



Southern Lakes Business Response Group

COVID-19 – Update 12 – 6/04/2020 – 4.00pm

*Here's the latest update from the **Southern Lakes Business Response & Recovery team***

As we enter week three of Alert Level 4, our focus remains on ensuring our Southern Lakes businesses have the tools, information and support they need during COVID-19 and through to the recovery stage. However, we must not forget the importance of following guidelines issued during Level 4 to keep us all safe and to eliminate the virus.

It's important as we enter Easter weekend that we remember we are in lockdown at Level 4. Easter is usually a very busy weekend in the Southern Lakes for visitors, businesses and events and so this year will certainly be very different. If our economy is going to have the best chance to recover when appropriate, we need to stay healthy and obey the rules in place. Below is a reminder on where to find some of the key health and welfare messages, which may be useful to you and your employees.

The advice from the government is clear; that people should not drive to holiday houses and cribs for a change of scenery during the Easter break. People should only travel locally if they are accessing essential services or if they are an essential worker travelling to, from or as part of essential work. Details below on Easter travel (there is none!). **Don't be an Easter Egg, stay home. Save lives.**

It's pretty simple really, please stay at home, stop the spread, save lives. As always look after yourselves, look after your loved ones and look after your community.

We've updated some FAQs below and advised new information for businesses and employees. The Advisory Group's next email update will be Thursday with any urgent updates posted on the local online forum inbetween [located here](#).

What's new?

Wage subsidy - A list of companies who have applied and received the wage subsidy will go live today (April 6) on the [MBIE website here](#). I

Essential businesses update - Most service stations remain open but have moved to closed door operations. Sale of items that can be sold at supermarkets and dairies, including pre-packaged food heated at service stations, is considered an essential service, however items such as coffee, car washes and trailer hire are considered non-essential.

Electronic Document Signing - With the amendments to the Companies Act announced last week, you are now able to digitally sign for documents. There are many products, one of the most popular being [DocuSign](#). A more extensive list of software can be [viewed here](#).

Prime Minister says start work on preparing for re-entry - As the Group has previously advised, Prime Minister Jacinda Adern has urged businesses to start planning for what a step-down re-entry might look like for your business. You can see what the specific [restrictions are at each level here](#).

Government backed business loans - If your business has a turnover of over \$250,000 and is not borrowing for assets, you may be able to apply to your bank for a government backed working capital loan of up to \$500,000. This facility doesn't allow you to refinance existing debt. [More details can be found here](#).

Easter trading: Supermarkets will close as usual on Good Friday (10 April), but will be open on Easter Sunday (12 April) so people don't feel the need to panic buy. All shop employees (including essential services employees working during Alert Level 4) have the right to refuse to work on Easter Sunday without giving a reason to their employer.

IRD closing for 7 days - Inland Revenue (IR) will turn off its computer systems for seven days from this Thursday to implement the latest round of planned transformation changes. All phone and online services will be unavailable from 3pm on 9 April until 16 April. That includes two business days – April 14 and 15. [Click here for the details of the changes](#).

Health, Welfare and general COVID-19 information

Easter Weekend - New Zealand is still in Level 4 lockdown- Easter DOES NOT change that and all current rules apply

The Southern District Health Board area has the highest number of cases in the country to date. Travelling to a holiday home not only increases the risk of spreading the virus, it can also put increased pressure on essential services such as grocery stores and medical services. Do your bit and stay home.

- If you are found to have travelled to a holiday home from your normal place of residence you will be required to return to your home immediately.
- Police will have an increased presence on the roads over Easter and will be conducting checks to ensure that people are following the guidance issued by the Director General of Health.

Health Notice issued - The Director General of Health, Dr Ashley Bloomfield, has issued a Health Notice that provides additional guidance on the rules around the COVID-19 Alert Level 4 to ensure its success and help move the country out of lockdown as soon as possible. [Details on the COVID-19 website here](#).

Unemployed migrants

The Southern Lakes Business Advisory Group remains concerned about the welfare of our migrant workers. There have been over 1,800 welfare applications received across the Southern Lakes, with a large number of migrant workers included in that number. Our migrant workforce aren't eligible for any other support from Work and Income and may play an important part in our region's recovery.

Remember: your migrant workforce are also eligible for the wage subsidy - if you have laid them off, you can re-employ them and apply for the wage subsidy to ensure they retain some level of income.

We expect to see more demand for welfare in the coming weeks as the 12-week subsidy nears the end. [Click here to register for welfare assistance.](#)

FAQ Update:

Wage subsidy - The government is still urging businesses to consider, wherever possible, to apply for the COVID-19 wage subsidy. The subsidy applies to all employed staff, including those on visas. If you are unsure whether your business is eligible for these subsidies please review the following website or call the OSEA advice line on 0508 656 75.

