The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the new coronavirus (COVID-19) a global emergency as the outbreak continues to spread globally. Its latest Situation Report can be found [here](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports).

**Ireland health authority and advice**

Please follow the advice of Irish health authorities. The Health Service Executive’s (HSE’s) website provides up-to-date advice and FAQs regarding COVID-19:

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/coronavirus.html>

and

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/472f64-covid-19-coronavirus-guidance-and-advice/>.

For further health information and guidance contact the HSE Live service: hselive@hse.ie or +353 41 685 0300 or 1850 24 1850.

In Ireland, disease surveillance and operational support is the function of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC), a part of the HSE. The HPSC is another point of reference for information on COVID-19, with daily briefings available at: <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>

**COVID-19 testing in Ireland**

Should you develop symptoms of COVID-19, such as a fever, cough, loss of smell and/or taste, or shortness of breath, the Irish health authorities ask that you [self-isolate](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/self-isolation-and-limited-social-interaction.html#self-isolate) immediately and contact your GP *by phone*. The people in your household will need to [restrict their movements](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/self-isolation-and-limited-social-interaction.html#self-quarantine).

If you are in one of the [priority groups](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing.html#Priority-groups) and your GP thinks that you need to be tested after consulting with you over the phone, they will arrange a test for you.

If you do not have a GP, phone 112 or 999.

See more details [here](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing.html) on coronavirus testing.

Some airlines and countries now require a Covid-19 Travel Clearance Certificate to allow an individual to fly or to enter a country. A Travel Clearance Certificate is needed as proof to show that an individual has had a Covid-19 PCR test and is clear of infection within a determined time frame. Some countries currently require the cert to be issued 72 hours before travelling. If you require a test for international travel, we cannot recommend any particular organisation, but below are two companies that we are aware of providing services in this line:

[Tropical Medical Bureau Clinics](https://www.tmb.ie/services/covid-19-travel-clearance-certificate) or [Travel Health Clinics](http://travelhealth.ie/Covid19Testing/?gclid=CjwKCAjw9vn4BRBaEiwAh0muDCl-S2DNo1hpY-klskZNt4wI50sZiyvv55nAXtQWkc-hexoNmGqWoRoC0kwQAvD_BwE)

It is important to note that this Viral Screening service is only for those who are perfectly healthy and well with no signs of possible Covid-19 infection.

**Latest social and travel restrictions: stay at home**

Whilst the island of Ireland had moved to Phase 3 of the Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business, there has been a sharp increase in the number of confirmed Covid-19 cases in on the island in recent weeks, therefore, new public health measures and restrictions were announced on Tuesday 18 August which will remain in place until September 13th and detailed information can be found [here.](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/77b6d-statement-on-the-introduction-of-new-measures-to-limit-the-spread-of-covid-19/)

As of August 8th 2020 the 3 counties of Kildare, Laois and Offaly have been put back into lockdown in response to a localised spike in cases of Covid-19 in these areas. Residents of these counties can only travel within their county unless for essential reasons such as medical appointments or providing vital care. Cafes and restaurants are closed unless offering a takeaway only service. Public transport should only be used if absolutely necessary. Those who can work from home, need to do so. Indoor gatherings are limited to a number of 6 from no more than 3 households, while outdoor gatherings should be a maximum of 15 with social distancing rules to apply in every scenario. All cinemas, theatres, casinos, betting shops, bingo halls, gyms, leisure centres, swimming pools, exercise and dance studios must close at midnight. People from other areas of Ireland are advised not to travel to these counties unless for essential reasons.

These restrictions are to remain in place for at least 2 weeks and will be reviewed again on August 23rd.

