

COVID-19: Volunteering in a new "normal"

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You will all be aware of the development of the Coronavirus around the world since the beginning of the year and the devastating effects in some countries. COVID-19 has well and truly arrived in NZ and as we move into our flu season we must all work together to limit the spread of the virus keeping ourselves and the people we have contact with safe.

As there are daily changes in [Ministry of Health](#) updates this may affect the volunteering roles you have applied for with some changes made at very short notice. This will be where an organisation has to adapt to new recommendations to ensure their clients, their staff and volunteers are kept safe. Such as cancelling an event where there may be 500+ people expected to take part, as is in line with current recommendations – note that this may change. This may also apply for ongoing roles involving volunteering in rest homes, close contact support/mentoring roles, or volunteering in an office environment where it is difficult to maintain the recommended distance of 2 meters.

Can you still Volunteer? Definitely!

- When applying for a role through our website ensure that you check with the listing organisation if they have protocols in place regarding COVID-19
- If the role/event you have applied for is no longer available ask if there are other ways you can help; be mindful that we are all looking at how we can support each other with the social limitations we are and will be needing to adhere to
- Outdoor conservation or gardening roles where it is easier to keep recommended distances
- Online volunteering and roles that can be done from home
- Connecting via phone or other online tools with people who are self-isolating; physical distancing does not mean social isolation
- Neighbourhood Pods - Show up for our neighbours; reaching out to your neighbours, checking in on what needs are arising in your neighbourhood, coordinating a neighbourhood group chat or phone tree, and staying in touch
- The best way you can help is being mindful of the changing situation we are all in – be kind and wash your hands!

General advice in line with the [Ministry of Health](#) and the [World Health Organisation](#):

1. Avoid close contact with people with cold or flu like illnesses
2. If you are unwell stay home, do not visit the elderly or people with compromised immune systems: phone - text message - facetime - use Google hangouts etc. instead
3. Cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues. Wash hands often (!) for at least 20 seconds (twice Happy Birthday) with water and soap and dry them thoroughly
4. Avoid touching your face
5. Do not share food, drinks, or towels
6. If you are unwell or need advice, contact the dedicated Health Line number: 0800 358 5453

If you are unwell or think you may have been exposed

If you, or someone in your home, have cold or flu-like symptoms please stay at home. If you have been in close contact with a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19 you are expected to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of the contact and/or positive confirmation.

Stay informed

For up to date information on keeping yourself and your whanau / family safe, and preventing the spread of the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) see the [Ministry of Health](#) website.