



COVID-19 and travel

! Do not travel overseas at this time. If you wish to return home, do so as soon as possible.

What we recommend

18 March 2020:

We now advise all Australians: do not travel overseas at this time. This is our highest advice level (level 4 of 4).

If you are already overseas and wish to return to Australia, we recommend you do so as soon as possible by commercial means.

Regardless of your destination, age or health, our advice is do not travel at this time.

As more countries close their borders or introduce travel restrictions, overseas travel is becoming more complex and difficult. You may not be able to return to Australia when you had planned to. Consider whether you have access to health care and support systems if you get sick while overseas. If you decide to return to Australia, do so as soon as possible. Commercial options may become less available.

If you are overseas and cannot, or do not want to, return to Australia, follow the advice of local authorities. Take care to minimise your risk of exposure to coronavirus including by self-isolating. If you choose to stay, note our ability to provide consular assistance in some places may be limited due to restrictions on movement and other services.

If you decide to return to Australia, you will now be required to self-isolate for 14 days. This applies to all travellers, including Australian citizens. For details see the Australian Border Force website.

Contact your airline, travel agent or insurance company to discuss your travel plans and options for cancelling or postponing current bookings, or to arrange commercial flights back to Australia.

All cruise ships which have sailed from a foreign port have been banned from entering Australian ports for 30 days.

All of the above advice has also been provided to Australian Government staff, who have been instructed to instead use video-conferencing and other communication technologies as much as possible.

The Foreign Minister decided on 17 March to offer voluntary departures globally for all dependants of staff at our overseas posts, staff at high risk due to underlying health conditions and staff the head of mission considers non-essential for ongoing operations.

For more information see our Coronavirus (COVID-19) – information for Australian travellers page.

For **urgent** consular assistance contact:

- !** +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas
- !** 1300 555 135 from within Australia
- !** +61 421 269 080 from SMS

For non-urgent inquiries, email smartraveller@dfat.gov.au

New Zealand

Latest update

Still current at: 18 March 2020

Updated: 18 March 2020

Latest update: We now advise all Australians not to travel overseas at this time, due to the health risks from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the significant disruptions to global travel. This includes to New Zealand. If you're already overseas and wish to return to Australia, we recommend you do so as soon as possible by commercial means. If you decide to travel, be aware from 11:59pm 15 March (NZ time) anyone travelling to New Zealand from any country, including Australia, will be required to self-isolate for 14 days. Travel from the Pacific is not included in these restrictions. Cruise ships are banned from arriving in New Zealand from midnight 14 March until 30 June 2020. See further details in the Travel section.



We now advise you to:

Do not travel to New Zealand.

Download

 [map of Pacific \(PDF 549.39 KB\)](#)

Advice levels

What does this mean? | >

Do not travel to New Zealand.



Overview



Safety

- Crime rates are similar to those in Australia. Thieves often target vehicles. Don't leave valuables in your car or campervan.
- Earthquakes are a constant risk. Large, damaging quakes can happen at any time. Know what to do during and after an earthquake.
- All of New Zealand's coastline is at risk of a tsunami. Know the tsunami warning signs and move to high ground immediately. Don't wait for official alerts.
- New Zealand has several active volcanoes. A volcano erupted on White Island in the Bay of Plenty on 9 December 2019. Further eruptions are possible. Avoid the area and follow the advice of local authorities.
- Weather conditions can change quickly. Severe weather could leave you stranded or injured, especially in an isolated area. If you're climbing, hiking or in a remote area, register your trip with the Department of Conservation. Carry a personal locator beacon.

Full travel advice: [Safety](#)



Health

- There's an outbreak of measles in New Zealand. Make sure your vaccinations are up to date before you travel.
- Medical facilities and services are of a similar standard to those in Australia.
- New Zealand and Australia have a reciprocal health care agreement. This lets Australians access public medical facilities and care. However, there are some things it doesn't cover. Ensure you get comprehensive travel insurance.

