

# Riskline / Destination Report

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## NEW ZEALAND

### Overall risk level

Low	Moderate	Medium	High	Extreme
Take normal safety precautions	Take normal safety precautions	Exercise caution	Reconsider travel	Defer non-essential travel

The Overall Risk Level will be determined by the higher of the Security Risk Level and Covid-19 Risk Level.

### Security risk level

Low	Moderate	Medium	High	Extreme
Take normal safety precautions	Take normal safety precautions	Exercise caution	Reconsider travel	Defer non-essential travel
Safe, with few security risks	Generally safe, with some predictable security risks	Not completely safe, but typically presents predictable security risks	Can be dangerous and may present unexpected security risks	Extremely dangerous and presents unpredictable security risks
Travel is possible with an expectation of routine disruptions and delays	Travel is possible with an expectation of routine disruptions and delays	Travel is possible, but there is a potential for disruptions	Travel is possible, but there is a potential for disruptions	Chaotic; travel impossible

### Covid-19 risk level

Low	Moderate	Medium	High	Extreme
Take normal safety precautions	Take normal safety precautions	Exercise caution	Reconsider travel	Defer non-essential travel
Travellers should take normal precautions when travelling to <b>Low Risk</b> locations, which have limited or no restrictions on international travel and domestic activities.	Travellers should take normal precautions when travelling to <b>Moderate Risk</b> locations, which have few restrictions on international travel and limited or no restrictions on domestic activities.	Unvaccinated travellers should exercise caution when travelling to <b>Medium Risk</b> locations, and vaccinated travellers should take normal precautions. These locations may have some restrictions on international travel, but few restrictions on domestic activities.	Unvaccinated travellers should reconsider their need to travel to <b>High Risk</b> locations, and vaccinated travellers should exercise caution. These locations may have severely restricted international travel and partially restricted domestic activities.	Unvaccinated travellers should defer non-essential travel to <b>Extreme Risk</b> locations, and vaccinated travellers should reconsider their travel. These locations may have severely restricted international travel and domestic activities.

# Overview

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## Upcoming Events

23 December 2023 - 24 December 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Pro-Palestine activists to march in Auckland on 23 December

Local sources indicated that activists will march from Aotea Square to the United States Consulate General building in Auckland, Auckland region, from 11:00 local time on 23 December (22:00 GMT, 22 December) to demand a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war.

24 December 2023 - 02 January 2024

- **Moderate risk:** Security likely to be tightened nationwide for festivities on 24 December-1 January 2024

Robust security measures are likely to be imposed at and around shopping centres, religious venues, tourist spots and transport hubs, especially Auckland (AKL/NZAA) and Wellington (WLG/NZWN) airports, and other urban areas nationwide, from 24 December 2023 to 1 January 2024, for Christmas and New Year festivities.

01 April 2024 - 31 October 2024

- **Moderate risk:** Hawaiian Airlines to suspend flights between Honolulu and Auckland airports from 1 April 2024 to 31 October 2024

Hawaiian Airlines flights between Honolulu's Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (HNL/PHNL) in Hawaii and New Zealand's Auckland Airport (AKL/NZAA) will be temporarily suspended from 1 April 2024 through 31 October 2024 due to economic reasons.

# Travel Advisories

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# Summary

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## Overall ● Low Risk

New Zealand is a **Low Risk** destination: take normal safety precautions.

## Security ● Low Risk

Low Risk locations are safe, with few security risks. Travel is possible with an expectation of routine disruptions and delays.

## Covid ● Low Risk

Authorities in New Zealand have relied on periodic localised lockdowns, border restrictions, health screening and testing measures, along with a COVID-19 awareness drive to prevent a widespread outbreak. Most COVID-19-related measures were lifted. Borders are open to all incoming international travellers.

## Political Instability ● Low Risk

New Zealand has robust state institutions and a transparent federal political framework. Historically, transfers of power have been peaceful. The latest 14 October parliamentary elections were won by the National Party-ACT coalition, which secured 59 out of the 120 seats in Parliament. National Party leader Christopher Luxon as the next prime minister is expected to form a new government in the coming days. A high standard of living and a high level of social cohesion negates the threat of long-term internal political instability.

## Conflict ● Low Risk

New Zealand has no territorial disputes given its geographic isolation from other nations and has good relations with all of its neighbours. Its internal stability means that conflict remains extremely unlikely.

## Terrorism ● Moderate Risk

The greatest terror threat the country faces is from self-radicalised, ethnoreligious extremists, as seen in the March 2019 **Christchurch** mosque shootings and the September 2021 **Auckland LynnMall** supermarket stabbing attack. Though the country has historically not been the target of terror attacks, New Zealand's commitment of troops to the conflicts in the Middle East and possible reprisals over the **Christchurch** mosque shootings, make the country a possible target for future attacks.

## Unrest ● Low Risk

Potential mass unrests are mitigated by a high standard of living and a dynamic political system that quickly seeks to address the concerns of its citizens. Peaceful protests over social justice and environmental issues occur regularly in urban hubs, including **Auckland** and **Wellington**.

## Crime ● Low Risk

Overall, crime rates are low in New Zealand when compared with regional averages, though as is the case with major cities worldwide, some form of crime exists in urban hubs. Petty theft of unattended vehicles and other valuables sometimes occurs in urban areas, including **Auckland**, **Christchurch** and **Wellington**. Violent crimes are rare and mostly spurred by domestic issues; foreign nationals are unlikely to be targeted. An exceptionally well-trained police force further ensures low crime rates.

## Natural and Environmental ● Moderate Risk

New Zealand is situated near an active seismic zone that experiences thousands of minor earthquakes annually; earthquake-resistant buildings help to mitigate risk of damage and fatalities. Strong earthquakes have the potential to generate tsunamis and a warning system is in place to warn citizens of potential dangers. Heavy rainfall can cause flooding in foothill areas, near tributaries and in national parks nationwide. Several active volcanoes exist nationwide which includes the **Taupo Volcanic Zone (TVZ)** encompassing the **Mount Ruapehu**, **Mount Ngauruhoe** and **White Island volcanoes** on **North Island**. Emergency services are well-trained and equipped to handle large-scale disasters and response times are extremely quick.

## Local Travel ● Low Risk

Road travel in New Zealand is safe as the driving standard and road conditions are of high quality. Within urban areas, taxi, bus and metro services are safe and viable forms of transport, though opportunistic thieves will take advantage of lackadaisical travellers on buses and light rail cars. Trains are available for domestic travel, though they are plagued by long delays on occasion, as are a number of domestic flights.

## Health and Medical ● Low Risk

New Zealand's healthcare infrastructure meets international standards. While healthcare might be unavailable in some more remote areas of New Zealand, air evacuation services are excellent. Waiting lists for elective surgery can be long, but having private health insurance enables faster access to elective procedures. There are few ailments or illnesses to be concerned about within New Zealand.

## Political Overview : ● Low Risk

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Election turnout in the October 2023 election was around 78.2 percent with around 2.8 million votes cast. While the centre-right National Party (NP) managed to return to power after losing to the centre-left New Zealand Labour Party (NZLP) for the previous two consecutive terms in six years, it still needs another coalition partner, the populist New Zealand First party, to get an absolute majority in the Parliament.

The NZLP's election loss is partly attributed to its popularity waning after Jacinda Kate Laurell Arden resigned as prime minister in mid-January. Arden was widely credited for the NZLP's landslide victory in the previous October 2020 election which saw the NZLP secure an absolute majority of 64 seats, a feat which no other party had achieved since 1996; that win for the NZLP was attributed to Arden's handling of the COVID-19 crisis at the start of the pandemic which saw New Zealand have one of the lowest death rates in the world. Shortly after Arden stepped down, on 25 January Chris Hipkins was elected as prime minister and leader of the NZLP.

