

## Government's three phase public health response to Omicron

**The Government has announced a three phase plan aimed to slow down and limit the spread of Omicron. We are currently in phase 1 of the plan, and as case numbers grow, will adjust into phases 2 and 3.**

**Key aspects of the three phases:**

### PHASE 1

The approach in phase 1 is to continue using tools to stamp out the virus. Anyone who is symptomatic is encouraged to be tested at a community testing station or at a primary health provider.

The isolation requirements in phase 1 is 14 days if you are a positive case, and 10 days if you are a close contact.

### PHASE 2

The objective in phase 2 is to slow the spread of the virus and protect vulnerable communities.

The isolation requirements will be reduced to 10 days for positive cases, and 7 days for close contacts.

Positive cases will be notified via text messages and directed to an online self-investigation tool.

Asymptomatic critical workers will be able to provide a negative Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) to return to work where they are a close contact of a case. They will undergo daily symptom checks and daily Rapid Antigen Tests prior to commencing work. The Government has indicated this will be used for people like our healthcare workers and those working in food supply and infrastructure who are key to the COVID-19 response and in ensuring New Zealanders can access the services they need.

### PHASE 3

When daily cases are in the thousands, we will transition into phase 3.

The definition of close contacts will change to household and household-like contacts only.

Symptomatic people, or priority populations may use Rapid Antigen Tests for diagnosis. Rapid Antigen Tests will be available at GPs, pharmacies, Community Testing Centres or workplaces for symptomatic or critical workers.

Only the highest risk contacts will be traced and required to isolate. Cases will be required to isolate for 10 days, and close contacts for 7 days. Cases will be encouraged to self-notify close contacts, and most would self-isolate at home with clinical and welfare support targeted based on need.

### Want to know more?

If you have any questions about the three phase plan, please contact our specialist [Litigation and Employment Team](#)