Full travel advice: [Health](#)



Local laws

- Don't use or carry illegal drugs. Penalties may include fines and prison sentences, including for small amounts.
- Carry approved identification if you want to purchase alcohol or enter licensed premises. Approved ID includes your current passport, a current New Zealand driver's licence, or a Kiwi Access Card. You can't use an Australian driver's licence.

Full travel advice: [Local laws](#)



Travel

- New Zealand has put in place strict entry restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. From 11:59pm 15 March (NZ time), anyone travelling to New Zealand from any country, including Australia, will be required to register with Healthline ([0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453)) and self-isolate for 14 days. Travel from the Pacific is not included in these restrictions unless you have symptoms of COVID-19. See the NZ Ministry of Health [COVID-19 – Countries and areas of concern](#) page for full details. Cruise ships are also banned from arriving in New Zealand from midnight 14 March until 30 June 2020.
- All foreign nationals who have been present in, or transited through, Iran or mainland China, 14 days prior to departing for New Zealand will be refused entry.
- From 1 October 2019, Australian permanent residents need a New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA) to enter New Zealand. You can [apply online](#) for a NZeTA. Australian citizens are exempt from this requirement.
- New Zealand has strict quarantine rules. Penalties for breaking them include heavy fines and prison sentences.
- The local currency is the New Zealand Dollar (\$NZ). ATM availability is similar to Australia. You can use credit cards in most of the places you would in Australia.
- You can drive for up to 12 months with your Australian driver's licence. If you're staying longer, get a local licence.
- Drive to the conditions. Ice, snow, fog and high winds can be dangerous. Heavy rain can cause landslides across roads. There aren't many motorways outside major cities. Prepare for longer travel times than in Australia.

Full travel advice: [Travel](#)



Local contacts

- The [Consular Services Charter](#) details what the Australian Government can and can't do to help you overseas.
- For consular help, contact the [Australian High Commission in Wellington](#), or the Australian Consulate-General in Auckland.

Full travel advice: [Local contacts](#)

Full advice

Safety

Crime



Petty crime

Crime rates in New Zealand are similar to those in Australia.

Thieves often target valuables left in cars and campervans.

Civil unrest and political tension



Demonstrations and protests

Protests are generally peaceful. However, public protests and events that draw large groups of people can turn violent.

Follow the advice of local authorities.

More information:

- [Demonstrations and civil unrest](#)

Terrorism



In March 2019, a terrorist attack occurred in Christchurch, killing and injuring many people.

Terrorism is a threat worldwide.

More information:

- [Terrorism](#)
- [New Zealand police](#)

Adventure activities



Most people enjoy adventure activities safely in New Zealand. However, these activities carry risks.

Several serious accidents involving Australians and other travellers have occurred. People have died.

Some operators have been found to be negligent.

Safety standards can differ both between individual operators, and from standards in Australia.

If you plan to do an [adventure activity](#):

- be aware of the risks of individual or group activities

- check the safety standards of operators
- check to see if operators meet industry standards

Safety risks can increase in severe weather and remote areas.

Before you do any adventure activities:

- make sure your [travel insurance](#) covers your planned activities
- understand what your travel and other insurance doesn't cover
- only book with operators with appropriate safety equipment and practices
- always use the safety equipment, even if others don't

If you're trekking or travelling in a remote area:

- get updates on local weather from the [Department of Conservation \(DOC\)](#)
- check conditions with the local DOC visitor centre
- register your trip with a DOC visitor centre
- tell your family and friends your plans
- carry a personal locator beacon
- avoid creeks and rivers after heavy rains

You can hire personal locator beacons throughout New Zealand.