The message continues to be to Stay Safe - you are urged to use your own judgement and take personal responsibility for protecting yourself, your friends and your family. The following points should be noted:

* **Easing of stay** **local** **Travel** - You can now travel anywhere in Ireland with the exception of Kildare, Laois and Offaly, however, people should avoid using public transport where possible.
* **Face coverings** - Face coverings are mandatory in shops, shopping centres and other indoor settings in all parts of Ireland from Monday. Shoppers who refuse to wear coverings in the Republic will face fines of up to €2,500 and a potential prison stint. [Guidance on safe use of face coverings is available here.](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/)
* **Economic activity and Work** - Unless it is absolutely essential for an employee to attend in person, they should work from home.
* **Social** - Social visits to people’s homes should be limited to a maximum of 6 visitors – from no more than 3 other households. This is to allow for physical distancing of 2 metres and for adequate ventilation if they are taking place indoors.
* **Indoor gatherings** - Indoor gatherings of up to 6 people when conducted in line with public health advice are permissible.
* **Outdoor gatherings** - Outdoor gatherings of up to 15 people when conducted in line with public health advice are permissible.

All New Zealanders in Ireland should follow these instructions.

Further advice is available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d06271-easing-the-covid-19-restrictions-on-29-june-phase-3/#public-health-measures>

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**Official travel advice**

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade provides official Irish government travel advice in accordance with Government policy, which is based on official public health advice. As of August 4th the DFA continues to advise against non-essential travel overseas. This includes Great Britain but does not apply to Northern Ireland. It also includes all travel by cruise ship. Further information can be found [here.](https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/coronavirus/)

Please consult [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz) for the latest official New Zealand government travel advice. Please register your travel details at [www.register.safetravel.govt.nz/login](http://www.register.safetravel.govt.nz/login) so we can contact you updated on COVID-19 developments (email updates to registrants has been our main mechanism to keep New Zealanders in Ireland updated in recent weeks).

On Safetravel you will also find:

* Travel advisories [Ireland](https://safetravel.govt.nz/ireland) and other destinations, with up-to-date information on security risks.
* Specific advice on [COVID-19](https://safetravel.govt.nz/covid-19-coronavirus#overlay-context=covid-19-coronavirus).
* A checklist for travellers to help you plan your journey.
* Information on what steps you can take when things go wrong.

**Arriving into Ireland**

The Irish Authorities advise anyone coming into Ireland, apart from Northern Ireland and individuals arriving in Ireland from locations with a security rating of ‘normal precautions’ (“green”), to restrict their movements for 14 days, and this includes citizens and residents returning to Ireland. Restricting your movements means staying indoors in one location and avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible. To ensure that this is being observed all passengers arriving to Ireland from overseas are obliged to complete [a mandatory Public Health Passenger Locator Form](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ab900-covid-19-passenger-locator-form/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/locatorform/) and to submit it to the relevant authority at their port of entry. Failure to complete the form could result in the issuing of penalties, including a fine of up to €2,500 or imprisonment for up to 6 months.

**Staying in Ireland**

Not all New Zealanders who want to return home have been able to do so. If you are in this situation, and booking the few remaining commercial options to return home is not an option, you should shelter in place and take steps to stay safely where you are.

All New Zealanders in Ireland should follow the instructions of Irish authorities. Details and guidance are available at [www.gov.ie/covid19](http://www.gov.ie/covid19) and in this [information booklet](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/472f64-covid-19-coronavirus-guidance-and-advice/).

In addition, we encourage all New Zealanders in Ireland to consider the following:

* Be ready to comply with local isolation or quarantine requirements and to rely on the local health system. Find out how to access healthcare in case it becomes necessary to do so.
* Take care to minimise your risk of exposure to COVID-19 by following the advice of the World Health Organisation, HSE and New Zealand Ministry of Health.
* Find suitable accommodation (see accommodation sector).
* Make sure you have access to enough medication if you are abroad for longer than planned.
* Keep your family and friends regularly informed of your plans and well-being.
* Monitor local media for developments.
* Be prepared for logistical and financial disruption. Make sure you can access money to cover emergencies and unexpected delays. New Zealanders facing financial hardship overseas should seek assistance from family or friends or contact their bank in the first instance. Check with your insurance provider to see if they can help.
* Look after yourself – your emotional and mental wellbeing is important. Keep in touch with your usual supports – family and whānau, friends and workmates. If you feel you are not coping, it is important to talk with a health professional. Further tips can be found on the [COVID-19 website](http://www.covid19.govt.nz/).
* Register on the SafeTravel website and keep checking for updates.

