

3 April 2020

Andrew Coster
Commissioner of Police
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Tēnā koe Andy,

Essential travel during COVID-19 Alert Level 4

As part of the Justice Sector's response to COVID-19, staff and Deputy Secretaries across Police, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Corrections, Crown Law, and Oranga Tamariki, in consultation with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and the State Services Commission, have developed an approach to help address the issue of transportation of people interacting with the justice system.

As the Secretary for Justice, I am required to determine what constitutes essential travel in the justice system during COVID-19 Alert level 4. Based on the cross-sector advice, it is my view that travel by defendants, prisoners and young people from Court, prison or a Youth Justice placement to their residence can be classified as essential travel.

This exception to the level 4 travel restrictions extends to whānau and other support people travelling to pick up and deliver defendants, prisoners and young people for these purposes. While many journeys from Court to residences will be local, journeys from prisons or Youth Justice placements to addresses could cover long distances (for example from Hawkes Bay Prison to Gisborne; and from Christchurch Mens Prison to the West Coast and Tasman regions). I request that Police, in recommending bail residences, minimise the distances required to be travelled.

It is not practicable for individual letters or other documents to be issued to people who are travelling for this purpose. If there is any doubt about whether travel is legitimate, enquiries may be made with the relevant prison or court, or with Oranga Tamariki in respect of young people.

I request that you pass this information on to your relevant staff. I am also sharing this letter with other relevant parties (eg the New Zealand Law Society, judiciary, Oranga Tamariki and Ministry of Justice staff) so these arrangements can, as far as possible, be made in advance.

As with other essential functions, the movement of people should be carried out in a way that minimises risk and I note you have stated the Police will manage the movement of releasees in accordance with Ministry of Health Guidelines. Further guidance on protecting drivers and use of transport vehicles can be found at the following link:

<https://www.transport.govt.nz/about/covid-19-alert-level-4-transport-essential-services/>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Nāku noa, nā



Andrew Kibblewhite
Secretary for Justice

cc: Chief District Court Judge
Una Jagose, Solicitor-General
Jeremy Lightfoot, Chief Executive, Department of Corrections
Grainne Moss, Chief Executive, Oranga Tamariki
Tiana Epati, President, New Zealand Law Society
Jacqui Thompson, Acting Executive Director, New Zealand Bar Association
Peter Hutchison, Director, Public Defence Service