When you return from a hike, check in with:

- the DOC visitor centre
- your family and friends
- anyone else who knew your plans

More information:

- [Adventuresmart](#)
- [Mountain Safety Council](#)

Climate and natural disasters



New Zealand experiences [natural disasters](#) and [severe weather](#), including:

- [earthquakes](#)
- [tsunamis](#)
- [volcanic activity](#)
- [flash flooding](#)
- bushfires

To protect yourself in a natural disaster:

- secure your passport in a safe, waterproof place
- follow the advice of local authorities
- keep in contact with friends and family

Monitor local media and other sources, including:

- [Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management](#)
- [Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System](#)

More information:

- [GetThru website](#)

Earthquakes

[Earthquakes](#) are a constant risk in New Zealand.

Most quakes are too small or deep in the earth to feel. However, about 150 to 200 quakes are big enough to feel each year.

Large, damaging earthquakes have occurred and could happen again at any time. Aftershocks can continue for days or weeks.

Recent strong earthquakes include:

- November 2016, magnitude 7.8 earthquake in Kaikoura (Canterbury region)
- February 2016, magnitude 5.7 earthquake in Christchurch (Canterbury region)
- February 2016, magnitude 5.7 earthquake occurred in St Arnaud (Marlborough region)

When an earthquake happens you are advised to drop, cover and hold. If an earthquake is long or strong and you are near the coast or large body of water you are advised to go to higher ground immediately.

If you're indoors during an earthquake:

- move no more than a few steps to a heavy, solid object you can get underneath, and hold onto it
- don't try to run outside
- stay indoors until the shaking stops
- stay away from windows, chimneys, and shelves with heavy objects

If you're in bed:

- hold onto the bed and stay where you are
- protect your head and body with a pillow and blankets

If you're outdoors:

- move to the nearest clear spot
- keep away from buildings, trees and power lines
- drop to the ground

If you're in a car:

- slow down
- drive to a clear place away from buildings, trees and power lines
- stay in the car with your seatbelt on until the shaking stops

If you're in a lift:

- stop at the nearest floor and get out

After the earthquake finishes:

- be aware of possible tsunami risks (see below)
- prepare for travel delays
- reconfirm your travel arrangements
- check your accommodation with travel agents and tour operators

Tsunamis

Because of the region's earthquake risk, tsunamis could happen.

All of New Zealand's coastline is at risk of a tsunami.

The [Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management](#) issues tsunami alerts on its website. These are also broadcast by New Zealand media.

A tsunami could arrive within minutes. There may not be time for an official warning.

Move immediately to high ground, or as far inland as possible, if you're near the coast and you:

- feel a strong earthquake that makes it hard to stand up
- feel a weak, rolling earthquake that lasts a minute or more
- see a sudden rise or fall in sea level
- hear loud and unusual noises from the sea

Don't wait for official warnings.

Walk or bike if possible because of potential road congestion.

Volcanoes

A volcano erupted on White Island in the Bay of Plenty on 9 December 2019. Further eruptions are possible. Avoid the area and follow the advice of local authorities.

Visit [GeoNet](#) for information about volcanic activity at:

- Mt Ruapehu
- Mt Tongariro
- White Island
- other active volcanic sites

Volcanic eruptions can happen at any time.

If you plan to visit active volcanoes or surrounding areas:

- monitor the [GeoNet](#) website
- get local advice first

Severe weather

Weather conditions can change quickly. Severe weather can occur.

Creeks and rivers can experience [flash flooding](#) after heavy rains.

Rapid weather changes could leave you stranded or injured, particularly if you're in a remote area.

Monitor weather conditions, forecasts and warnings from [Metservice](#).

Take extra care if you're climbing, hiking or in a remote area. See [Travel](#)

Bushfires

Parts of New Zealand experience [bushfires](#) in hot, dry conditions.

If there's a bushfire, follow local advice.

Health

Travel insurance



Get comprehensive [travel insurance](#) before you leave. Your policy needs to cover all overseas medical costs, including medical evacuation. The Australian Government won't pay for these costs.

If you can't afford travel insurance, you can't afford to travel. This applies to everyone, no matter how healthy and fit you are.