In the first half of 2023, the economy went into recession with bank interest rates rising in mid-June to a 14-year high while the cost of living increased 7.2 percent in the 12 months to June. These factors, coupled with public criticism of the government's alleged delayed responses to the severe flooding in **Auckland** and other surrounding areas of **North Island** in late January, among other issues, added to the waning popularity of the NZLP-led government.

The NP-ACT coalition of Luxon won the election on promises of tax reliefs, reducing the cost of living and improving the law and order situation in response to an increase in gun crimes and stabbings in major cities like Auckland in recent years. Other promises of the NP-ACT coalition is to improve healthcare and education which is likely to result in more policies and spending in these areas in the coming months. Luxon is still in the process of forming a new government, as of 17 November.

Aside from ongoing economic issues, New Zealand is a stable democracy. New Zealand's political system is highly robust and faces no credible threats from internal or external influences. The country operates a mixed-member proportional (MMP) system of democracy, ensuring that a party's representation in parliament is based on the proportion of the total vote it receives. Coalition governments are common, and the political spectrum is broad, with established parties representing the moderate left and right, as well as numerous specific issue groups, contributing to a vibrant

democracy.

In addition to a stable government, New Zealand enjoys geographic isolation and a high standard of living. Both of these elements contribute to a peaceful domestic security environment. The only perceived threats in the country come from interethnic relations and sporadic terror attacks. While relations between ethnic Maori and the majority Anglo population can be occasionally tense, it has rarely escalated to widespread unrest that can threaten political stability and governance. A number of arrests of radicalised individuals believed to be linked to terrorist groups have been made in recent years. Any failures to prevent future possible large-scale attacks could threaten political stability.

## Recent incidents

27 November 2023 - 28 November 2023

### ● **Moderate risk:** Christopher Luxon sworn in as prime minister – Update

National Party leader Christopher Luxon was sworn in as the country's prime minister during morning hours local time after the National-ACT coalition won the 14 October election. Luxon replaces Chris Hipkins from the Labour Party. New Zealand First leader Winston Peters was sworn in as deputy prime minister to serve for the first 18 months, following which ACT leader David Seymour will assume the role.

14 October 2023 - 15 October 2023

### ● **Moderate risk:** General election to be held on 14 October

General election to elect 120 members to the House of Representatives will be held nationwide on 14 October; the polls were expected to be a closely contested race between Prime Minister Chris Hipkins' Labour Party and the opposition National Party led by Christopher Luxon, among other candidates.

14 October 2023 - 15 October 2023

- **Moderate risk: National-ACT coalition projected winner of parliamentary elections - Update**

Incumbent Labour Party Prime Minister Chris Hipkins announced that he conceded defeat in the 14 October parliamentary elections to National Party leader Christopher Luxon, who is expected to form a new government with himself as prime minister after the National-ACT coalition was projected to secure at least 61 seats in Parliament and possibly bring NZ First, which won eight seats, into the government as well.

25 January 2023 - 26 January 2023

- **Moderate risk: Chris Hipkins to be sworn in as prime minister on 25 January - Update**

Updated reports indicated that the Minister for Police, Education and Public Service, Chris Hipkins, will be sworn in as New Zealand's 41st prime minister to replace the current Prime Minister Jacinda Kate Laurell Ardern on 25 January, after the members of the Labour caucus unanimously voted for Hipkins.

## Conflict : ● Low Risk

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**External Relations:** New Zealand is over 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) away from its nearest neighbour and has good relations with countries in the South Pacific. In the interests of regional stability, New Zealand provides military and law enforcement personnel, as well as logistical support, for peacekeeping missions in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Tonga.

**Strength of Military Forces:** New Zealand is geopolitically secure, and the low risk of inter-state conflict means that the military is small. While the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) is small in numbers - comprising around 15,500 personnel - they are highly-trained and well-equipped.

Military funding has concentrated on training and funding for peacekeeping missions. New Zealand is an important contributor to peacekeeping coalitions mandated by the United Nations (UN), particularly in the Pacific Islands.

# Terrorism

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**Far-Right Extremism:** New Zealand was for decades spared from acts of domestic terrorism until the **Christchurch** mass shootings on 15 March 2019, the deadliest attack in the country's modern history. On that day, a heavily-armed 28-year-old Australian man inspired by far right ideology launched a mass shooting on **al-Noor Mosque** in **Riccarton** and the **Linwood Islamic Centre** in **Christchurch** while Muslim devotees were holding Friday prayers; the attack left 50 people dead - mostly in **al-Noor Mosque** - and another 50 wounded before the gunman was arrested. Security personnel also found two unexploded improvised explosive devices (IED) in the assailant's car. The attacker, who also filmed the attack and streamed it live on Facebook, had sent an Islamophobic and white-supremacist manifesto to multiple recipients, including the prime minister, only a few minutes before the attack.

Immediate investigations showed that the assailant was inspired by extreme right-wing propaganda and ideas and self-radicalised himself for up to two years prior to the attack while acting outside any known terrorist structure. Nonetheless, the shootings clearly highlight the potential impact of violence inspired by far right ideology. In subsequent years, threats and acts of vandalism targeting multiple mosques, especially around Ramadan and Eid festivals, have periodically resulted in heightened security measures.

**Islamist Militancy:** Despite being a lower profile target than most other Western democracies, New Zealand's close association with Australia and contribution of troops to the war in Afghanistan and other conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, has led New Zealand to adopt a more robust counter-terrorism stance. The government has been aware of individuals within the country who had trained at al-Qaeda camps in Yemen and other unspecified countries in the Middle East. Hence, there is an ongoing risk of lone-wolf attacks by radicalised individuals, as seen during the 3 September 2021 **Auckland Lynn Mall** supermarket stabbing attack, in which at least six people were injured by an individual who was inspired by the Islamic State (IS). The government has since increased funding to intelligence, police, customs and immigration, as well as cooperation with international counter-terror initiatives.

## There are no recent incidents

# Unrest : ● Low Risk

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**Ethnic Tensions:** The primary internal tension in New Zealand has in the past been between the Maori (Polynesian) and the European-origin population. However, the government has in recent years done much to address the sources of discontent. Many outstanding land claims by the Maori have been settled by the Waitangi Tribunal, a court set up for the hearing of such claims, while Maori has been made an official language along with English. While tensions occasionally flare up, they have rarely escalated to clashes and unrest in recent years.

Racial discrimination, though unacceptable in public discourse, does exist and has been exacerbated by the sharp rise in Asian and Indian immigration in recent decades. Travellers of Asian and Indian descent may face racist taunts on the street and when driving. Travellers of Somali or Ethiopian and Middle Eastern descent should also be aware that significant racial tensions exist in some urban suburbs between Pacific Islanders and people from these ethnicities.

Small neo-Nazi groups have made an effort to raise their public profile in recent years, sparking large counter-demonstrations. The risk of getting caught up in racist incidents is low, however.

**Protests and Demonstrations:** New Zealand has an extremely active presence of environmental groups and lobbyists who regularly hold rallies to attract press coverage in major cities like **Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Palmerston North**, especially around public squares and government buildings. These are usually peaceful and pose no safety threat, although they can cause disruptions to traffic.

Widespread protests against COVID-19 restrictions took place in 2020 and first half of 2021, when the government imposed lockdowns and limited international travel. Such protests were usually held outside **Parliament** in **Wellington** and often led to road closures and minor clashes between police and demonstrators.

## Recent incidents

17 December 2023 - 18 December 2023

- **Moderate risk: Pro-Palestine rally to be held in Auckland on 17 December**

Activists plan to gather for a rally at Aotea Square in Auckland, Auckland region, at 14:00 local time (01:00 GMT) before a march at 14:30 local time (01:30 GMT) on 17 December, to demand an end to Israeli military operations in Gaza.

