

New Zealand

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<https://covid19.govt.nz>

Update 08/10/2021;

The PM 4/10 announced a slight relaxing of the Level 3 restrictions that are currently in place around Auckland.

Going forward, there are 3 steps before a possible change into Level 2 restrictions where caching would normally be able to continue. Over the last day or so, your New Zealand reviewers have reviewed the new more relaxed restrictions and to see if there is anything in them that would let us relax our views on whether geocaching is recommended.

Of the 3 Steps, based on the relaxations in place, we are happy to be able to say that geocaching will be encouraged at Step 1 (ie after 11:59pm tonight, 5th October) In saying that geocaching is encouraged, it is also important to remember that the Covid Level restrictions are still at Level 3 so we also ask you to follow those restrictions, which includes;

- social distancing at least 2 metres from people not within your bubble.
- Also please try to keep your caching to lower risk areas so the emergency services don't need to come rescue you.

At this stage, we are still going to hold off on new cache publications and are still discussing among ourselves on when these will start up again.

The Current Level 3 restrictions in place for parts of the Waikato and Northland still apply - no geocaching allowed. To know the current areas in different alert levels go to [Alert Level boundary map | Unite against COVID-19 \(covid19.govt.nz\)](#)

Please remember to be kind to each other.

The following is to keep the wider community and players safe and has been prepared by the NZ Reviewers in line with discussions with the government advisers (covid19.govt.nz) and is supported by Geocaching HQ.

Level 3 and 4:

NOTE IF IN THE EVENT WE RETURN TO LEVEL 3 or Level 4 (LOCKDOWN) IN THE COUNTRY OR REGION YOU ARE IN, YOU SHOULD NOT BE FINDING PHYSICAL WAYPOINTS or GEOCACHES, or PLACING GEOCACHES or ATTENDING EVENTS.

Whilst people should not be caching, overarching rules including rules over deleting logs stand, along with conduct in terms of respecting each other. We should not have to say educate and avoid/walk away from disagreements and avoid witch hunts/public shaming others. Be kind to each other.

FOR LEVEL 2:

<https://covid19.govt.nz>;

- **If you are unwell - DO NOT GO GEOCACHING! STAY HOME!**
- Keep your distance from other people in public.
- Wash your hands. Wash your hands, consider wiping down touched surfaces, WASH YOUR HANDS. If you plan on wearing gloves there are some good online videos on how to safely use them - gloves and masks do not remove the need to wash your hands.
- Please note not all cachers log at the time of their find, so treat any caches found as if they had only just been touched.
- Take your own pens and minimise touching these and other swag items in caches - of if you touch them think about wiping them down and Wash your Hands.
- We recommend you consider holding onto TBs for now. But if you are set on moving TBs; wash these down and maybe have a zip lock bag to hand to put them in so you can keep them separate from other items or if possible leave them in a clear bag (where number is visible without having to open) so anyone else going for them can wipe down the bag. Soft materials are not easy to clean so please make sure these are bagged as noted.

New Zealand Reviewers

[TheCur8or](#) - South Island, [TheCod diwompler](#) - North Island (South), [L adyPolgara](#) - North Island (North)

About This Guide

The local laws and guidelines for geocaching placement vary from place to place. As community reviewers learn geocache placement policies for a certain location, they can add it here. This site may not be a complete or accurate list of land policies. These policies are made by the land owner or manager, they are neither the reviewer's nor Geocaching HQ's. This guide is just for reference, if no policies for the area you're looking for are listed, that doesn't mean no policies exist. You must still obtain permission to place your geocache from the landowner or land manager, comply with all applicable laws, and follow the [Geocaching Listing Requirements](#).

If you have an update, email the community reviewer(s) listed.