If you're not insured, you may have to pay many 1000s of dollars up-front for medical care.

Confirm:

- what activities and care your policy covers
- that your insurance covers you for the whole time you'll be away

Physical and mental health



Consider your physical and mental health before you travel, especially if you have an existing medical condition.

See your doctor or travel clinic to:

- have a basic health check-up
- ask if your travel plans may affect your health
- plan any vaccinations you need

Do this at least 8 weeks before you leave.

If you need counselling services in New Zealand, contact:

- Lifeline – 0800 543 354 or free text HELP (4357)
- Suicide Crisis Helpline – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)
- Healthline – 0800 611 116
- Samaritans – 0800 726 666

More information:

- [General health advice](#)
- [International travel and health](#)

Medication



Not all medication available over the counter or by prescription in Australia is available in other countries. Some may even be considered illegal or a controlled substance, even if prescribed by an Australian doctor.

If you plan to bring medication, check if it's legal in New Zealand. Take enough legal medication for your trip.

Carry a copy of your prescription or a letter from your doctor stating:

- what the medication is
- how much you'll take
- that it's for personal use

More information:

- [New Zealand Customs Service](#)
- [Medicare Australia](#)
- [Medication](#)

Health risks



COVID-19

New Zealand has confirmed cases of coronavirus ([COVID-19](#)). If you have symptoms of respiratory illness, contact your doctor before travelling. See [Travel](#) for details on entry restrictions.

Measles

There's an outbreak of measles in New Zealand. Make sure your vaccinations are up to date before you travel. Follow advice from local health authorities.

More information:

- [2019 Measles Outbreak Information](#) (New Zealand Ministry of Health)
- [Measles outbreaks and recommendations for Australian travellers](#) (Department of Health)
- [Measles immunisation service](#) (Department of Health)

Medical care



Medical facilities

Medical facilities and services are of a similar standard to those in Australia.

Reciprocal health care

New Zealand and Australia have a [reciprocal health care agreement](#). This lets Australians access public medical facilities and care.

It doesn't:

- include ongoing treatment of existing health conditions
- cover extra accommodation costs or flights for family members
- cover flights to Australia
- replace the need for travel insurance

To access services under the agreement:

- show your current Australian passport or evidence of permanent residency
- show your valid Medicare card

More information:

- [New Zealand Ministry of Health](#)
- [Medicare Australia](#)

Accident Compensation Corporation

If you're injured in an accident, the [Accident Compensation Corporation \(ACC\)](#) covers the costs of hospital treatment.

The cover provided by ACC:

- offers injury cover on a 'no-fault' basis — this means accident victims don't have a legal right to sue a third party
- ends once you've left New Zealand
- doesn't replace your need for [travel insurance](#)

Local laws

Local law



You're subject to all local laws and penalties, including those that may appear harsh by Australian standards. Research local laws before travelling.

If you're arrested or jailed, the Australian Government will do what it can to help you under our [Consular Services Charter](#). But we can't get you out of trouble or out of jail.

Drugs

Penalties for possessing and using drugs may include fines and prison sentences.

More information:

- [Carrying or using drugs](#)

Alcohol laws

You'll need photo ID to buy alcohol or enter licensed premises.

You can't use your Australian driver's licence.

Approved IDs include:

- current passport
- current New Zealand driver's licence
- Kiwi Access Card

More information:

- [Approved ID](#)

Australian laws



Some Australian criminal laws still apply when you're overseas. If you break these laws, you may face prosecution in Australia.

More information:

- [Staying within the law and respecting customs](#)

Dual citizenship



New Zealand recognises dual nationality.

If you're an Australian-New Zealand dual citizen, use your [Australian passport](#) to enter and leave Australia.

More information:

- [Dual nationals](#)

Travel

Every country or territory decides who can enter or exit through its borders.

Make sure you meet all entry and exit conditions. If you don't, the Australian Government can't help you.

