consider other ways to ensure physical distancing is maintained, such as staggering breaks, limiting numbers of people in lunch room etc</li> <li>▪ Where possible replace paper-based documents that have to be handled with electronic documents</li> <li>▪ Ensure licencees and staff are made aware that they must not attend office if they have flu like symptoms, are self-isolating or have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitor compliance with your safety plan regarding offices (e.g. ensure register is being completed)</li> <li>▪ Regularly involve staff/ licencees and request feedback on how controls are working</li> <li>▪ Adhere to physical distancing at all times (2m minimum)</li> <li>▪ Practice good hygiene etiquette</li> <li>▪ Hand sanitiser and/or soap and water for hand washing to be available for use</li> <li>▪ Ensure all those entering the office have completed the register to confirm that they have not been unwell, self-isolating or in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the previous 14 days before entering the office</li> <li>▪ Ensure processes and procedures are followed for reporting a case of COVID-19 in the workplace.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure office is cleaned daily with a particular focus on high touch surfaces such as stairwell handrails, door handles, personal workstations, table tops, lift buttons, microwave and kitchen surfaces</li> <li>▪ Use a product that is anti-viral and follow instructions</li> <li>▪ Ensure register is used when people leave office</li> <li>▪ Retain registers in case they are required by Worksafe.</li> </ul>
<b>Appraisals &amp; listings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appraisals must be carried out remotely where possible. Remote appraisals to be followed up with physical appraisal at Alert Level 2.</li> <li>▪ If an appraisal cannot be carried out remotely, licencees may briefly visit homes to conduct appraisals with the permission of the client/s (and tenant/s if property tenanted)</li> <li>▪ Only one licensee to attend the property</li> <li>▪ Discussions regarding the agency agreement, marketing and listing process must occur via <b>telephone/ virtual methods only</b>, not in-person</li> <li>▪ Photography and videography to be carried out remotely by the client/s where possible</li> <li>▪ Licencees must not attend a property if either they or anyone at the property have been unwell with flu like symptoms, are self-isolating or have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the previous 14 days</li> <li>▪ Sanitise hands before entering property</li> <li>▪ Licencees should not use letterbox drops to market a property.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep visit very brief</li> <li>▪ Adhere to physical distancing at all times (2m minimum)</li> <li>▪ Practice good hygiene etiquette</li> <li>▪ Do not touch any surfaces – the visit must be <b>contactless</b></li> <li>▪ Where photography/ videography cannot be carried out remotely, photographers/videographers must adhere to COVID-19 safety and health requirements and any industry specific government guidance relevant to their profession</li> <li>▪ Photography/ videography to be <b>contactless</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sanitise hands</li> <li>▪ Caravans in person are not allowed. Use virtual methods to share new listings with colleagues.</li> </ul>

	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<b>Open homes &amp; private viewings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>No open homes</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Vacant properties to be treated the same as if the property is occupied</b></li> <li>▪ Utilise online viewing methods (virtual tours, video conferencing software) where possible</li> <li>▪ <b>Private viewings strictly by appointment only and with the consent of the client and property occupants/ tenants</b></li> <li>▪ Attendees to be prequalified to ensure only serious buyers attend private viewings</li> <li>▪ Client/occupants/ tenants to leave premises while viewing takes place. If the client/occupants/tenants will not or cannot leave property, the private viewing must not take place</li> <li>▪ <b>Maximum of 2 private viewings per day. Maximum of two people from the attendee's 'extended bubble' to attend a private viewing and maximum of one licensee</b></li> <li>▪ The private viewing <b>must be contactless</b>. To enable this, the licensee is to open any doors/ cupboards before the viewing</li> <li>▪ Pre-register all private viewing attendees including names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses to assist with contact tracing</li> <li>▪ All attendees to be emailed COVID-19 information beforehand, including hygiene expectations</li> <li>▪ Information to include instructions that the private viewing is 'contactless' and surfaces, doors, cupboards cannot be touched by attendees</li> <li>▪ Only one licensee to attend a private viewing</li> <li>▪ Display COVID-19 information and hygiene notices at property</li> <li>▪ No private viewings at properties where the client/ occupants have been unwell with flu like symptoms, are self-isolating or have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the previous 14 days</li> <li>▪ No private viewings in homes where the occupants are high risk (e.g. elderly, pre-existing medical conditions)</li> <li>▪ Those feeling unwell, who are self-isolating or have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 may not attend the viewing</li> <li>▪ High risk people should be discouraged from attending viewings (e.g. those over 70 or those with other existing medical conditions)</li> <li>▪ People cannot travel inter-regionally to view properties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maximum of 2 private viewings per day</li> <li>▪ One private viewing at a time. Viewings to be spaced sufficiently apart to allow time for sanitising after each viewing, as required, and to ensure there is no contact between attendees</li> <li>▪ Maximum of two people from the attendee's 'extended bubble' to attend a private viewing and maximum of one licensee</li> <li>▪ Attendees to wait in their vehicles until licensee advises they can enter, to ensure that there is no contact between attendees</li> <li>▪ Shoes removed prior to entry</li> <li>▪ Licensee to remind attendees that viewing is <b>contactless</b> and to not touch surfaces</li> <li>▪ Physical distancing of 2m to be maintained at all times</li> <li>▪ Hand sanitiser to be available for use by all attendees entering and exiting property</li> <li>▪ Keep private viewings very brief.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sanitise any areas attendees may have accidentally touched</li> <li>▪ Use a product that is anti-viral and follow instructions</li> <li>▪ Retain attendance registers in case they are requested by Worksafe or Ministry of Health.</li> </ul>
<b>Sale and purchase agreements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Negotiating and executing agreements must be <b>contactless</b>. Agreements cannot be negotiated or executed in person and <b>must</b> be explained over the telephone or via virtual methods.</li> <li>▪ Agreements can be drawn up and executed via online methods, or via courier.</li> </ul>		

	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<b>Inspections to satisfy conditions of sale and purchase agreements (e.g. building inspections, valuations, pre-settlement inspections etc)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspections by professionals can only take place where the inspection is a condition of a sale and purchase agreement signed by the parties, and where the inspection cannot be carried out remotely</li> <li>If a property is tenanted, the consent of the tenant is required</li> <li>Purchasers and licencees should not attend the property with the professional. They should attend via virtual methods if necessary</li> <li>Record contact details of any professional visiting the property and the date they attended, to assist with contact tracing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professionals must comply with health requirements and any Government guidance issued in respect of their industry</li> <li>The purchaser should not attend the inspection, unless via virtual methods</li> <li>If the licencee is required to provide access to the property, the licencee should wait outside or in one room in the house while the professional works.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask the professional to sanitise any areas they may have touched.</li> </ul>
<b>Auctions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Auctions by phone or online bidding methods only</b></li> <li>Inspections by professionals can only take place where the inspection is a condition of a sale and purchase agreement signed by the parties, and where the inspection cannot be carried out remotely</li> <li>Where the terms of an auction say only unconditional bids may be accepted, we recommend the licencee talks to the client about the client providing professional reports for the property (for example, building inspection reports)</li> <li>Where the client is providing professional reports, the licencee will need to explain to any potential buyers the risks of relying on a report commissioned by the client.</li> </ul>		
<b>Settlements &amp; moving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Settlements and moving house can occur</li> <li>Moves can occur inter-regionally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensees must arrange for <b>contactless</b> delivery of sanitised keys to be provided.</li> </ul>	