- Caches held since lockdown (Levels 3 & 4) will be published - mostly in the daytime and over several days, please be patient with reviewers as we have a backlog to get through. If you meet others at a cache please remember the social distancing rules and be kind. Note Reviewers and HQ do not get involved in FTF (joint or otherwise) disputes.
- Limits on Social gatherings. When social gatherings are limited to under 100 people. This applies to Geocachers too looking or placing caches. Now as per HQ rules we are not allowed to limit number of attendees to events (we reconfirmed this with HQ 11 May 2020) - so, no events are allowed in these scenarios. Note we are keen to meet up with our caching buddies too and whilst its disappointing, safety first. CO's who have events during these limited numbers are asked to postpone their event and this can be done by contacting a reviewer. One of the local reviewers will try and contact the CO but it can be a busy time so please be proactive.
- If your cache is based in a local building check to see what they are doing and if necessary (keep) disable(d), we promise to go easier with the archiving tool for these caches.
- The maintenance sweeper and cache reaper will also be appearing in Level 2. However if you are not well, do not feel comfortable or safe to go check on your geocaches we will be making sure to take this into account and allowing for extended timeframes. However, this will require CO's communicating with the reviewers posting notes.
- Deleting logs - please note the official rules still apply and logs should only be deleted if geocachers have not signed the logbook.
- Please remember to be kind when undertaking this.
- As we have seen the rules change quickly and to help educate geocachers, we ask CO's to consider including at the top of their cache descriptions or post a note; "For information on Geocaching during Covid19 in New Zealand please visit wiki.groundspeak.com/display/GEO/New+Zealand."
- If you are not sure on what the level is in the area you are currently in and the activities you can undertake to get a cache (hiking, biking, kayaking etc) then a good simple guide can be found at www.covid19outdoors.nz
- For updates - you can either place this page on a watchlist or follow the reviewers page on Facebook; 'Frie-NZ of the Frog'
- Remember to look after yourself and each other, be kind and be safe.

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And, you agree to keep content current by checking back regularly for updates.

Events during Level 2;

- Event Caches at Level 2 can only occur whilst the government guidelines allow social gatherings of 100 people (or more) . This means only outdoor events (excluding Megas) can take place.
- As the government has restricted indoor venue gatherings to 50 people, this is below the social gathering number below 100 required for events to occur, any events (even those published) must not go ahead during this time, as under event rules COs cannot limit the number of attendees. Based on the average attendees of events in New Zealand we are not expecting any event to reach 50 attendees, however this cap is on all people at a venue not just a single social group.
- We have been told by HQ to have a single rule for events (covering events, CITO's and community celebrations) and based on the government rules this 100 social gathering applies to events held outside as well as indoors. No exceptions.

Planning an event?

If you are looking at hosting an event, we are recommending people consider the following and where possible include the following in the descriptions and or reviewer note;

- Logbooks - some people might not feel comfortable signing an event logbook. It is not required under the rules and COs cannot refuse anyone's attended log who did turn up to the event.
- **We are seeking guidance but it appears there will be a requirement that a COVID QR is set up and visible for the events at Level 2** (and possibly 1) You can make a QR code at <https://covid19.govt.nz/business-and-money/businesses/get-your-qr-code-poster/> it is a temporary event. Please make sure you encourage everyone to scan.
- Outdoors; with the weather locations may not allow for social distancing, so please communicate this with attendees so they know they'll have no choice but to pack that umbrella.
- ~~Indoors; please ensure to communicate with the venue. Many café/restaurants will have limited seats and have their own H&S procedures. All attendees should know from the description and or event announcement the expectations, we encourage the CO to provide this before the start of the event.~~
- ~~Cafes/Restaurants etc with limited capacity many of these businesses need paying seats, and we cannot force/expect attendees to pay. Therefore, if you know from past events that many attendees will bring their own flask/sandwiches to an event then please think about alternatives, like BYO homemade or takeaways to a park.~~
- Whilst COs are not bouncers, they are expected to encourage all attendees to follow the guidelines of covid19.govt.nz; masks and social distancing etc. If people are not following the rules, the CO should ask them to stop or leave. If they do not then the event should be stopped immediately and all attendees advised to leave the area. This is important because if the reviewers or HQ hear that geocachers cannot attend events within guidelines of covid19.govt.nz, events might not be allowed under Level 2 and it could affect their status also at Level 1 if these guidelines are required.
- Please note if CO does not confirm they have/will be undertaking the above within their reviewer note, reviewers will likely ask for confirmation and this delay could result in the event not being published.

For attendees;

If you are looking at attending an event, we are recommending people consider the following ;

- **IF you are ill, stay home!**
- **If you have recently left Auckland area, have been informed you are a close contact or waiting for a covid19 test result back - don't be an egg and stay home!**
- Whilst logbooks are not required, QR codes are likely to be required. If you are not comfortable providing your details if you cannot scan then please note you may be asked to provide contact information like username. No other information is required as far as we can tell from covid.govt.nz . But please make sure your contact email on geocaching.com is up to date in case you need to be contacted.
- ~~If an event is within a business which has a policy requiring all entering to provide contact details or to use an app, all attendees should follow these rules. COs are being asked to communicate these in advance, so those not willing to follow these rules can decide not to attend.~~
- ~~All usernames should list the number of people (including muggles, children etc) attending the event so the CO can track numbers attending. Where possible please do not leave to last minute especially if a table booking is required.~~
- TB swaps - as mentioned on the wiki page above [<https://wiki.groundspeak.com/display/GEO/New+Zealand>] think about how this can be done safely - maybe for discoveries people could send the CO TB numbers and they can PM a list to attendees?
- Hand sanitiser is still a little like gold dust in areas, so please bring your own.
- If you are attending an event and you do not feel safe, then leave immediately. Where possible tell the CO. If you are voicing concerns please remember to be kind and if people continue (well we know the community would be disappointed) and you think it is not safe, leave. This is important because if geocachers cannot attend events within guidelines of [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz), events could be stopped under Level 2 and it could affect their status also at Level 1.