Visas



Visa conditions

You don't usually need a visa to visit New Zealand if you:

- travel on your Australian passport, or
- have a current Australian resident return visa

However, check your visa requirements if you've been:

- convicted of any crimes, or
- deported from any country

In these cases, contact a [New Zealand Visa Application Centre](#) for advice well before you travel.

New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority

Most Australian citizens and residents don't need a visa to enter. The exceptions are if you have a criminal record or if you've been deported from any country.

From 1 October 2019, you may need to follow new visa rules.

Australian permanent residents need to apply online for a New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority (NZETA) to enter New Zealand.

Australian citizens are exempt from this rule.

More information:

- [New Zealand Immigration](#)

New Zealand Visa Application Centre

Suite 9.03, Level 9,
139 Macquarie Street
Sydney, New South Wales 2000
Phone: 1800 388 718
Website: www.ttsnzvisa.com
Email : ttsydneynz@ttsvisas.com

Entry and exit conditions can change at short notice. Contact [NZ Immigration](#) for details about visas, currency, customs and quarantine rules.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)



New Zealand has placed temporary entry restrictions in response to COVID-19.

The restrictions apply to [three categories of countries and territories](#). Category 1b and 2 will be effective from 11:59pm Sunday 15 March 2020.

Category 1a: Iran and mainland China (does not include Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan).

Foreign nationals will not be allowed to enter New Zealand if they have been present in, or transited through, Category 1a countries and territories, within 14 days before departing for New Zealand.

Australian citizens and permanent residents are not subject to travel restrictions for Category 1a countries and territories if New Zealand is their primary place of established residence.

Category 1b: all countries (including Australia) not named in Category 1a or Category 2.

Anyone travelling from Category 1b countries will be required to self-isolate for 14 days on arrival in New Zealand. This applies to foreign nationals, New Zealand citizens and Australian citizens.

Category 2: Pacific countries, not including Australia.

Anyone travelling from a Category 2 country or territory will not be required to self-isolate, unless they display COVID-19 symptoms within 14 days of departing for NZ.

Cruise ships have been banned from coming to New Zealand, until 30 June 2020. Quarantine measures allow authorities to quarantine vessels or aircraft when they come into New Zealand, where there are grounds to believe there may be cases of COVID-19 on board. The public health emergency contingency plans will be activated if a person on board the aircraft or vessel is suspected of having COVID-19.

Entry restrictions can change at short notice.

More information:

- New Zealand Ministry of Health - [COVID-19 – Countries and areas of concern](#)
- New Zealand Ministry of Health - [COVID-19 \(novel coronavirus\)](#)
- New Zealand Immigration - [Coronavirus update: INZ's response](#)

Other formalities



Quarantine regulations

New Zealand has strict biosecurity rules.

If you don't declare items for quarantine, you'll get an instant fine.

If you make a false statement, you'll face heavy fines and prison sentences.

Electronic devices

When you arrive, customs officers may check electronic devices they suspect are being used in criminal activity. Devices may include:

- mobile phones
- portable tablets
- hard drives
- laptops
- digital cameras

Passport



Validity

Some countries won't let you enter unless your passport is valid for 6 months after you plan to leave that country. This can apply even if you're just transiting or stopping over.

Some foreign governments and airlines apply the rule inconsistently. Travellers can receive conflicting advice from different sources.

You can end up stranded if your passport is not valid for more than 6 months.

The Australian Government does not set these rules. Check your passport's expiry date before you travel. If you're not sure it'll be valid for long enough, consider getting [a new passport](#).

More information:

- [NZ Immigration](#)

Lost or stolen passport

Your passport is a valuable document. It's attractive to people who may try to use your identity to commit crimes.

Some people may try to trick you into giving them your passport. Always keep it in a safe place.

If your passport is lost or stolen, tell the Australian Government as soon as possible:

- In Australia, contact the [Australian Passport Information Service](#).
- If you're overseas, contact the nearest [Australian embassy or consulate](#).

