



About food provision and distribution

August 2021

Everyone needs access to food and essential items such as medicine through COVID-19 lockdowns. We don't want anyone to try to go without these basic needs.

Community providers have a key role to play. We want to support you to take care of people who need your help during lockdowns.

This COVID-19 fact sheet has information for iwi and community providers about:

- About Food Secure Communities support
- Operating safely through COVID-19 at Alert Level 4
- Information to help your whānau and clients access food, other essentials and local foodbanks.

About Food Secure Communities support

The Food Secure Communities programme was funded in Budget 2020 (\$32 million over two years). This funding is to help meet the additional demand during COVID-19 lockdowns on foodbanks, food rescue and other community providers.

Through this funding:

- 131 foodbanks, food rescue and community providers around New Zealand are currently getting funding to help with increased demand: [See provider list here](#)
- Access to food stocks through food rescue organisations and other food hubs has increased including:
 - The [New Zealand Food Network](#) was established to distribute surplus food from large scale food producers (over 3,100 tonnes of food – about 8,972,771) distributed through [50 food hubs](#).
 - [Local food rescue organisations](#) are distributing 90% more food compared to pre-COVID-19, totalling nearly 8,700 tonnes (or 24,776,731 meals); this includes 16% from New Zealand Food Network

Two umbrella groups have also had funding: [Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective](#) and [Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance](#). These organisations continue to work with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to strengthen the food security sector.

Operating safely at Alert Level 4

Community food providers can continue to operate at Alert Level 4, [under the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act](#). They must make sure they operate [within Alert Level 4 requirements](#).

Food and other community providers are asked to assess their services against the [four types of services that can continue to operate under Alert Level 4](#).

1. Accessing food and other goods to survive
2. Accommodation and care support
3. Support for disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing
4. Crisis support for people who are unsafe

Community food providers fall under Category 1: *Where the social service is the only way for people accessing food and other goods they need to survive (eg delivering food and other essential goods).*

MSD has sent specific advice to organisations providing or delivering food and other essential goods (eg foodbanks, food rescue, food parcels) on [operating safely during COVID-19](#). The most important messages include:

- Deliveries should be contactless and kept local.
- Where whānau or clients must come to your premises, operate a strict “one in one out” policy.
- You may not sell or provide food prepared on your premises (without an exemption from MSD).

Please see [MSD’s Food Secure Communities webpage](#) for more information. This page is being kept up to date with COVID-19 guidance.

If providers are unsure, they can email Community_Information@msd.govt.nz.

Foodbanks and other community food providers are all registered on the [Family Services Directory](#), so whānau and clients needing help can easily find their local foodbank.