

## Your community, your place.

### Tēnā koutou

Happy New Year! I hope you had a pleasant and relaxing break over the festive season.

We had quite the year last year, with the emergence of the Delta variant of COVID-19, higher Alert Levels and more lockdowns. I think we should expect more of the same this year, unfortunately, especially since the Omicron variant has now arrived in New Zealand. As we've now gone back into the Red setting of the COVID-19 Protection Framework, we've some helpful advice on how everyone can prepare their households in case they need to self-isolate for several weeks. Key to this will be ensuring you have sufficient food supplies and medicines at home (see our checklist of things to consider).

Hopefully, you'll already have had your booster vaccination, which you can now get four months after your second dose. This will be our most effective defence against the new variant and it offers a high level of protection against severe disease. 100% of Haumaru Housing staff are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Our staff will continue to wear masks when they're in the villages and will use PPE when they enter units, to keep both tenants and staff protected from any possible risk.

So let's stay safe, continue to Mask, Scan and Pass wherever we go and make the most of the rest of the summer.

Until next time.

Ngā mihi maioha



Gabby Clezy,  
Chief Executive Officer

## COVID-19: staying safe and being prepared

As Omicron has now reached our shores, the following tips may be helpful for planning how to get ready in case you have to self-isolate:

- Being vaccinated is the best way to be prepared for COVID-19 and its variants, and it also helps reduce transmission of the virus. Make sure you get your vaccine booster shot as soon as you become eligible and encourage your family and friends to do the same.
- If you have grandchildren aged 5 to 11, they can now also get the vaccine, so encourage parents to have their tamariki vaccinated at the earliest possible opportunity.
- In the event you might have to self-isolate at home for a period due to an outbreak, make sure your cupboards are well-stocked at all times and that you have sufficient supplies of food, prescribed medications (fill some repeats ahead of time) and other essential items to avoid having to make too many visits to the supermarket or pharmacy (if you test positive for COVID, you won't be able to go out at all).
- Have ample provision (within reason) of masks, gloves and hand sanitiser, tissues, rubbish bags and cleaning products, as well as the usual remedies for relieving common cold and flu symptoms – cough medicine, throat lozenges, vapour rubs, paracetamol/ibuprofen, a thermometer and electrolytes for re-hydration.
- Follow good hygiene practices and remember to Mask, Scan and Pass – wear a mask or face covering when out and about; scan in everywhere you go using the COVID Tracer app or keep a record manually; and have your Vaccine Pass at the ready. As Omicron is much more transmissible than Delta, we always have to be on our guard and do everything possible to reduce any chance of contracting the virus.
- If you feel unwell or show any symptoms, stay home. Call Healthline on **0800 358 5453** and get a COVID test.

For more tips on being prepared, visit [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) and [health.govt.nz](https://www.health.govt.nz). Of course, your Haumaru Housing team will also be on hand if you need advice or assistance at any stage.

## When our maintenance contractors come to call

All maintenance contractors who are appointed to undertake work on behalf of Haumaru Housing are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, so tenants have no need to worry about letting them into their unit when they call to do a job. You're welcome to ask to see their Vaccine Pass if you've any concerns at all. They'll be wearing a mask, of course, and will practise social distancing and all the usual COVID safety precautions.

Likewise, they might ask you about your vaccination status. Please don't be offended if they do – they might just need to ask you this as part of their company's standard health and safety procedures. If you haven't been vaccinated yet, let them know so they can take extra precautions for your safety. If you're more comfortable stepping outside for the short time they're in your unit, or going into another room, they'll make sure they finish the job for you as quickly as they can.

## Face covering exemption

Under the COVID-19 Protection Framework legislation, face coverings are mandatory under the Orange and Red settings for people aged 12 years or older on flights, public transport, in taxis, retail and public facilities, and are encouraged whenever leaving the house.

An exception to this rule is when a person has a disability or health condition that makes wearing a face covering unsuitable. An exemption card can be requested from the following organisations:

- Disabled Persons Assembly NZ: **04 801 9100, info@dpa.org.nz**
- Blind Citizens NZ (for blind, deafblind, low vision and vision-impaired people): admin@abcnz.org.nz, **0800 222 694**, or visit their website
- Deaf Aotearoa: **covid@deaf.org.nz**
- Your local Alzheimers and Dementia organisation.

Having an exemption card is not a legal requirement and people who are exempt from wearing a face covering are not obliged to show an exemption card.

Businesses and others need to ensure they don't discriminate against people who are exempt from wearing a face covering. While it's reasonable for a business owner or employee to check whether someone's exempt from having to wear one, it's inappropriate to enquire about the nature of the person's disability or condition.

If wearing a face covering is unsuitable for you due to a disability or health condition, it's especially important that you're vigilant in your other hygiene and safety practices when in public and while accessing businesses and services.

People who refuse to wear a face covering and falsely claim to be exempt from wearing one could be liable for an infringement fee of \$1,000 or up to \$4,000 if the matter goes to court.

## COVID-19 resources and helplines

Important COVID-19 information in Te Reo Māori and over 33 other languages, plus accessible formats for the disabled community, is available from the Unite Against COVID-19 website: **covid19.govt.nz/languages-and-resources/translations**. Information is available in NZ Sign Language, large print and audio and easy read formats.

Information for Māori communities is available at: **karawhiua.nz**

Information for Pacific peoples: **facebook.com/MinistryforPacificPeoples/**

Call Healthline if you have symptoms **0800 358 5453**.

Need to talk? For mental health help, call or text 1737.

Contact the Haumarū Housing team any time of the day or night: **0800 430 101**.

## Keep cool over the long hot summer

Summer can present some unique health risks for older people, so it's important to take extra steps to stay hydrated at this time of year. Here are some easy suggestions from the Ministry of Health for staying cool and hydrated during these warmer months:

- Set a daily drinking schedule. Post it on the refrigerator. It doesn't have to be super regimented. It can be as simple as having a full glass of water first thing in the morning, a beverage after a daily walk, while reading the newspaper, between each meal or after working in the garden.



- Eat more fruits and vegetables. Keep a handy list of water-rich fruits and vegetables to incorporate into meals and snacks, such as a cucumber salad, watermelon or frozen bananas.
- Be creative. You can experiment with new flavours of water by adding various berries, lemon and cucumber to a pitcher or glass of water.
- Wear loose fitting and breathable clothing.
- Keep out of direct sunlight and rest in a cool place if you're feeling overheated.

You can find more tips for a healthy summer at the Ministry of Health Website.

## Hardship income threshold increase

The Government has increased the income limits for hardship support for people who are struggling to meet essential costs such as rent, heating and food. Information on the increased income limits and eligibility for a Special Needs Grant, Recoverable Assistance Payment or Advance

Payments of Benefit is available from Work and Income and the Ministry of Social Development (**workandincome.govt.nz** and at **check.msd.govt.nz**). People over the age of 65 can ring **0800 552 002**. The new income level limits will be in place until 28 February 2022.

**If you're concerned about an immediate threat to life or property, call the emergency services on 111.**

The Selwyn Foundation 

Auckland Council   
Te Kaunihera o Tāmaki Makaurau

We always appreciate your feedback. You can talk to your Community Manager, call us on **0800 430 101**, email **info@haumaruhousing.co.nz** or visit **www.haumaruhousing.co.nz**