

Response To Covid-19 Virus Policy

Authorised by	Chief Executive Officer & General Manager
Effective	March 2020
Latest version	31st March 2020
Associated documents	
Author	CEO, GM, Operations & Operations, Project Manager

1. Purpose

To provide guidance for Ākina staff in response to the global outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) – declared a public health emergency on 31 January 2020 – and ensure the general safety and wellbeing of staff.

2. General organisation response

Effective immediately, Ākina will implement the following:

- Regularly reviewing the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (MFAT) and [Ministry of Health](#) (MoH) guidelines, and following recommendations accordingly.
- Regular communication of relevant updates to all staff.
- Reminders to all staff regarding symptoms of coronavirus, and the recommended approach to minimise contraction of the virus (regular handwashing and avoiding close contact with people with cold or flu like symptoms).
- We will continue to offer flu jabs when available (in around April 2020).
- Encourage staff to raise any concerns or questions they have.

This policy will be reviewed on a weekly basis until such time as it is considered not necessary. This review will be undertaken by the CEO and/or General Manager, Operations.

3. Experiencing Symptoms

If any staff, or anyone that any member of staff shares accommodation with, including dependents, is suffering the [symptoms of coronavirus](#) (fever, coughing, difficulty breathing), they are to contact MoH – ring this phone number for instruction:

0800 358 5453

All staff must advise either the GM, Operations or CEO of the occurrence of these symptoms, and it is likely that self isolation in accordance with these [MoH guidelines](#) will be recommended for 14 days and will be confirmed by the GM, Operations and/or the CEO, in writing.

All staff suffering symptoms will be asked not to come into the office and will be required to take sick leave, as per Ākina's policy. The affected staff member will be fully paid, and may need to work from home, once they have recovered, for a stand-down period, as advised by a medical professional.

If Ākina requests the staff member to self-isolate, the [Ministry of Health guidance](#) on self isolation will apply. Staff members will be required to work from home and be fully paid, as per our standard policies. All support to ensure that the staff member can continue their planned activity during the period of isolation will be provided, including a review of their responsibilities and reassignment of any activities that can not be undertaken remotely.

4. General international travel

Any staff travelling internationally (either for work or on a private capacity) must notify the GM, Operations or CEO of this travel, who will consult this policy and the up-to-date MFAT travel guidelines. Based on these, a response and guidance for that staff member will be considered on a case by case basis and will be provided in writing to the staff member from either the GM, Operations or CEO..

More information is provided in the Operational Guidelines attached to this Policy.

As of the **15th of March**, any staff travelling overseas will now be required to go into mandatory self-isolation for 14 days on return to New Zealand in accordance with these [MoH guidelines](#), unless they are returning from the Pacific Islands. They will be required to work remotely and will receive full pay.

No work-related international travel will be approved by the Board until further notice.

Prior to any personal international travel, you must advise the CEO and/or GM, Operations of your travel plans. This is so we know where you are and it will enable us to start planning for how we will support you during your mandatory self-isolation period.

5. Pandemic

The WHO has declared that Covid-19 is now a global pandemic. On the 14th of March, the New Zealand Government announced significant international travel restrictions and it is expected that announcements will be made by the 18th of March, restricting domestic gatherings and other recommendations. Ākina will continue to update our policies and instructions to staff and key stakeholders, based on the NZ Government's advice. Gatherings of people, and face to face workshops may need to be cancelled, and we will be reviewing whether the Ākina offices will need to be closed for a period of time.

6. General domestic travel

As per the Government announcement on the 21st of March advising that New Zealand is at an [Alert Level 2](#), no domestic air or train travel will be allowed on behalf of Ākina.

Authorised by: Louise Aitken & Nicola Nation

Date of approval: 6 March 2020 (with urgent changes made under approval from the Ākina Board)

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines have been put in place to respond on a daily basis to the changing circumstances around the Covid-19 outbreak:

Update: 31st March 2020

These guidelines will be reviewed on a daily and weekly basis as required. There is no change to our business arrangements at this time. We are monitoring the situation and the expert Government advice.

Some clients or business associates might make changes to their business plans which have an impact on you and/or your projects, for example cancelling travel plans or closing their offices. If this occurs, we will work with our clients and business associates to move in-person meetings to video-conference.