Money



The local currency is the New Zealand Dollar (\$NZ).

Declare all amounts over \$NZ10,000 or equivalent on arrival and departure. This covers all forms of currency, not only cash.

ATM availability is similar to Australia.

You can use debit or credit cards in most places as you would in Australia.

Contact your bank to let them know you'll use your cards overseas.

Local travel



Driving permit

You can drive for up to 12 months with your Australian driver's licence.

After that, you'll need to get a local licence.

More information:

- [Driver licences](#)

Road travel

City roads and highways are in good condition.

Ice, snow, fog, high winds and roaming animals can cause hazardous conditions. Heavy rain can cause landslides across roads.

Outside major cities, there aren't many motorways. Overtaking opportunities are limited.

Prepare for longer travel times than in Australia.

Railway crossings don't always have barriers, particularly in country areas.

If you're driving in mountain areas or to ski fields, be aware that roads:

- are often narrow and unpaved
- may not have safety barriers
- may require you to use snow chains
- may only be accessible by 4WD

It's illegal to use a mobile phone while driving, but there is an exemption for 111 calls in genuine emergencies. Hands-free devices and 2-way radio are permitted.

If you plan to drive in New Zealand:

- learn the [local road rules](#) before driving
- be careful if there's ice, snow, fog or high winds
- check for road closures and warnings with the [New Zealand Transport Agency](#) and [New Zealand Automobile Association](#)
- equip yourself for current and possible weather conditions

More information:

- [Driving or riding](#)
- [Driving in New Zealand](#)

Motorcycles

Make sure your travel insurance covers using a motorbike, quad bike or similar vehicle.

Always wear a helmet.

Taxis

Taxis are generally reliable. The standards are similar to in Australia.

The [New Zealand Transport Authority](#) regulates taxis and rideshare apps.

Public transport

Buses, trains and ferries operate throughout New Zealand. State-run services are also regulated by the New Zealand Transport Authority.

Take care of your belongings on public transport.

More information:

- [Transport and getting around safely](#)

Sea travel

Several international cruise lines stop over in New Zealand.

More information:

- [Going on a cruise](#)

Air travel

DFAT doesn't provide information on the safety of individual commercial airlines or flight paths.

Check [New Zealand's air safety profile](#) with the Aviation Safety Network.

More information:

- [Air travel](#)

Local contacts

Emergencies



Emergencies

Depending on what you need, contact your:

- family and friends
- travel agent
- insurance provider
- employer
- airline

Fire and rescue services

Call 111.

Medical emergencies

Call 111.

Police

Call 111 or contact the nearest police station.

Call 105 or go [online](#) for Police non-emergencies.

Always get a police report when you report a crime.

Your insurer should have a 24-hour emergency number.

Tourism



Contact your provider with any complaints about tourist services or products.

You can also lodge a complaint with [New Zealand Consumer Affairs](#).

Consular contacts



Read the [Consular Services Charter](#) for what the Australian Government can and can't do to help you overseas.

For consular help, contact the [Australian High Commission in Wellington](#), or the Australian Consulate-General in Auckland.

Australian High Commission, Wellington

72-76 Hobson Street

Thorndon

Wellington, New Zealand

Phone: (+64 4) 473 6411

Fax: (+64 4) 498 7103

Website: newzealand.hjghcommission.gov.au

Facebook: [Australia in New Zealand](#)

Twitter: [@AusHCNZ](#)

Australian Consulate-General

Level 7, Price Waterhouse Coopers Tower
186-194 Quay Street
Auckland City, New Zealand
Phone: (+64 9) 921 8800
Fax: (+64 9) 921 8820

Check the High Commission website for details about opening hours and any temporary closures.

24-hour Consular Emergency Centre

In a consular emergency, if you can't contact an embassy, call the 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre on:

- +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas
- 1300 555 135 in Australia



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade