

Ministry school transport services under Alert Level 2

Ministry school transport services will be available once schools reopen under Level 2, as they were prior to COVID-19, to assist families where distance is a barrier to education.



This section has been updated on Wednesday 13 May at 4:40pm.

Unlike public spaces, our school buses, like school classrooms, are controlled environments. Ministry of Health guidelines make it clear that in some environments like school classrooms or early learning Centres it's not always practical to have physical distance restrictions in place, so observing all the necessary hygiene requirements is the key priority. Schools also know which of their students are in the classroom and travelling on the school bus, so contact tracing can take place if required.

We are satisfied that by prioritising and maintaining good hygiene practices in line with Ministry of Health advice and making sure that every bus is cleaned in accordance with [Ministry of Transport guidelines \(external link\)](http://www.transport.govt.nz/about/covid-19) [<http://www.transport.govt.nz/about/covid-19>], with all touch points cleaned after each journey (twice daily), our school transport services will be managed safely.

We cannot predict how many students will be accessing school bus transport from Monday when schools welcome them back. We understand some families may be anxious about their children using school transport for the first time in a while and may prefer to make other arrangements, and we respect that choice.

In the meantime, we will be working with our school transport services to make sure the necessary hygiene requirements are being met. Just as schools will be provided with hand sanitiser for the classroom, hand sanitisers will also be available on every vehicle for the students to use when getting on and off.

Schools will continue to make sure they are observing all the necessary hygiene requirements once students arrive onsite and have plenty of information for young people and parents around good health and hygiene.

Special school transport assistance

SESTA (special school transport assistance) services will run to normal timetables. Transport operators will liaise with families about their transport needs.

Driver safety

Drivers' employers will be taking extra measures to make them feel safe in their workplace, such as leaving seats in close proximity to the driver free. Physical distancing isn't practicable on school buses, however, it's a controlled environment where contact tracing can take place if required.



