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Omicron brings different challenges



Kia ora tatou,

Although the infection rates of the Omicron variant have not as yet reached predicted levels, many businesses are preparing for when, not if, a positive case or close contact is confirmed within their ranks. The uncertainty that this brings adds another challenge and layer of complexity to business continuity for all concerned.

The ever-changing landscape which has seen New Zealand move into Phase Two of the Omicron response means that employers and employees alike have another set of rules and regulations to try and understand and implement. This latest transition to different guidelines has, as ever, thrown up a number of questions for business owners regarding their obligations and what support is available to them and their staff should a positive case be identified in their business.

Business North Harbour is hosting an online [Harbour Happy Hour](#) session tomorrow, Thursday 17th February, from 12.00pm to 1.00pm, with subject matter experts including [Emma Monsellier](#) (Director, Monsellier Law Employment) and [Denise Bayne](#) (Manager Regional Services, Ministry of Social Development) who will give guidance on a range of key issues around the latest isolation rules and Government support for business along with some HR and employment law considerations. I would encourage as many members as possible to join us for this informative online meeting.

I look forward to seeing you online tomorrow and the Team at BNH wish you all well as collectively we look to navigate our way through the ongoing disruption caused by the pandemic.

Ngā mihi mahana,

Kevin O'Leary

General Manager, Business North Harbour



[Register](#)

Omicron response moving into new phase

Please keep our workplace safe

Find out more at [Covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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New Zealand is still early in its Omicron outbreak and cases will grow further. As the number of Omicron cases rise, we are adjusting our response in order to slow the spread of the virus and keep our health services and communities protected.

New Zealand moved to a new phase of its Omicron response yesterday at 11:59pm. In this phase, the period of self-isolation for people who test positive for COVID-19 reduced from 14 to 10 days. The period of self-isolation for their household contacts has reduced to 10 days unless they themselves test positive. The period of self-isolation for close contacts has reduced from 10 to 7 days. This will apply also to MIQ, meaning that people who are eligible to travel from Australia to New Zealand on the 27th February will only have to isolate for 7 days.

People should develop a plan for when they need to isolate, and identify a buddy who can drop off essential items if needed. Anyone who experiences symptoms that get worse while they're isolating, particularly breathlessness, should call Healthline immediately on 0800 611 116. Find out more at www.covid19.govt.nz/prepare

Testing & returning to work during Omicron



At each of the three phases to the Omicron response, there are different requirements for businesses, including testing and how long cases need to isolate for. This is to better enable critical workforces to continue operating through a widespread community outbreak of the Omicron variant. Click [here](#) for information on the following;

- Businesses can continue to operate under Red
- Managing workers who are COVID-19 cases, contacts or have symptoms
- 'Bubble of one'
- Close Contact Exemption Scheme
- Mask wearing

Click [here](#) for COVID-19 support information for employers.

Upcoming Workshops, Webinars & Events

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Register

Free business mentoring – eligibility extended



We know some small business owners in Auckland are doing it tough right now, while others are busier than ever. If you could do with some extra support in 2022, sign-up now for [Auckland Unlimited's](#) free business mentoring initiative with an expert advisor, supported by nine local boards across Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

Auckland Unlimited has recently increased the size of businesses eligible for this initiative to businesses of up to ten employees, meaning more Auckland businesses are now eligible. Delivered by [Business Mentors New Zealand](#), eligible small business owners can be provided with up to 12 months of support to help grow, solve business challenges, and build their skills. Register [here](#).

Connected.govt.nz - Connecting you to support for mahi & training



New Zealanders have a new way to find out about the services available from government agencies to help them explore jobs, study, training or business support. Launched in August 2020, **Connected** is an all-of-government service that provides information on government support such as:

- [Job vacancies](#)
- [Study and training options, including support for apprenticeships](#)
- [Careers advice](#)
- [Finding staff](#)
- [Business support](#)

Check out Connected's Auckland business support regional page [here](#). The Connected service includes a [website](#), phone line (0800 264 737) and Connected centres in 35 of the Ministry of Social Development's sites and three Jobs and Skills Hubs sites. Click [here](#) to view the Auckland Connected Overview.

Auckland Council's focus on reducing construction & demolition waste



It might surprise some people to know that the greatest volume of waste in the Auckland region comes from construction and demolition, more than double the total waste from all household

collections in the region.

Auckland produces around 600,000 tonnes of construction and demolition waste each year. That is the equivalent of 23,155 shipping containers. An average new house build produces 4.5 tonnes of waste, with materials worth more than \$31,000 if they were saved rather than sent to landfill. To put it into perspective, you'd have to set your kerbside bin out weekly for more than 30 years to generate that much waste.

Qualitative research undertaken by Auckland Council to better understand sentiment towards waste reduction has revealed that any changes to the methods used to deal with waste needs to clearly articulate the industry benefits, ensure external market structures provide the capability to act sustainably, and be backed by regulation. Contractors and builders are also wary of adding time, complexity, and risk to the project. Read more [here](#).

Is your workplace relocating? Please let us know & be in to win!



Has your workplace recently relocated or are you in the process of relocating shortly? Have you recently purchased or sold a property within the North Harbour BID? If so, BNH would like to know so that we can keep our member records up-to-date.

As a small thank you for keeping us informed, you will go into the draw for one of 3 x \$20 vouchers to your favourite North Harbour eatery! Please [email BNH](#) to notify us of your movements. Also, please don't forget to utilise our [Office Inorganic Collection service](#).

Get going by bike this summer with free adult bike skills courses



Auckland Transport's great range of free bike courses suit every ability and are perfect if:

- you're new to riding or it's been a while since you've been on a bike
- or you're ready to progress to riding on the road and in busier situations
- or you want to learn some basic maintenance like how to fix a puncture

Fancy trying an e-bike? AT have courses for e-bikes available too. For more information on what course is best for you, for course schedules, and to register, please click [here](#).

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