What if you have already made your staff redundant? Advice from the government is: If you have made staff redundant, you should think about re-hiring your employees and applying for the wage subsidy. Businesses who have already made employees redundant can apply for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy if they re-employ those employees before they apply and if those employees were:

- employed by the business as of 17 March 2020; and
- the business had to let them go because of COVID-19; and
- the business did not apply for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy for the employees.

It is expected that employers and employees would operate in 'good faith' and employers would look to rehire on at least the same terms and conditions.

Reminder:

Otago Welfare Support

Civil Defence Otago is working with Volunteering Central and Volunteering Otago to provide safe and coordinated volunteer support at this time. A regional COVID 19 help centre has been set up and will operate 7am to 7pm, 7 days a week to receive requests for welfare assistance. Anyone requiring welfare support at this time should in the first instance email help@otagocdem.govt.nz or call 0800 322 4000 for more information on how to get support. Over 1,600 people have registered via the online form and are receiving the help they need and **over 500 people have stepped up to volunteer.**

QLDC Mayoral Update tomorrow - Tuesday 7 April, 12:00-12:45pm - Mayor Jim Boulton will update the business community on the Covid-19 response and emerging plans for recovery. This will be followed by a Q & A session. All businesses welcome. No need to register. [Click here to join.](#) Meeting ID: 691 269 505 and Password: 517244.

Webinars

Tourism and Hospitality specific

How to be open when you're closed - Weds 8 April -2-3pm- An interactive webinar and learn how hotels, travel and tourism businesses should respond to the current COVID19 virus situation when they are closed for business. [Click here to register.](#)

Hospitality industry - The Restaurant Association is holding weekly webinars for members and non-members on topics including restructuring, social media marketing, food costing and more. [Click here for all training and webinars](#)

Covid-19 Business Response Screen Sector Forum - Live stream Tuesday, 7 April at 10:00 am. Registration for this livestream Zoom meeting broadcast will appear on the **WellingtonNZ Business Response [page here](#)**

In collaboration with Screen Wellington, WellingtonNZ is hosting a forum on supporting the Screen Sector through Covid-19 Level 4 and beyond. There will be opportunities to ask questions of the presenters throughout the session via the Zoom online chat facility.

General business and economic

Leasing and Contract Issues - Tuesday 7th April 2020, 10am - Hosted by Sarah Simmers (Commercial Partner) Anderson Lloyd and Sharon Knowles (Commercial Partner) Anderson Lloyd. Understand your obligations and options for contract negotiations and discussions with your landlord. Join these two subject experts and have the opportunity to ask them questions. **Register in advance for this webinar: [Click here](#)**

Harnessing your Resilience during COVID-19 - facilitated by Workplace Support Southern Training & Development Manager, Trudy Schievink.

- Thursday 9th April, 10am - [Click here to register.](#)
- Thursday 16th April, 2pm - [Click here to register.](#)

We are living through an unprecedented event that means our world is changing rapidly around us. Now is the time for us to ensure we are looking after ourselves so we can in turn, look after others. How we view these challenges and respond to this specific event will influence the way we navigate through this COVID-19 crisis.

This one-hour online webinar introduces how resiliency can enhance our capacity to effectively manage during this crisis. It includes identifying sources and symptoms of stress, explores the importance of harnessing resiliency and introduces resiliency strategies and resources.

Contract Law, Employment Law and Health & Safety - Regular sessions will be run by John Farrow (Employment Partner) and Sarah Simmers (Commercial Partner) Anderson Lloyd on: **New webinars will be posted here.**

- Health & Safety
- Employment Law
- Contract Law

Economic and wage advice - BDO has some really great advice and tips here including webinars, advice on dealing with economic turbulence, wage subsidy info and more. [Read online here.](#)

FAQs

Business FAQs on COVID-19 - How do I apply for the subsidy, what does it mean for my business, the economy, my staff etc. [BDO has set up a great resource here.](#)

General FAQs on COVID-19 - What it is, what self-isolation and level 4 means etc. [Click here for the COVID-19 website.](#)

Local FAQs on COVID-19 - What services are available, how can I get help etc. [Click here for local Council information.](#)

Local Business FAQs- Up-to-date [local information for businesses here.](#)

We are here to help, so if you have any concerns, or are not getting the support you need, from the resources, please contact anyone below.

Destination Queenstown – Ann Lockhart – CEO – annl@queenstownNZ.nz

Queenstown Chamber – Anna Mickell – CEO – ceo@queenstownchamber.org.nz

Lake Wanaka Tourism – James Helmore – GM – james@wanaka.co.nz

Ignite Wanaka Chamber – Naomi Lindsay – Executive Officer – naomi@ignitewanaka.co.nz

QLDC Economic Development – Peter Harris – Economic Development Manager
peter.harris@qldc.govt.nz

Regional Business Partners – Tara Druce – Business Advisor – tara@otagorbp.co.nz