13 December 2023 - 14 December 2023

- **Moderate risk: Demonstrations against smoking legislation repeal underway in Wellington and Auckland - Update**

Local sources indicated that hundreds of people rallied in front of the Parliament in Wellington, in protest of government plans to repeal a Smokefree legislation. A similar large demonstration was also taking place outside ACT Leader David Seymour's office in Auckland. There were no reports of clashes or arrests.

13 December 2023 - 14 December 2023

- **Moderate risk: Demonstration planned in Wellington on 13 December**

A demonstration called by the Association of Salaried Medical Specialists union is planned outside the Parliament House in Wellington from 13:00-14:00 local time (00:00-01:00 GMT) on 13 December, to denounce the coalition Government's repeal of the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Amend Act.

12 December 2023 - 13 December 2023

- **Moderate risk: Pro-Palestine rally planned in Wellington on 12 December**

Activists from the Justice for Palestine group plan to rally at the Parliament lawns in Wellington, from around 12:00 local time on 12 December (23:00 GMT, 11 December), to demand a permanent ceasefire in Gaza amid the Israel-Hamas war.

# Crime : ● Low Risk

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**Petty Crime:** Pickpocketing and other street crimes sometimes occur in urban areas, including central **Wellington** and **Auckland**'s popular tourist areas. Thefts from hotel rooms have also occurred occasionally at venues with poor reputations.

Beware of your surroundings, do not leave your belongings unattended and exercise general personal safety for travel. Only carry what is needed, do not flash expensive valuables or large sums of money, and keep cash, identification and mobile phones in front pockets, or in a zipped or concealed pocket or pouch rather than in a bag. Secure belongings when using public transport or when frequenting markets and other crowded public areas; secure bags diagonally across the body against the chest, keep bags within sight and away from the street. Refrain from using mobile phones or laptops in congested public places; avoid putting bags containing valuables on the ground. Avoid walking in poorly lit and isolated areas. Stay in groups. Reject rides or drinks from strangers and never leave drinks unattended. Exercise extreme caution when purchasing and consuming alcohol in public venues. Do not accept pamphlets in the street or shopping centres; these could be impregnated with potent and disorienting drugs, which permeate the skin. If you start to feel unwell, tell staff or close friends and do not leave the venue alone or with strangers. Shout to attract attention, if needed.

**Violent Crime:** Violent assaults and murders are usually spurred by domestic disputes. Disputes between motorcycle and drug gangs resulted in some shooting incidents in suburban areas of **Auckland** in mid-2022, which prompted authorities to launch Operation Cobalt to try and curtail gang-related violence. However, the issue does not pose a direct threat to foreign nationals.

Commonsense measures are best kept to ensure against becoming the victim of a violent crime. Travellers are advised to remain vigilant at all times and exercise general personal safety for travel: avoid walking alone at night, do not venture down roads with poor lighting and few access points. Be careful when using taxis and public transport and plot route bypasses around rowdy crowds. Seek local advice for areas to avoid. If you are held-up by an armed robber do not become confrontational as any resistive behaviour may cause more violence by the attackers.

**Organised Crime and Gangs:** Multiple motorcycle and other crime gangs have a presence in New Zealand, but they have not targeted foreign nationals in any violent

crimes. In 2019, authorities traced around 6,500 members belonging to at least 10 different organised crime gangs in the country. The Organised Crime Agency of New Zealand tracks and handles cybercrime, identity theft and identity fraud, money laundering, extortion, blackmail, fraud and drug manufacturing, distribution and trafficking cases within the country.

Violence is often contained within inter-gang rivalries, though bystanders may be caught up in drive-by shootings, street shootings and armed or arson attacks. Avoid the epicentres of criminal activities, which are often located on the outskirts of urban areas. Seek local advice on specific areas to avoid. Restrict travel in unfamiliar areas to daylight hours. Visitors should avoid association with members of any groups or individuals they suspect of being involved in such activities.

**Vehicle Crime:** There have been some reports of thefts from unattended vehicles, especially in the **Coromandel Peninsula, Rotorua** and **Queenstown**, in recent years. However, there has been no evidence of vehicles of foreign nationals being specifically targeted in such crimes.

**Break-ins:** Expensive-looking vehicles, especially 4x4s, or vehicles with visible valuables are commonly targeted. Visitors should park cars in well-lit areas, preferably in private parking lots with security and ensure that all valuables, including vehicle's papers/insurance, are removed from the vehicle. Lock car doors at all times and make sure windows are rolled up. If renting a vehicle, ensure that it is fitted with a secure car alarm.

**Fraud and Scams:** Cases of credit card fraud have increased in New Zealand in recent years, mostly linked to online shopping transactions, especially during busy holiday seasons like Easter and Christmas. Authorities have focused on tightening banking regulations to crack down on such scams.

**Credit Card fraud:** Visitors should only use credit cards when an electronic transaction is possible and when the transaction can be completed directly in front of them. Never let a clerk, sales assistant or waiter take a card to another location for the transaction to be processed. If this cannot be avoided, visitors should insist upon going with the individual to the point of sale to witness the transaction. Keep an eye on the card at all times. Always ensure that you receive a receipt and check the amount to be correct.

**Kidnapping:** There have been no known reports of kidnapping incidents targeting foreign nationals in recent years. Police response, in the event of a kidnapping, is likely to be quick in both urban and rural areas.

Travellers should remain aware of their surroundings and follow the latest advisories for their destination. Maintain communications and your itinerary with local contacts, authorities or embassy staff, especially in locations with a higher risk of kidnapping. Consider a local guide or security escort for the highest risk locations.

## Recent incidents

11 November 2023 - 12 November 2023

- **Low risk:** Police investigate incident in Stoke, Nelson region - Closed

Updated reports indicated police launched a homicide investigation as of morning hours local time after a person was killed in a suspected stabbing attack in a private property on Orchard Street in Stoke, Nelson region, South Island, at around 19:00 local time (06:00 GMT) on 10 November. Police launched a search operation for a white BMW X5 station wagon with the registration BMW693, and believed the victim was known to the suspect.

02 October 2023 - 03 October 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Injuries reported following attack at bus stop in Mangere, Auckland

At least four people were injured in an unspecified attack by at least one assailant at the Bader Drive bus stop in Māngere, Auckland, at around 22:50 local time (09:50 GMT) on 2 October; a 25-year-old male suspected was arrested in the area by the police. The bus stop was partially closed until morning hours local time due to an ongoing police investigation.

07 August 2023 - 08 August 2023

- **Low risk:** Police investigate deadly shooting incident in Highbury, Manawatū-Whanganui region - Closed

Updated reports indicated that the shooting that left at least one person dead on Croydon Avenue in Highbury, Palmerston North, Manawatū-Whanganui region, during afternoon hours local time on 6 August, was gang-related. A police investigation and search for the suspect continued.

23 June 2023 - 24 June 2023

● **Moderate risk:** Police operation gets underway in Henderson and other parts of West Auckland area, Auckland region

Local sources reported that police searches got underway in the area of View Road and Cranwell Street in Henderson while checkpoints were set up across the West Auckland area, Auckland region, as of morning hours local time due to an operation against the Head Hunters gang. Checkpoints will be moving during the operation.

# Law

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The New Zealand legal system is based on English law, with special land legislation and land courts for the Maori. The judiciary is independent in theory and practice; corruption is virtually unheard of.

# Corruption

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## Overview

Corruption is virtually nonexistent in New Zealand and travellers are unlikely to be affected by instances of corruption.

# Security Services

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**Security Services:** The police are extremely efficient at maintaining public order and safety and possess very high investigative capacities. Internal police supervision structures are firmly established with a culture of procedural correctness promoted from training. This means that corruption and abuse of power are virtually non-existent since all police activity and conduct is closely monitored.

# Natural Risks : ● Moderate Risk

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New Zealand is situated near an active seismic zone that experiences thousands of minor earthquakes annually; earthquake-resistant buildings help to mitigate risk of damage and fatalities. Strong earthquakes have the potential to generate tsunamis and a warning system is in place to warn citizens of potential dangers. Heavy rainfall can cause flooding in foothill areas, near tributaries and in national parks nationwide. Several active volcanoes exist nationwide which includes the **Taupo Volcanic Zone (TVZ)** encompassing the **Mount Ruapehu, Mount Ngauruhoe and White Island volcanoes** on **North Island**. Emergency services are well-trained and equipped to handle large-scale disasters and response times are extremely quick.

## Earthquakes

An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the earth, caused by the breaking and shifting of subterranean rock as it releases strain that has accumulated over a long period. Initial mild shaking may worsen and become extremely violent within a matter of seconds. Additional earthquakes, called aftershocks, may follow the initial earthquake.

The country is located in a very active seismic zone – between the Pacific and Indo-Australian tectonic plates – and experiences more than 14,000 earthquakes each year, with about 20 over magnitude 5.0. Because buildings in New Zealand are built to very specific earthquake-resistance standards, most tremors rarely result in fatalities. On 14 November 2016, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck near **Hanmer Springs** in **northern Canterbury region**, located on **upper South Island**, was followed by two aftershocks between 6.0 and 6.9-magnitudes and 24 aftershocks between 5.0 and 5.9-magnitudes. Although there were only two victims, it caused widespread disruptions to overland travel over many days. The tremors following the November 2016 earthquake triggered major damage to infrastructure in **Kaikoura Town**, located 180km (112 miles) north of **Christchurch**, as well as **Wellington**, and a state of emergency was issued in the **Kaikoura** and **Hurunui districts**. Hotels and other buildings were evacuated in **Christchurch** and residents on the coast were temporarily moved to higher ground due to the associated tsunami threat.

When shaking begins, drop to the ground and take cover under, and hold on to, a

sturdy piece of furniture, such as a heavy desk or table that can provide you with air space if the building collapses. If you're not near a strong piece of furniture, crouch down and protect your head and face in an inner corner of a building; only stand in a doorway if you know it is strongly supported. Stay away from windows or glass panels. Most deaths and injuries in an earthquake are caused by collapsing building materials and heavy falling objects. Stay indoors until the tremors stop and you are sure it is safe to exit. Avoid all areas in the vicinity of outer walls and doorways, as these are most prone to falling debris. In a high-rise building, the electricity may go out and the sprinkler systems may come on. Do not use the elevators. If the lights go out, avoid using candles, matches or lighters during or after the earthquake; if there is a gas leak, an explosion could result. If outdoors, move to an open space away from buildings, electric poles and street lights which are prone to collapse. Do not travel on roads and bridges which may have been damaged by the earthquake. Be prepared for secondary earth movements that follow the initial earthquake; some of these may be large enough to cause additional damage or bring down weakened structures.

## **Tsunami**

Tsunamis are commonly generated by an earthquake-induced movement of the ocean floor. A strong earthquake lasting 20 seconds or more near the coast is likely to generate a tsunami and imminent coastal impact, possibly before warnings can be issued. However, all offshore or coastal earthquakes carry the potential of generating tsunamis. Warning signs of a tsunami include a sudden rise and fall in coastal sea levels.

New Zealand is at risk of tsunamis triggered by offshore earthquakes in the Pacific Ocean. Authorities have revised the country's national tsunami advisory and warning plan to make use of new scientific modelling from GNS Science that allows for distinct threat warnings to be issued for 43 coastal zones. National warnings are issued by the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management to the National Crisis Management Centre in a timely manner located at the Beehive complex in Wellington and agencies throughout the country.

In areas at risk of tsunamis, know the height of your street above sea level and the distance of your street from the coast or other at-risk waters. Areas which are less than 7.5 metres (25 feet) above sea level and/or within 1.5 kilometres (one mile) of the coastline are perceived to be the most at risk. Evacuation orders may be based on

these numbers. Immediately move inland or to higher ground in the event of a tsunami alert/warning; stay away from the beach. In the absence of an official warning, if you are on the coast and feel an earthquake, or if there is a noticeable recession in water away from the shoreline this is a natural warning of a possible tsunami and should be heeded; move away immediately. Remain out of the tsunami hazard zone until local officials advise otherwise.

## Flooding

A flood is an overflow of water that submerges land that is usually dry. It is normally triggered by an extended period of heavy rainfall and can be exacerbated by poor drainage systems in the affected area.

New Zealand faces a risk of flooding. Flash floods occur in many parts of the country, particularly in foothills and around tributaries. The topography of New Zealand's national parks make them prone to flash flooding. Floods have periodically triggered state of emergencies on parts of **South Island**, including **Canterbury** and **West Coast regions**.

If instructed of the possibility that flash-flooding may affect the area you are in, monitor local updates and move immediately to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks and storm drains. Though flash-flooding is commonly attributable to excess upstream precipitation, be aware that flooding can occur without typical warning signs of rain clouds or heavy rain. This is especially true near streams, drainage channels, canyons and other areas known to flood suddenly. If you happen across a flooded road in your car, turn around and drive in the opposite direction. When trapped on a flooded road, vacate your vehicle immediately and climb to higher ground.

## Volcanic Eruptions

A volcanic eruption occurs when lava, rocks and gas are discharged from a volcanic vent. Eruptions can also trigger volcanic ash clouds and landslides called lahar.

New Zealand has several active volcanoes. The **Taupo Volcanic Zone (TVZ)** is a 350km (217 miles) by 50km (31 miles) area on **North Island**. Although much of the zone is

dormant, **Mount Ruapehu**, **Mount Ngauruhoe** and **White Island** have all erupted in recent years. An eruption on **White Island** on 9 December 2019, when tourists were visiting the area, resulted in 22 fatalities, making it the worst volcanic disaster in the country to date. Eruptions can produce powerfully destructive pyroclastic flows, lava and falling rocks as well as hot, dangerous gasses and ash that can cause serious respiratory problems. Secondary effects of eruptions include flooding, mudslides, power outages, drinking water contamination and wildfires.

In the event of a volcanic eruption, listen to your radio or television until you are told all is safe or you receive instructions to evacuate. Local authorities may elect to vacate specific areas at greater risk. If instructed to remain indoors, stay inside with windows and doors closed and all heating and air conditioning systems turned off. Move to a ground level interior room without windows. If you are caught in an outdoor rock fall, roll into a ball to protect your head. Immediately evacuate an area when volcanic fumes and gases begin to cause an irritation to your sensory or respiratory organs. Your symptoms should dissipate when you are no longer in contact with the gases or fumes. Keep your vehicle engine switched off. Avoid driving in heavy ashfall. Ash and debris may clog a car's engine, causing the vehicle to stall. If driving is unavoidable, ensure that all windows are rolled up and that the air conditioning system is turned off. In the event of volcanic activity, avoid travel within the radius of the danger zone established by authorities. Volcanic ash clouds may also impact air travel if the volcano is located within range of an airport; confirm updated itineraries with airline representatives if this occurs.

## **Hurricanes/Typhoons/Tropical Cyclones**

A cyclone/typhoon/hurricane is essentially a large mass of air that spirals around a low-pressure centre. It is an organised collection of thunderstorms embedded in a swirling mass of air. This mass of air is called a cyclone if it forms in the Indian or South Pacific oceans, a typhoon if formed in the West Pacific Ocean and a hurricane if formed in the East Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Cyclones/typhoons/hurricanes normally bring gale-force winds, heavy rainfall and high tides, with the potential of causing significant or destructive damage and widespread travel disruptions.

Tropical cyclones usually affect the region in the summer months between November and March. Recent cyclones have caused significant disruptions and damage in the country. At least 11 people died and thousands of others were displaced while power

and water supplies were also disrupted across the **North Island**, including in **Auckland, Gisborne, Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay and Waikato regions** after Category-3 Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle hit the country's northern areas in mid-February 2023, prompting authorities to declare a nationwide state of emergency.

