

13 May 2020

VODAFONE PREPARES FOR LEVEL TWO

Contact tracing and protective measures in place to prevent against COVID-19

Consistent with its cautious approach to COVID-19 to date, Vodafone New Zealand is taking extra steps to protect staff and customers throughout Alert Level Two. From Thursday 14 May the digital services company will open offices and retail stores throughout the country, but with a series of additional measures introduced to avoid the risk of contagion.

Vodafone NZ's new Chief People Officer Jodie King says the business will continue to prioritise the health and safety of employees and customers while keeping New Zealand connected.

"Although we can celebrate low numbers of Coronavirus throughout Aotearoa at the moment, we are acutely aware that it only takes one case to put many at risk," she says.

"For this reason we are doing everything we can to keep our people and customers safe while still keeping up with the increased demand on our networks and customer service queues."

Only half of employees in the office, contact tracing introduced

Vodafone NZ's office buildings will reopen from Thursday morning but will only cater to a maximum of half of the company's employees at any one time. Teams are asked to ensure no more than fifty percent of the team are in the same office on the same day, with the remaining team members working from home or one of the other office locations.

"In order to ensure we can maintain physical distancing our offices will be only set up for fifty percent of our staff," says King.

"Only every second desk is available for use, employees will be asked to only use one desk per day and to ensure they completely clear it at the end of each day so that it can be thoroughly cleaned. Chairs, monitors, docking stations and other work equipment have been removed from every second desk to encourage staff to maintain recommended physical distancing."

Throughout lockdown Vodafone NZ has utilised a phone application to track the health and safety of its employees. In Alert Level Two this technology will now also be used for employee contact tracing on site, keeping track of areas that the employee spends time in and the people they come in contact with.

"Since the end of March, our compulsory staff app asks Vodafone employees four health and safety questions every weekday morning, so we can follow up on any wellbeing red flags that arise," says King.

"From this Thursday 14 May not only will our employees be required to complete the wellbeing check, but we will also be asking them to 'check-in' to a desk and 'tag' any employee they spend any more than 15 minutes in close contact with. The app and QR codes makes this process really simple and the data will be key to identifying and alerting any affected people should an employee come into contact with COVID-19.

"Pre-lockdown, the majority of Vodafone's employees enjoyed our flexible work policies and for many lockdown will have reinforced the benefits working from home can provide. We are just as aware that there may be people who, for personal reasons, may not feel comfortable entering the office environment just yet so employees may continue to work from home at Alert Level Two if they would like to."

"However for those that do wish to return to the office we are committed to making that environment as safe and COVID-free as we can."

Retail stores open to the public, with restrictions

Throughout Alert Levels Four and Three, certain Vodafone NZ retail stores operated as [Essential Connectivity Hubs](#), with strict contactless restrictions and booking-only appointments. Now, under Alert Level Two

guidelines, Vodafone retail stores throughout the country will be able to open their doors, however with additional safety measures and contact tracing in place.

A virtual queuing system will see customers entering details via a QR code outside the store, with notifications sent to the customer when they are able to enter. Details gathered will be securely stored and only used to inform the Ministry of Health should a COVID-related case occur that may affect that customer.

Inside the store, physical distancing will be encouraged through clear signage and one staff member will be assigned to help each customer with requests. Handset demos will be conducted by staff only, hand sanitiser and cough guards have been put in place, and personal protective equipment (PPE) is available for staff that would like to wear it.

“We want all our customers to feel confident to enter our stores with the knowledge we have the utmost respect for their health and safety,” says Vodafone NZ Consumer Director, Carolyn Luey.

“We will also only open stores if we know we can do so safely and we have enough staff rostered to do so, so we encourage customers to check our [opening hours and visiting guidelines](#) online before going to a store. Of course all [our digital channels](#) also remain open should our customers prefer to interact with us online.

“Our teams continue to assess Vodafone’s response to the threat of COVID-19 and adherence to Government guidelines in relation to how we operate. We look forward to lifting restrictions around staff and customer interactions as the virus threat decreases and New Zealanders can enjoy the freedom of a safe, healthy environment once more.”

- ends -

About Vodafone NZ

Vodafone NZ is one of New Zealand’s leading digital services and connectivity companies, and we believe every New Zealander will thrive with access to the world’s best digital services. We offer more than 3 million connections to Consumer and Business customers, and our existing mobile network covers 98.5% of where Kiwis live, work and play. Vodafone New Zealand is owned by Infratil and Brookfield Asset Management. We are now a partner market in the Vodafone Group, one of the world’s largest telecommunications companies. For more information, please visit www.vodafone.co.nz

For more information, please contact:

Rebecca Huang
rebecca.huang@vodafone.com
021 1122 720