
Close Contact Exemption Scheme

Critical Service: Process

STEP ONE: SELF-ASSESSMENT

A business or service can self-assess whether they are critical using guidance on business.govt.nz to see if, or what parts of their service, qualify for the scheme.

STEP TWO: REGISTRATION OF SELF-DECLARATION

Once they have carried out the self-assessment process and determined that they would qualify then they register a self-declaration that they are a critical service on the Close Contact Exemption Scheme Critical Services Register (the Register) on business.govt.nz.

STEP THREE: EMAIL ISSUED AND SELF-DECLARATION RECORDED

Once the business has completed their registration of self-declaration then the Register will issue them with an email recording that they have declared themselves as a critical service and assigning them a unique identifier. This email is not an approval.

Entries on the Register will be spot-checked (by MBIE and other sector lead agencies).

STEP FOUR: ASSESSMENT OF IMMEDIATE NEED

Once New Zealand has shifted to Phase Two, a business may make an assessment that they need to use the scheme for a close contact worker to return to work.

This step is optional. A business may not reach the point where it is necessary to use the scheme, because other business continuity plans may mean they can continue to operate.

If they do choose to use the scheme, the business would provide that worker with the appropriate documentation they will need. They would also ensure they had put in place health measures before that worker made their return to the workplace.

Refer to the [guidance on the Ministry of Health website](#) for the process for ordering, collecting and undertaking a Rapid Antigen test, and recording the result.

While the worker is in the workplace, the following safety protocols must be complied with:

- Daily symptom check and daily RAT testing is required before entering the workplace.
- Strict use of a medical mask, out on before entry to the workplace, changed as needed during the day and strictly complying with any infection prevention and control protocols at work.
- When mask is removed (e.g., for eating and drinking) physical distancing must be maintained; eating alone in a well-ventilated space, outdoors where possible.
- Travel solo, to, from and around work or between jobs where possible.
- Ensure good ventilation when in small spaces and masks must be worn by everyone present.
- Continue regular workplace surveillance testing if this is already in place.
- If symptoms develop at any stage, follow the public advice for close contacts with symptoms: www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-contact.
- The worker must self-isolate at home, away from other household members, as per standard close contact advice, including testing if applicable: www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-contact.