Follow local radio or television broadcasts for information and evacuation instructions. If not under an area with mandatory evacuation orders, remain indoors. Locate and secure important documentation, including passports, photo identification, travel permits and any indispensable personal effects. Be advised that the calm 'eye' is deceptive and should by no means be interpreted as a sign that the storm has passed. The second winds are likely to be worse and may destroy trees and buildings damaged in the first pass. If caught in a region hit by a cyclone/typhoon/hurricane, remain indoors until the storm passes. If there is a need to move to an evacuation centre, evacuate in a calm manner and ensure you carry important personal identification. Avoid all low-lying coastal areas due to storm surges. Confirm the viability of overland travel routes due to the risk of flooding. Air and sea travel are also likely to be impacted. Anticipate disruptions to power, communications and other essential services.

## Recent incidents

17 December 2023 - 18 December 2023

- **Low risk:** Adverse weather triggers domestic flights disruptions at Wellington Airport - Closed

Flight operations resumed at Wellington Airport (WLG/NZWN) as of morning hours local time, following a ground stop due to weather conditions on 16 December.

16 December 2023 - 17 December 2023

- **Medium risk:** Adverse weather triggers domestic flights disruptions at Wellington Airport

Domestic flights into and out of Wellington Airport (WLG/NZWN) were suspended since the morning hours local time due to low cloud conditions in the area.

15 December 2023 - 18 December 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Authorities warn of heavy rainfall in Buller district, West Coast region

An orange heavy rainfall warning was in effect in Buller district, West Coast region, as periods of heavy rainfall which had the potential to trigger floods and landslides, and possible thunderstorms were forecast in the area from evening hours local time until afternoon hours local time on 17 December.

12 December 2023 - 13 December 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Authorities warn of thunderstorms in and around Wellington, North Island – Update

A severe thunderstorm warning was in effect in parts of Wellington and Manawātū-Whanganui regions in the North Island including Carterton, Tararua and Masterton while heavy rainfall, hail and floods were also forecast in the affected areas; a tornado churned up during the storm was reported in Lower Hutt. Around 2,000 properties in the Hutt Valley lost power.

# Health and Medical: ● Low Risk

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## Overview

New Zealand's healthcare infrastructure meets international standards. While healthcare might be unavailable in some more remote areas of New Zealand, air evacuation services are excellent. Waiting lists for elective surgery can be long, but having private health insurance enables faster access to elective procedures. There are few ailments or illnesses to be concerned about within New Zealand.

## Before you travel

Consult your doctor or a healthcare provider who specialises in travel medicine at least six weeks before your departure. If you have a medical condition, you should also share your travel plans with your doctor.

## Outbreaks and Other Diseases

### Malaria

There is no risk of malaria transmission.

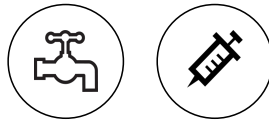
### Yellow Fever

There is no risk of Yellow Fever infection.

## Vaccinations, Medicines and Documentation

**Note:** Requirements and recommendations for vaccines and other medicines as well as Yellow Fever vaccine are based on guidelines from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Yellow Book 2024. All other entry requirements are based on Riskline research.

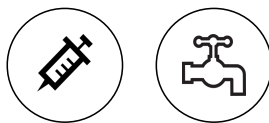
## Routine vaccines



Make sure you are up-to-date on all routine vaccines before every trip. Some of these vaccines include

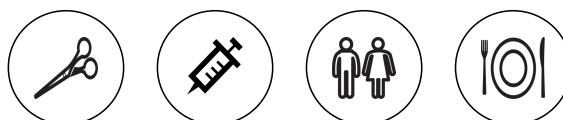
- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis
- Flu (influenza)
- Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)
- Polio
- Shingles

## COVID-19



All eligible travellers should be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines.

## Hepatitis A



Consider hepatitis A vaccination for most travellers. It is recommended for travellers who will be doing higher risk activities, such as visiting smaller cities, villages, or rural areas where a traveller might get infected through food or water. It is recommended for travellers who plan on eating street food.

## Hepatitis B



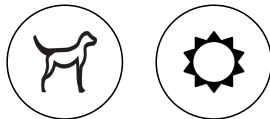
Recommended for unvaccinated travellers younger than 60 years old traveling to New Zealand. Unvaccinated travellers 60 years and older may get vaccinated before traveling to New Zealand.

## Measles



Infants 6 to 11 months old traveling internationally should get 1 dose of measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine before travel. This dose does not count as part of the routine childhood vaccination series.

## Rabies



New Zealand is free of dog rabies. However, rabies may still be present in wildlife species, particularly bats. CDC recommends rabies vaccination before travel only for people working directly with wildlife. These people may include veterinarians, animal handlers, field biologists, or laboratory workers working with specimens from mammalian species.

## Required documentation

### Yellow Fever entry requirement (Source: USA CDC):

None

### Other entry requirements:

#### Travel (PLF) document

Authorities replaced the paper-based Passenger Arrival Card with the online New Zealand Traveller Declaration portal for inbound travellers at all international airports nationwide, including Auckland Airport (AKL/NZAA) in the Auckland region and Wellington Airport (WLG/NZWN) in Wellington. Travellers may submit the NZTD within 24 hours of departing for the country; the paper form is still available for those who are not able to submit the NZTD. Travellers are asked about health risk assessments, biosecurity, customs and immigration. International arrivals must fill out Passenger Arrival Cards at land and sea ports of entry. Travellers are asked about health risk assessments, biosecurity, customs and immigration. Document link: <https://app.travellerdeclaration.govt.nz/#/>

**Note:** Documentation requirements are subject to change. Consult your destination embassy or consulate prior to departure for confirmation.

## While you are there

### Emergency Numbers

Medical	111	
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### Emergency services

New Zealand has an excellent local ambulance service. Air evacuation services operate in rural areas but may have longer response times.

### Evacuation

It is very unlikely medical evacuation would be required for injury or illness.

## Routine care

The provision of public medical care throughout the major cities is excellent. Teaching hospitals are among the best in the world, and suburban and local hospitals are also good. "Urgent Pharmacies" are listed in the local telephone directory whenever medicines are needed outside regular business hours. Several hotels also have doctors on call for their guests.

## Medicine

There are no known issues with the availability or quality of prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

## Payment

Up-front or cash payments may be required prior to treatment, even for individuals with medical insurance. Whenever possible, check with medical providers for payment requirements prior to treatment.

## Ailments

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### Mumps



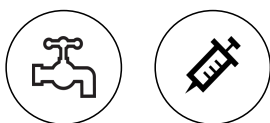
**Mumps:** Health authorities have in recent years detected mumps cases in **Auckland, Nelson** and **Marlborough** regions as well as **Dunedin** in **Otago region**. Officials indicated that the vast majority of the infected were not properly immunised with measles mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccinations.

*Mumps is a highly contagious viral infection transmitted via the coughing and sneezing of infected persons or contact with infected surfaces or utensils. Symptoms include fever, swollen jaw and cheeks, headaches, fatigue and swollen salivary glands. In some cases, particularly in adults, infected persons may develop*

*meningitis or encephalitis. There is no treatment for mumps, beyond rehydration and bed rest.*

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## Measles



Health authorities have expressed concerns over a possible outbreak of measles due to low measles vaccination rates worldwide. Nevertheless, New Zealand maintains a relatively high coverage of its childhood immunisation schedule, which includes the measles vaccine, at about 82.9 percent. Previously, the country experienced an outbreak from 2019–2020 when more than 2,000 cases were detected mostly in **Auckland** region, and to a lesser extent in **Northland, Otago, Southland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Canterbury, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Manawatū-Whanganui, Taranaki, Nelson** and **Marlborough** regions; at least two unborn fetuses in second trimester have died as a result of the outbreak.