If you are concerned about your ability to stay safely where you are (for example, if you are worried about accommodation options, access to food, medicine or essential services) or otherwise require consular assistance, please contact the Embassy (see New Zealanders requiring consular assistance section).

**Short-term extensions to visas**

Both Ireland and New Zealand have made some announcements regarding extensions to temporary visas for those affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) issued advice on 16 July 2020 (‘Notice 3’ at [http://www.inis.gov.ie](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Home)) which confirms that all Immigration and International Protection permissions to reside in the Ireland that are due to expire from 20/7/2020 to 20/8/2020 are automatically renewed by the Minister for a period of one month. Any permission that was renewed by the notices of 20/3/2020 and 13/5/2020 and which therefore has a new expiry date between 20/7/2020 and 20/8/2020 is automatically renewed by this notice for a further 1 month.See the above link for further information of INIS FAQs [here](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Home).

After being closed for over 3 months due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Registration Office in Burgh Quay will reopen on 20th July in line with the Government roadmap. Priority will be given initially to those who had their appointments for first time registrations cancelled when the office closed. Applicants for first time registration who had their appointments previously cancelled will be contacted directly by Immigration Service Delivery (ISD) with a new appointment. Anyone who did not previously have an appointment but needs to register should contact ISD at **burghquayregoffice@justice.ie** and request an appointment. A new online Registration Renewal system for all non-nationals based in Dublin will go live on 20th July. This will mean anyone looking to renew their registration will no longer have to book an appointment or attend the registration office in person.

More information can be found on their [website](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Home).

Immigration New Zealand has announced similar extension arrangements for Irish nationals in New Zealand:

* Holders of a work, student, visitor, limited or interim visa with an **expiry date of 2 April to 9 July 2020 inclusive who are in New Zealand on 2 April 2020 will have their visas automatically extended to 25 September 2020.** Confirmation of extensions will be emailed to all visa holders. Please see further details [here](https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/covid-19/coronavirus-update-inz-response).

However, please take note of the below:

* If your visa expires after 9 July and you are in New Zealand If you hold a open work visa, student, visitor, limited or interim visa with an expiry date after 9 July, your visa was **not** extended by the Epidemic Management Notice or the change announce on 7 July 2020. Your current visa expiry remains the same. You need to:
* leave the country before your visa expires,
* make an application for a new visa.

**COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment and other social welfare payments available in Ireland**

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection are introducing various measures to provide income support to people who’s ability to work has been affected by COVID-19 (Coronavirus). These include the pandemic unempolyment payments (PUP), payments for those in self isolation or a positive covid diagnosis, and a jobseekers payments. More information, including how to apply can be found [here](https://services.mywelfare.ie/en/topics/covid-19-payments/).

**New Zealanders requiring consular assistance**

We are committed to helping New Zealanders in Ireland where we can, but the international situation is complex and continues to change quickly. Some things are out of our control. Assisted departure flights should not be relied upon to get home.

The New Zealand Embassy in Dublin remains open, albeit with reduced functions, and continues to assist New Zealanders in need. Meetings at the Embassy are limited and by appointment only. The easiest way to get in touch is by emailing nzembdublin@gmail.com or calling us during office hours (currently 9am to 5pm) on **00353 01 5677680.**

For those needing consular assistance, please contact us on **00353 01 5677680 during office hours**. For urgent consular assistance after-hours please contact **0064 99 20 20 20**(monitored 24 hours a day).