

## COVID-19 Measures for Business

Today's announcements by the government have set out the program for business support and operation for the next few months. Based on what we know so far, this is split in to three main parts:

1. Financial support for businesses whose income is diminished by the impact of the ongoing lockdown in Auckland.
2. A special fund for business advice and action, in the same manner as last year's fund.
3. Rules for operation in the three new stages of living with COVID-19 - the promised traffic light system.

We address each of these below, and advise who to contact in our firm if you require information or assistance about the first two items above.

We are aware that some clients have had assistance refused or retracted, mostly by Inland Revenue officers. If you find yourself in this situation, *please contact us*. The reasons given for refusal have mostly so far proven to be incorrect, and we are concerned about this trend.

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### Financial support for businesses whose income is diminished by the impact of the ongoing lockdown in Auckland:

The wage subsidy will continue as it is at present.

The extension to business support will be by way of the Resurgence Support Programme. The next round, on 29 October, will continue as usual. However, from 12 November, the RSP will be a **fortnightly** payment, and will be at the rate of:

- \$3,000 per business, and
- \$800 per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee up to 50 employees

These rates will continue until Auckland moves to the "Covid Protection Framework" - the new traffic light system (see below). Further developments and details will be announced, including what happens when we are in the new Red zone.

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**A special fund for business advice and action, in the same manner as last year's fund:**

The government has released a fund of \$16 million for business support and business mental health support through the Regional Business Partner Network.

A number of our clients applied for this support last year through us. Last year it covered not only accountancy, but also marketing and other business services.

The new fund enables application for \$3,000 for business advice, and a further \$4,000 to implement the plan arising. This is full funding, not a 50% contribution which is usually the case with RBP funding.

From our experience last year, we advise you to **get in early**.

We will provide further details on how to apply next week.

As part of this fund (not clear whether it is separate), \$10 million will be available for mental health and wellbeing, and this will be administered by the Auckland EMA and Chamber of Commerce.

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**Rules for operation in the three new stages of living with COVID-19 - the promised traffic light system:**

Each DHB area must be 90% double vaxxed before we can move to the Red state of the new framework. Greater Auckland needs 16,000 more first doses, then for everyone to get that second vaccination. Using this system, any future lockdowns will be highly targeted.

Covid Traffic Light System	Red	Orange	Green
Covid cases	Spreading	(Not stated)	Few cases
Masks compulsory	Everywhere	(Not stated)	Flights
Vaxxed businesses	Open with limits	Lifted limits	Open
Non-vaxxed business (by choice)	Open with public health measures	Open with public health measures	Open with limits
Working from home	Encouraged	(Not stated)	(Not stated)

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**Summary:**

Today is a huge day for announcements, and we have tried to cover off the key information for business. It does not deal with low income support - now a single person earning less than \$800, or a couple earning less than \$1,600, per week, will be eligible for further support. We have also not covered the Maori health initiatives.

Hopefully what we have included will be of use in planning for the next few months. We will provide updates and corrections as they are available.