*Measles is a highly contagious viral infection transmitted via coughing and sneezing from infected persons. Cold-like symptoms as well as fever are initially presented before a skin rash develops three to five days later. The measles vaccine is effective at preventing the disease. There is no treatment once infected beyond rehydration and bed rest.*

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## Recent incidents

08 December 2023 - 09 December 2023

### ● **Low risk:** Officials lift disease-related boil water order in Queenstown, Otago region - Closed

Authorities lifted the boil public water supply order across Queenstown, Otago region, on 8 December after an outbreak of cryptosporidium was contained.

10 November 2023 - 11 November 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Officials maintain disease-related boil water order in parts of Queenstown, Otago region - Update

Officials maintained the boil public water supply order, in place since 18 September, in parts of Queenstown, Otago region, including the town centre, Fernhill, Sunshine Bay and Frankton Road and its surrounding suburbs, amid a cryptosporidium outbreak. It remains uncertain when the order will be lifted.

24 October 2023 - 25 October 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Unionised senior doctors and dentists to strike nationwide on 24 October

Senior doctors and dentists part of the Association of Salaried Medical Specialists (ASMS) union plan to stage a 24-hour strike nationwide on 24 October, over wages and working conditions, among other issues; urgent care will be provided during the strike. Further information was not available.

05 October 2023 - 07 October 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Authorities issue nationwide measles alert

Authorities issued a measles alert for the country on 5 October after a person with measles travelled on Jetstar flight JQ258 from Wellington (WLG/NZWN) to Auckland (AKL/NZAA) airports on 3 October after attending multiple events in Wellington, including one at Scots College. The person is a resident of Northland.



## Summary

Authorities in New Zealand have relied on periodic localised lockdowns, border restrictions, health screening and testing measures, along with a COVID-19 awareness drive to prevent a widespread outbreak. Most COVID-19-related measures were lifted. Borders are open to all incoming international travellers.

**What is the current nationwide Policy?:** Open

**Policy starts:** 13 September 2022

**Policy ends:** indef

### Policy explanation:

All businesses are open and operating normally. Face mask and vaccination mandates have also been lifted. People are advised to maintain social distancing measures.

**Policy source:** <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

**Last update:** 09 November 2023

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## Infection

**Infection Level:** High

**Infection rate:** 68.08 cases per 100k in the last 14 days

**As of date:** 09 November 2023

**Hotspots:** -

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## International Travel



### International Flights

**Is there a ban on international commercial flights?** No

**Through what date?** indef

#### **Flight Ban Explanation:**

There is no explicit ban on international flights. International travellers have also been allowed to transit through the country's airports without COVID-19 related restrictions.

**Last Update:** 22 November 2023

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### Entry and Borders

**Is there a ban on entry for any travellers?** No

**Through what date?** indef

#### **Travellers from where are banned?**

**Land border:**

**Maritime border:** Open

#### **Entry Rules Explanation:**

Incoming air and sea travellers are no longer required to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination to enter New Zealand; arrivals are no longer required to undergo any mandatory post-arrival testing.

**Entry Rules:** <https://covid19.govt.nz/international-travel/>

**Last Update:**

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## Testing

**Do travellers need to take a COVID-19 test** No

**When?**

**Is it mandatory or optional?**

**Test Type:**

**Minimum age requirement:**

**Pre-travel test validity, in hours:**

**After arrival test days:**

### **Testing Explanation:**

Mandatory post-arrival testing requirements have been removed; travellers are only advised to take a test on Day 1 and on days 5 or 6 of arrival and can report the test results by contacting the COVID-19 test Results Line (0800 432 010), which is open daily from 08:00-20:00 local time.

**Testing Rules:** -

**Last Update:** 22 November 2023

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## Health and Travel Documentations

**Do arriving travellers need any health and/or travel documentation?** Yes

### **Documentation Explanation:**

#### **Travel (PLF) document**

Authorities replaced the paper-based Passenger Arrival Card with the [online](#)

[New Zealand Traveller Declaration portal](#) for inbound travellers at all international airports nationwide, including Auckland Airport (AKL/NZAA) in the Auckland region and Wellington Airport (WLG/NZWN) in Wellington.

Travellers may submit the NZTD within 24 hours of departing for the country; the paper form is still available for those who are not able to submit the NZTD. Travellers are asked about health risk assessments, biosecurity, customs and immigration.

International arrivals must fill out Passenger Arrival Cards at land and sea ports of entry. Travellers are asked about health risk assessments, biosecurity, customs and immigration.

**Travel Document:** <https://app.travellerdeclaration.govt.nz/#/>

**Last Update:** 09 November 2023

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## Tracing App

**Do travellers need to use a contact tracing app after arriving?** No

**Tracing App Explanation:**

**Last Update:** 22 November 2023

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## Quarantine on Arrival

**Who needs to quarantine on arrival** Some travellers

**Travellers from where need to quarantine?**

**How many days is quarantine?** 14

**Is it self-quarantine or operated by the government?** Gov

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## Quarantine Explanation:

**Quarantine Rules:** <https://www.miq.govt.nz/>

**Quarantine mandate list:**

**Last Update:** 2023-11-22

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## Exit

**Is there a ban on exit for any travellers?** No

**Are there special requirements to exit?** No

### Exit Requirements Explanation:

There are no exit rules for travellers.

### Exit Requirements

**(URL):** -

**Last Update:** 22 November 2023

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## Vaccination

**Percent vaccinated with at least one dose:** 87.951 as of 21 Apr 2023

**Percent fully vaccinated:** 80.66 as of 04 Apr 2023

**Is vaccination mandatory for entry?** No

**Fully vaccinated are exempt from:** -

**Minimum age for vaccine requirements for travel:**

**Exemptions for vaccine requirements for travel:**

**"Fully vaccinated" is defined by the destination as:**

**Accepted vaccines, validity and special age restrictions:**

**Is mixing of vaccine doses authorised?** Yes

**Are specific combinations of mixed doses required?** No

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**"Boosted" is defined by the destination as:**

**Accepted boosters:**

**"Recently recovered" is defined by the destination as:**

Recovery status is valid from days until after .

**Vaccination certificates accepted:**

**Vaccination certificates accepted in the following languages:**

**Recent recovery document required:**

**Recent recovery document accepted in the following languages:**

**Explanation:**

However, some international airlines operating flights to and from New Zealand and local establishments may still ask for proof of COVID-19 vaccination.

**Sources:** <https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/vaccine-passes-and-certificates/proof-of-your-vaccination-status/#international-travel-vaccination-certificate>

**Last change to**

**vaccination** 12 September 2022

**policy:**

**Last Update:** 09 November 2023

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## Other International Travel Restrictions

**Exit Requirements Explanation:**

**Last Update:**

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## Domestic Situation

## Areas on Lockdown

**Last Update:**

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## Areas under Curfew

**Last Update:**

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## Domestic Travel

### **Domestic Travel Explanation:**

Cruise ships owned by Carnival Cruises do not require passengers anymore to show vaccination records before boarding and to wear masks on ships.

**Last Update:** 09 November 2023

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## Other Domestic Restrictions

Officials have lifted most COVID-19-related restrictions nationwide, including a facemask mandate, vaccine mandates and the traffic light system. Those who test positive for COVID-19 are recommended to self-isolate for five days.

Authorities provide free facemasks, rapid antigen test kits and vaccines for COVID-19 for the public. Further details can be found [here](#).

### **Cryptosporidiosis-related measures:**

Effective 18 September, authorities ordered people to boil public water supply in parts of Queenstown, Otago region, including the town centre (north along Gorge Road), Sunshine Bay, Fernhill, Queenstown Hil, effective until further notice after at least 30 people contracted cryptosporidiosis, which is a parasitic disease that may cause diarrhoea.

Authorities lifted the boil public water supply order in parts of Queenstown, Otago region, namely Frankton, Kelvin Heights, Quail Rise and areas around Tucker Beach Road.

