Te Hui Amorangi o
TE MANAWA O TE WHEKE

COVID Protection Framework

Guidelines for Ministry and Worship

Last updated on 20th May 2022
This set of procedures overrides any previous version

Visit our website for more information and resources

www.motw.org.nz
Churches and Ministry Teams Operating Safely under the COVID Protection Framework in Te Manawa o Te Wheke

In October 2021 the New Zealand Government Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa introduced the COVID-19 Protection Framework, also known as the ‘traffic light system’. This replaces the alert level system that has been in place since early 2020. This policy aligns with the government framework with an emphasis on vaccinations as a key method of protection. It is important that the guidelines in this document be read in the context of both government direction and Amorangi policy. At 11.59pm on Monday 4th April 2022, several new guidelines have been implemented. Pāriha may need to update the way they conduct worship, especially on Sunday services and gatherings.

It is important that vestry members, parishioners and mīnīt ā iwi read and understand these guidelines BEFORE planning any worship and/or services. This guideline applies only to churches, worship centres and spaces owned by Te Manawa o Te Wheke. Marae and other non-church owned properties will have their own guidelines to follow – ensure you enquire appropriately before proceeding with services.

Definition of a ‘Gathering’:
A gathering is a group of people who are intermingling. All worship, services and karakia are gatherings.
Examples of faith-based gatherings that can go ahead at Orange include:
• karakia in churches and spaces
• prayer group at home
• weddings
• funerals and tangihanga.

Steps to reduce the spread of the virus
• Encourage contactless donations instead of a cash collection box.
• Consider offering online services so people who cannot attend in person can participate.
• Clean and sanitise musical instruments thoroughly before and after use.

1. Face masks
Face masks must cover the nose and mouth, and need to be attached by loops around the ears or head. This means scarves, bandannas, or t-shirts should not be used. Face masks are required at indoor gatherings and events at Orange by everyone, for the entire time. There is some leniency around ‘exclusive use’ of face masks. Regardless, we strongly encourage all attendees to wear a face mask at all times of worship and karakia in churches.

Face masks are required to be worn by workers, including volunteers, at indoor events and gatherings at Orange. The requirement to wear face masks excludes performers and formal
speakers, such as a person leading a service, provided they are 2 metres apart from the audience or other attendees. Face mask rules no longer apply to gatherings in private dwellings, for example, bible study in a private home or outdoors. For more information visit Wear a face mask | Unite against COVID-19 (covid19.govt.nz).

2. Capacity limits
No capacity limits apply at Orange or Green. Capacity limits do not include workers or volunteers (paid and unpaid), but do include all other people (adults and children) within the 'defined space'. Capacity limits are based on 1 metre distancing. This means the maximum number of people who could occupy the space is determined by how many people could occupy the space if each person was 1 metre apart.

3. QR Codes and Mandatory Scanning
There is no requirement for people to scan in or for a place of worship to display a QR code poster, or have mandatory record keeping. Pāriha may continue to use the QR Code or a manual sign-in form.

4. My Vaccine Pass
My Vaccine Pass requirements have been removed from the COVID-19 Protection framework. They are no longer a legal requirement for entry into any venue including a place of worship.

5. Congregation Interactions
Congregation members and minita-ā-iwi must continue to refrain from interacting physically other than the defined areas of the liturgy at the ‘administration of the communion’. The Sharing of the Peace in close contact is not permitted even at Orange. Other acceptable forms include; hand waving, a short bow, or any other non-physical signs of peace.

6. Eucharist
We strongly recommend the following guidelines for Eucharist in any place of worship or church at Orange;

6a. Communion in one-kind - that is, the presiding priest consecrates the bread and wine and consumes alone from the chalice (or cup). The presiding priest distributes ONLY the wafers to the minita-ā-iwi and congregation.

The recommendation of communion in one-kind comes from a place of safety with the wellbeing and health of others at the forefront of our decision-making.

6b. In exceptional cases, we will allow worship centres to distribute full communion (wine and wafer) in Orange, they must be able to demonstrate the following;
- The presiding priest is the only person to be present in the sanctuary and at the altar at all times during the service.
- The presiding priest wears a face mask at all times of the service. They will also sanitise at all appropriate times, including, at the beginning of the service, before and after the Consecration of the Eucharist.
- Appropriate individual communion cups are used. They must be either 1) one-time use disposable plastic cups OR 2) high-quality glass communion cups.

We respect that some members of our communities may not be prepared to return to full communion. Therefore, we implore all minita ā āwi to provide alternative kinds of communion to accommodate to the congregation or according to the local custom of the pāriha.

**Food and refreshments**
The offering of food and refreshments during Orange and Green levels is allowed. Ensure that areas of eating and drinking are sanitised afterwards.

We continue to pray for and with our pāriha as we return to some kind of ‘normality’ within our worship centres.

If you have any queries as to the procedures being revised, please contact your District Missioner in the first instance.

Yours in Christ,

The Right Reverend Ngarahu Katene
The Rev’d Wiremu Anania
Te Pīhopa | Bishop of Te Manawa o Te Wheke
Te Manutaki | Te Manawa o Te Wheke

Helpful Links and References:

Anglican Church of Aotearoa, NZ and Polynesia: [www.anglican.org.nz](http://www.anglican.org.nz)
Ministry of Health – Official Website: [www.moh.govt.nz](http://www.moh.govt.nz)
Te Manawa o Te Wheke COVID Updates: [www.motw.org.nz/covid-19](http://www.motw.org.nz/covid-19)

Ministry of Health Support Line: 0800 000000
Te Manawa o Te Wheke Office: 0800 PIHOPA

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