FOR LEVEL1:

NO restrictions on geocaching but;

- *If you are unwell - DO NOT GO GEOCACHING! STAY HOME!*
- *If you have just come into the country/been advised by a doctor then please follow any quarantine or isolations and do not go geocaching.*

Also recommend you;

- Wash your hands, Wash your hands and consider wiping down touched surfaces.
- Take your own pens and minimise touching these and other swag items in caches - of if you touch them think about wiping them down and Wash your Hands.

In the meantime, no matter the alert level; you can go to your workshop to work on those lingering cache ideas or work on those D5 puzzles.

If your cache is based in a local building check to see what they are doing and if necessary disable (we promise to go easier with the archiving tool for these caches).

Remember to look after yourself and each other, be kind and be safe.

If you have any queries feel free to message any of the reviewers.

Kauri Dieback

North Island cachers need to be aware of a serious danger currently threatening Kauri trees throughout the North Island. This information link <https://www.kauridieback.co.nz/> has details of the problem and what you can do to minimise the spread of the disease. For cache owners, it is important **NOT to go off the track to place caches** in certain forests.

Christchurch Flat Lands Residential Red Zone.

The Manager of Community and Customer Services for Crown Property, within Land Information New Zealand has been consulted and advised about geocaching and has no issues for having geocaches placed within the Flat Lands Red Zone, but the **Port Hills Red Zone is out of bounds** (This area has been zoned red because of the life risk posed by rock fall and/or cliff collapse, and land slips. Please note this is an extremely dangerous area for the general public – there are natural hazards present and heavy machinery may be in use.)

A Map of the red zones is available here, and the RedZone is a layer that can be added to the map.

<https://mapviewer.canterburymaps.govt.nz/?webmap=8e2a6565eb084801afec078813296080>

Caches within the Flat Lands Red Zone are to have this text added to the listing.

'This geocache is placed within the Christchurch Flat Lands Residential Red Zone. Please follow all warning signs that you may come across. If there are areas that are fenced off with no access, then this is for a reason. There are to be no motorised vehicles (cars, motorbikes etc) used to travel through the Red Zone land or on roads where barriers are in place. People used to live in these areas, so please be respectful when in the Red Zone.'

Power boxes, Utility Boxes and Phone Booths

As these are owned and maintained by their respective companies. Some have warning signs of different types and some don't.

Power boxes/Transformers

"Geocaches or any other material should not be attached to any electricity reticulation or equipment and we also encourage the public to keep clear of any electricity or other infrastructure. There is a hazard if people are looking for the geocache feel for boxes in or under parts of the equipment. While the equipment is basically safe and is regularly inspected, we cannot guarantee this if there is a fault or damage that has not been identified.

It should be noted that transformers have 11,000 Volt wiring present inside the case."

Phone Booths

"Our (Spark) preference is that the Geocaching community not affix containers to the phone booths, magnetically or otherwise. While I don't believe the containers would cause any technical disruption to the service, or control panel access issues, it's more about setting a precedent of allowing the public to place items on the booths - however unobtrusive they might be. Also, the booths are regularly serviced by maintenance crews so which would probably result in a higher rate of container loss than some of the other locations your players use."

NZTA and local road structures

NZTA and local authorities require all users to ensure the safety of others. Geocachers (hidiers and finders) have a responsibility to protect ourselves and other road users. We can do this by;

- Not placing any containers on bridges or structures which could drop on to live traffic lanes/hard shoulder (if any are found NZTA have stated before they will revoke rights for geocaches to be placed in their corridor.) If paths below think about the damage it could cause if it was to be knocked off and someone was below.
- Caches should not be in areas where there are no public access allowances i.e. motorways, gated walkways
- Ensuring caches are placed in an area where there is safe parking.
- Think about the safety of others, can someone slow down or reach the cache without causing a distraction which can cause a crash?

Remember if co-ordinates are a bit out due to coverage/proximity to buildings or the hints are not explicit - would someone search in wrong area and cause damage to anyone above or below.