**Last Update:** 09 November 2023

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## Resources

**Government COVID Site:** <https://www.health.govt.nz/>

**Health Dept COVID Site:** <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

**There are no recent incidents**

# Local Travel : ● Low Risk

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## Travel Safety

**Air Travel:** Most travellers arrive in New Zealand through **Auckland International Airport (AKL/NZAA)**, located in **Mangere**. Security at the airport is of a high standard. Safety is very good: the airport uses modern air traffic control systems and has experienced no serious accidents in recent years. Airbus Express buses depart from the airport every 10 minutes during the day, every 20 minutes in the evening and at half hour intervals after 19:00 local time. The trip takes around an hour to reach the **City Ferry Terminal**.

International flights also arrive at **Wellington (WLG/NZWN)**, **Christchurch (CHC/NZCH)** and **Queenstown (ZQN/NZQN)** airports. All three airports are served by special buses that travel into the centres of the aforementioned cities. There are also multiple shuttle and taxi operators at each airport. Taxis should be picked up from designated stands to reduce the risk of being overcharged.

**Wellington** airport buses leave from a stand to the right of the exit from the departures area on the hour from 06:20-20:20 local time daily and take 15-20 minutes to get to downtown before travelling up the **Hutt Valley**.

Three public buses operate routes between **Christchurch Airport** and the city centre. Bus number 10 runs from **Harewood** to **Cashmere**. Bus number 3 runs from the airport to **Sumner** via **Avonhead**. Bus number 29 goes from the airport to the city centre via **Fendalton**. A faster option is the Airport Flyer, which takes 30 minutes to reach the city centre and operates between 06:30 and 01:00 (hourly at night). All buses arrive and depart from the regional transport hub at the northern end of the international arrivals hall.

National flag carrier Air New Zealand flies to many international destinations, including London, Los Angeles, Singapore, Sydney and Bangkok. Air New Zealand has a very good safety record.

**Airspace:** There is no explicit ban on international flights. International travellers have also been allowed to transit through the country's airports without COVID-19 related restrictions.

**Borders and Entry:** Incoming air and sea travellers are no longer required to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination to enter New Zealand; arrivals are no longer required to

undergo any mandatory post-arrival testing.

**Exit:** There are no exit rules for travellers.

**Road Travel:** Traffic in New Zealand moves on the left. New Zealand's roads are generally in good condition. Roads are single lane each-way in most places, with dual and multiple lane carriageways leading into **Wellington, Auckland** and **Christchurch**.

Weather conditions can be dangerous, often including high winds and driving rain. Surface flooding and mudslides are common after heavy downpours both in cities and rural areas so take care on city underpasses and dips in the road in the countryside, which may not be marked. In winter, roads in the centre of **North Island** and in many areas of the south are closed regularly by snow and black ice (which is very difficult to see). For long trips away from cities, bring a phone, extra water and clothing, and ensure your vehicle is equipped with a basic emergency kit. Listen to radio stations for potential road closures and drive with extreme care. Roads that should be avoided by inexperienced drivers in bad weather include: The **Parapara road** from **Wanganui** to **Raetihi**; **Rimutaka Hill** between the **Hutt Valley** and **Masterton**; **Nelson** to **Blenheim** and **Nelson** to **Takaka roads**; **Lewis Pass (Murchison to Christchurch)** and **Haast Pass (Haast to Queenstown area)**. There is no passing on an extremely dangerous stretch of **State Highway 1** between **Paekakariki** and **Pukerua Bay** north of **Wellington**.

Visitors can legally drive in New Zealand for up to 12 months with a current driver's licence from a foreign country, together with an English translation, or an International Driving Permit (IDP). Speed limits are generally 100kph (62 mph) on rural roads and 50kph (31 mph) in towns. The legal alcohol limit while driving is 0.3 milligrams of alcohol per millilitre of blood (0.3mg/1ml) for those under the age of 20 and 0.8 milligrams of alcohol per millilitre of blood (0.8mg/1ml) for those above 20. Police speed cameras are commonplace so drive carefully, particularly at the entrance and exit of rural towns where speed zones vary.

**Rail Travel:** New Zealand's passenger railway network suffers from a lack of funding, sparse services and significant delays. Nevertheless, it can be a better option than buses on competing routes if comfort is a priority. National rail operator Kiwi Rail operates metro rail services in **Auckland and Wellington**, which are reliable; service in **Auckland** is limited, but **Wellington's** rail network is the best way to get to and from the city.

Kiwi Rail also operates reliable but limited intercity services between **Wellington and**

**Auckland, Hamilton and Auckland, Palmerston North and Wellington, Christchurch and Picton and Christchurch and Greymouth.** . Seven-day passes are available but, given the limited services and regular discounts, it is often cheaper to book ahead on the company's website.

The **Wellington-Auckland** service departs from **Auckland's Britomart Center** at the bottom of Queen Street and **Wellington's central railway station** three times per week. The trip is scheduled to take 12 hours but can take up to 16. Trains also connect the **Interislander Ferry Terminal** in **Picton** to **Christchurch** and **Christchurch** to **Greymouth**.

It is inadvisable to travel by train during periods of significant volcanic activity on **Mount Ruapehu's eruptions** present a risk. Automated warning systems are in place, but you should be aware that the line may be cut and travel disrupted in future. As with roads, mud-slips are common on tracks during heavy rains and are also a significant safety hazard that could lead to delays.

## **Public Transport**

**Ferries and Boats:** There are two ferry companies operating vessels between **Wellington** and **Picton** at the north end of **South Island**: Bluebridge and the Interislander, which is publicly-owned. Interislander bookings can be made in conjunction with Intercity coach ticket purchases. The waterway between the **North** and **South Islands** is often stormy and ferry services are often cancelled by high seas.

**Buses:** Services operated by Intercity, the national bus company, are the most used interurban public transport option. The company's buses are often the only option when travelling to many smaller towns or cities. Intercity buses leave from **Platform 9** at the **Wellington Railway Station** (also used by the free ferry shuttle), **Auckland Sky Casino** and from **Ritchies Travel (123 Worcester Street, Christchurch)**. Intercity's driving standards tend to be high and most drivers are experienced in all road and weather conditions. Bags are stowed in the hold so take care to keep valuable items on your person as carry-on luggage. Intercity's prices can be quite high by local standards.

Private bus and shuttle companies that use a variety of vehicles ranging from vans through mini-buses to full coaches are also available. These services do not always leave from bus and railway stations, so check where to pick them up. The shuttles can be a lot quicker than Intercity services and some smaller operators provide door-to-door service.

Petty theft occurs periodically on bus services in New Zealand so it is advisable to deter opportunist thieves by keeping bags close and valuables in a money belt.

**Taxis:** Taxis are widely available, metered and any extra charges should be in plain view. There have been reports of drivers overcharging visitors by taking a longer route to destinations. It is a good idea to ask at your hotel reception how much it should cost to get to certain destinations. Cars tend to be in good condition, though driving standards are variable. Women travelling by themselves should sit in the backseat as there have been a number of instances of sexual harassment by drivers.

**Vehicle Hire:** Major international companies operate in New Zealand, in competition with small local operators. Vehicle standards are good. Make sure to specify automatic or manual gearbox as New Zealanders tend to prefer the latter.

## Recent incidents

21 December 2023 - 22 December 2023

### ● **Low risk:** Papua New Guinean officials allow nationals of New Zealand and other countries to obtain VoA

Papua New Guinean authorities allowed nationals of New Zealand, American Samoa, Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna, Cook Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands to obtain a visa on arrival (VoA) to enter Papua New Guinea for up to 60 days, effective until further notice.

21 December 2023 - 22 December 2023

### ● **Moderate risk:** Chemical explosion reported near Tauranga, Bay of Plenty region

Local sources indicated the emergency services were responding to a chemical explosion resulting in a fire on the Te Puke Highway near Tauranga's Papamoa in the Bay of Plenty region during morning hours local time. There were no reports of casualties.