The following statement is to be shared with anyone who is coming to an event that Ākina is hosting or co-hosting.

At Ākina, we take the wellness of our guests and team very seriously. To ensure everyone has an enjoyable and safe time at our upcoming event, please can you ensure that you observe the [Ministry of Health's guidelines](#) on self-isolation if you have been travelling recently, and for general health advice on Covid-19. If you have any symptoms, or have been exposed to anyone who has symptoms, we would appreciate it if you let us know and do not attend our event.

We are closely monitoring the ever-changing situation, and we may be in contact prior to the event, if we need to provide you with another update regarding your and our communities safety.

The New Zealand Government are in a containment phase of managing the virus, meaning efforts are focussed on reducing the spread of coronavirus, and Ākina's response is in line with this. It is vital for the health of our wider community, that we all focus on stopping the spread.

If you feel unwell STAY HOME

If you are experiencing **any** flu like symptoms, please stay home. The symptoms of Coronavirus are a dry cough and sometimes fever, along with general flu symptoms. More information on symptoms can be found [here](#).

1. **If you develop symptoms of a cold or flu, even if they are very mild, please stay at home.**
2. If a member of your household becomes ill, see and follow point 1 above.
3. If you do feel unwell and want to see a doctor, call ahead or **call Healthline on 0800 358 5453**. Do not just rock up at your GP's surgery or the hospital. We cannot afford for healthcare workers to be in isolation because they have been unnecessarily exposed to COVID-19.
4. Let's all start practicing **more restrained physical interactions**, and set good examples not only among ourselves but also for our colleagues and friends. That means no handshakes, hugs, and hongi for the time being. The "East Coast Wave" - the "chur" or "sups" are going to be our standard welcomes!

Self-Isolation

If you are required to self-isolate, there are some very good resources to help you understand how to manage this. Key links are:

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation>
- <https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/14-03-2020/covid-19-what-does-self-isolation-mean-in-practice/>

Team Day - 26 & 27 March

As of the 17th of March, the Ākina team day has been postponed until further notice.

Ākina Offices

As of the 23rd of March, all Ākina offices (Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch) are closed until further notice.

Here is a great article helping us understand how to keep surfaces clean, both at home and work:

- <https://thespinoff.co.nz/science/07-03-2020/how-to-get-rid-of-covid-19-from-surfaces-the-right-way/>

Domestic Travel – work related

As of the 21st of March, all work related domestic travel has been stopped, with no domestic travel to be approved in our systems for the foreseeable future.

In the case that domestic airline or train travel is cancelled:

- The office in the affected region/s would be closed.
- Staff would be required to work from home until further notice.
- Client commitments would continue using video-conferencing, as practicable.
- Local team members could attend, for example, client workshops or meetings, with other team members video-conferencing into the workshop or meeting as practicable. Discussions with the clients are recommended prior to any workshop or event to understand the policies that they are putting in place and how these may also impact the activity.

International Travel – work related

All international travel on behalf of Ākina will not be approved by the Ākina Board and therefore will not go ahead until further notice.

Personal Travel (any region)

Personal travel, internationally, or domestically, remains at the discretion of the individual.

Please immediately advise the GM, Ops and CEO of any international travel planned within the next 6 weeks, and apply through the normal process. This is so we know where you are and it will enable us to start planning for how we will support you during your mandatory self-isolation period.

As of the 21st of March, New Zealanders are advised not to travel overseas at this time. The New Zealand Government has raised its travel advice to “do not travel” – the highest level – regardless of destination.

The requirement for isolation for domestic travel will be regularly revised. At this time there is no requirement for self-isolation after domestic travel but the advice from Government as of the 21st of March is to limit all non-essential travel around New Zealand.

Business continuity planning (BCP)

Ākina’s business continuity planning relies on our people working from home and using video-conference to connect. Should the Ākina BCP plan be put in place you

will be required to work from home and use video-conferencing for meetings. This might impact client commitments and please discuss any potential impact with your Manager, the GM Operations or the CEO.

As of the 23rd of March, all Ākina staff will be required to work from home.

Our BCP plan continues to be updated and there are some great tools available to inform how we look after ourselves, our whānau and our wider community. This includes a [COVID-19 Pandemic Preparedness Plan](#).