

Volunteering During COVID 19

Thank you for your enthusiasm and aroha to help our community in these difficult and rapidly evolving times. Please visit <https://covid19.govt.nz/> for the latest alert level and the measures in place.

Community systems take time to coordinate so please don't assume that nothing is happening because you have not heard. Civil Defence Emergency Management is working in the background to coordinate welfare support at both the local and national level.

Civil Defence Otago is working with Volunteering Central and Volunteering Otago to provide safe and coordinated volunteer support at this time.

This is what we know

At alert levels 3 and 4, only essential services and service providers can continue to operate with face-to-face services and will support our at-risk population (e.g. the home-based health system, and Ministry of Social Development support for beneficiaries).

Community organisations, while a valuable service, are **not** in the essential service provider category.

This means that volunteer efforts and community initiatives that involve direct physical contact with people are prohibited. This is due to the risk of unintentional transmission of the virus occurring from activities such as door knocking, particularly to the most at-risk members of our communities.

Once the alert level reduces there may be an opportunity to mobilise volunteers to provide more targeted community support.

Things you and/or your organisation can do at level 3 or 4:

- Provide communication and social connection through telephoning, skype or other non-physical contact means (you need to be clear, when making contact, on what the call is about).
 - o If the call is for social connection, then carry on.
 - o If the call is about welfare support, then ask yourself:
 - § Do you provide the service? (i.e. helping order groceries on-line)
 - § Is the request beyond the ability of your organisation to manage?
 - § If so, is the request being forwarded onto another agency and do you have a work-flow/ process to ensure this information is followed through on?

- Register to volunteer through Volunteer Otago:
 - **Dunedin, Clutha & Waitaki:**
<https://forms.gle/ddVFHKTJaYyqhaYs9>
 - **QLDC & Central Otago:**
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/13LlV51mtWykA0U5v1SdlKzfggf0spL8KpWjhKLxAIU/viewform?edit_requested=true

Make sure you:

- Keep a record of who you are contacting and who you are supporting (this can be as simple as a spreadsheet).
- Refer any at-risk person with health needs to the Healthline 0800 358 5453.
- For any financial needs they should call the Government Helpline 0800 779 997.

Things to keep yourself safe:

- Run through your checklist on what you need for yourself and your family to stay safe.
- Only take on a little bit and make sure you can sustain that level before you take on a little more.
- Do one thing well before moving onto the next.

The No-Go zone. Things that put you and/or others at risk:

- No door knocking.
- Do not provide support if you are unwell.