20 December 2023 - 21 December 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Security tightened in Porirua, Wellington for gang member's funeral procession

Additional police were deployed to Porirua, Wellington, while authorities also warned of traffic delays due to the funeral procession of a Hawke's Bay-based gang member expected to take place from Porirua's Waitangirua to the Whenua Tapu cemetery located along Airlie Road in Pukerua Bay in the early afternoon hours local time.

16 December 2023 - 18 December 2023

- **Moderate risk:** Security measures tightened in Whakatāne, Bay of Plenty region until 17 December

Local sources indicated that officials tightened security measures in Whakatāne, Bay of Plenty region, until 17 December to maintain public security amid the funerals of the Black Power gang members. Police arrested at least 15 people and seized a variety of weapons.

# Destination Hotspots

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**Cities, Towns and Villages:** The **Linwood area** of **Christchurch** is considered to be a relatively high crime area in low-crime New Zealand. Exercise extra caution when in this area at night.

**Courtenay Place** is **Wellington's** primary nightlife street. Thursday to Saturday nights see a stream of arrests for violence and robberies so take extra caution after dark.

**Karangahape Road**, known to locals as '**K Road**', is **Auckland's** traditional red light district and, though the street's image has changed somewhat in recent years, women travellers should avoid the street at night. In **South Auckland** various areas in **Manukau City** suffer from youth gang problems and should be avoided unless you are being escorted by a local resident. One particular hotspot is **Otara**. Ask for local advice if you are unsure where to go and avoid poorly lit areas at night.

**Porirua** suffers the same youth gang problems as **Manukau City**, with **East Porirua**, **NaeNae** and **Taita** particular hotspots.

**General Areas:** Local thieves target cars parked in the country's national parks and regularly break into vehicles. Take valuables with you even when walking short distances. Leave any other valuables in hotel safes.

# Safety

## Emergency Numbers

Traffic	<b>*555 (mobile only)</b>	
Non-Emergency contact	<b>105</b>	
Medical	<b>111</b>	
Police	<b>111</b>	
Fire	<b>111</b>	

**Beaches and Public Areas:** Beaches are usually safe.. Many of New Zealand's beaches are patrolled by lifeguards and safety standards are high. Red and yellow flags mark the safest places to swim on patrolled beaches. However, strong rip currents do occur so visitors are advised to follow warnings signs and beach closures issued well in advance during adverse weather. If caught in a rip do not try to swim against it, swim parallel to the shore towards the breaking waves which will help carry you back to shore. It is extremely important to have sun protection because solar radiation is particularly bad in New Zealand, exacerbated by frequent ozone holes over Antarctica. Wear a broad-brimmed hat, sun-block (not low SP tanning products) and shirt. Sunburn sets in within 15 minutes on clear days.

Detailed instructions relating to trekking safety precautions should be sought from the Department of Conservation (DoC) website. Wear appropriate clothing including walking boots and proper rain protection. Weather changes can be sudden. Always sign in at cabins and visitor centres in national parks so that the DoC knows where to look in the event of emergency.

**Customs:** New Zealand has very strict biosecurity regulations that protect the country's vital agricultural sector. Customs officials are largely focused on finding passengers carrying drugs, plants, insects or animals that could damage New Zealand's forests and lucrative fruit export sector. Avoid carrying these items in as passengers are searched sporadically and all offending products are taken immediately and destroyed, without compensation to the passenger. It is illegal to import some foodstuffs, including meat products, honey, fruit and dairy products.

High fines are payable by those ignoring these rules. Travellers will also need to consider the implications of importing wood products (e.g. golf clubs), shoes (may have soil and dirt attached), and items made from animal skin. The arrivals immigration card has details of this. If in doubt, travellers should declare all potentially illegal possessions to a Ministry of Agriculture official or dump them in one of the bins available at the airport. As a result of these quarantine procedures, travellers could experience delays or be quarantined on arrival.

**Drugs and Alcohol:** The import of illegal drugs is sentenced with up to 12 years in prison. While marijuana is used widely throughout the islands, the police crackdown hard on both dealers and users. The drink drive limit is 0.3 milligrams of alcohol per millilitre of blood (0.3/1ml) and this is strictly enforced by traffic police. Those caught over the limit face fines and possible imprisonment.

**Security Services:** The police are extremely efficient at maintaining public order and safety and possess very high investigative capacities. Internal police supervision structures are firmly established with a culture of procedural correctness promoted from training. This means that corruption and abuse of power are virtually non-existent since all police activity and conduct is closely monitored.

# Culture

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**Cultural Sensitivities:** Maori consider the head to be tapu (sacred) and you should avoid touching the heads of Maori children except in the hongi (nose-to-nose greeting). When visiting a marae (meeting house) or protected land, you should seek, where possible, the permission of elders to enter; in the marae forecourt, take off your shoes when entering. If you are there on an official visit there is an elaborate welcoming procedure and you should listen closely to the elders' instructions so as not to cause offence.

**Political Sensitivities:** The relationship between the Maori population and settlers can be a potentially divisive political issue, especially when it comes to the debate on the continuance of positive discrimination policies for the Maoris. Avoid discussion of the issue in order to avoid causing offence or creating a heated, potentially violent, discussion.

# Specific Traveller Advice

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## Female Travellers

**Local Customs and Laws:** There are no local customs or laws that a female traveller should take into consideration in New Zealand. Familiarise yourself with your destination prior to travel, and be respectful and mindful of any cultural sensitivities, which may include dress, behaviour and topics of discussions, especially when visiting religious sites like temples, mosques and churches.

**Safety:** There are minimal safety concerns that a female traveller should take into consideration in New Zealand. Public transportation like buses, trams and trains are usually safe for women, also after dark. There are very few instances of sexual assaults targeting women and these usually occur in isolated areas at night time. Exercise personal safety awareness if walking alone at night. Stick to main, well-lit streets and avoid walking through desolate areas or unfamiliar neighbourhoods. Refrain from wearing headphones while walking in the evening. While isolated incidents of street harassment are reported in major cities like **Wellington, Christchurch** and **Auckland**, it is not a widespread or rampant concern. In the event public harassment escalates, draw attention to what is happening and someone will likely come to your aid. Police are very efficient in investigating reports of sexual crimes while first responders are quick. Female travellers will not encounter any problems dealing with first responders or reporting crimes to local police.

**Health and Wellness:** Women have access to a full range of gynaecological and reproductive health services, medicines and products in New Zealand. These include well-maintained specialised clinics, abortion services, rape kits, OTC emergency contraceptives and prescription contraceptives and a full variety of feminine hygiene products. Abortion is legal in the territory.

## LGBT+

Homosexuality is legal in New Zealand. There are many legal protections for LGBT+ persons in the country, including anti-discrimination laws and laws concerning gender identity or expression and adoption rights. Same-sex marriage is legal. LGBT+ activity and persons are widely accepted in the country. LGBT+ travellers are unlikely to face any difficulties or legal issues for travel. Exercise general safety precautions.

## Technology & Communication Risk

Travellers are unlikely to face risks related to information and communication

technology (ICT) in New Zealand.

Internet access and social media have no restrictions. There are some concerns related to device searches or sensitive technology. Although device searches and inspections at the border are unlikely, New Zealand Customs Service officers are empowered to conduct full searches of personal electronic devices at random and travellers are legally obligated to comply. There are no restrictions in relation to bringing or operating sensitive equipment, which may include photo cameras, satellite phones, drones, and other GPS systems, in the country. State or criminal penetration of private data is unlikely. Authorities implement minimal state surveillance of ICT networks in the country.

Travellers should exercise basic ICT safety precautions. However, travellers should note that ICT laws and practices are subject to change on short notice, and travellers are recommended to confirm the legality/appropriateness of their specific ICT needs prior to departure.

Travellers should be prepared for possible device searches at the border and should ensure that their ICT devices are compliant with local laws and regulations prior to their arrival to the country.

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