



## HOW TO PLAN A PRIDE EVENT IN A PANDEMIC

### An Auckland Pride Guide to safely navigating COVID-19

#### Legal Stuff:

Before we begin, it's important to note that this is just a guide to planning your Pride event. This advice has been developed from Auckland Pride's experience of producing events, and delivering a Festival impacted by two lockdowns in 2021. Auckland Pride is not liable for any losses, financial or otherwise, because of advice followed in the following document. Again, this is a guide because the landscape, advice, and Government response to COVID-19 is constantly changing and adapting.

#### Introduction:

In 2021 the Auckland Pride Festival was impacted by two lockdowns in response to community cases of COVID-19, and our response to those two lockdowns was regarded as industry-leading. Because of the ongoing threat of variants, and the Government continuing to follow an elimination strategy alongside vaccination of the population, we are preparing our response once again to ensure we're prepared in case a change in Alert Levels is needed to stamp out COVID-19 in the community during the Festival.

With this response, we ensured the safe execution of every Auckland Pride event in 2021, we had high compliance with contact tracing, and were in regular contact with health officials. Our response is once again about the safety of our participants, and our wider communities. We have done this before successfully, and with our event organisers and community on board with our response we know we can do it again.

[You can see how we put our COVID-19 plan into action during 2021 here.](#)

#### New Zealand Event Sector Voluntary Code:

The Event Sector Voluntary Code has the most up to date information about advice and guidance from the Government around delivering events. It is a requirement for all Pride Events that they sign up to and follow the NZ Event Sector voluntary code.

[You can find the code, collateral, and more information on the NZ Major Events Website.](#)

## Alert Level Planning:

It's important to begin by planning what your event will look like at each alert level. Naturally, we can plan that our events will be held at Alert Level One but it's important to know what you'll do and when, we know that Alert Levels can change within a matter of hours from announcements with barely any forewarning. Plan like an Alert Level change will take effect the day of your event - that's how you know you're prepared.

First step is to know what you'll do at each alert level. There are things to know to help you make this decision, such as how many people your venue can hold at Alert Level Two when people will be socially distanced.

Eg: You're hosting a workshop and panel discussion, and you're expecting 80 people will show up. You decide that you'll go ahead at AL 2 because you can still do that safely in your venue, but at AL 2.5 or AL 3 you'll host the event on Zoom, and at AL 4 you'll cancel.

There are additional things to think about, if you're catering the event then that has to look different at AL 2, eg. food has to be delivered to each table rather than people getting up and grabbing it. Will you have to change your seating plans? Alert Level Two changes a lot about the way in person events occur - so make sure you have a plan for every aspect of your event.

It's also worth thinking about timelines for making changes to your event, if we moved up Alert Levels on the day of your event will you postpone automatically? Or would you be able to quickly implement a socially-distanced or online version?

A lot of this decision making will come down to the specific circumstances of the Alert Level change, and many decided to postpone their events in 2021 when they thought they would originally go ahead with them. This information will be publicly available on the Auckland Pride Website - so try to make it as accurate as possible.

If an Alert Level Change was to occur that impacted your event, you will get a call from the Auckland Pride team confirming your plans and changes to your event. We will implement these as quickly as possible on your event listing, as well as provide an update through a media release & list of updates on our website.

If an Alert Level Change was to occur that might impact your event (eg. Auckland moved to Alert Level Three for three days, but there were no decisions beyond that) the Auckland Pride team will confirm your plans under different scenarios. That change will then be implemented automatically once there's confirmation from the Government, and an announcement will be made. [We did this in 2021 here.](#)

## Communication:

It's important to have a plan, because then you can communicate it. Communication with everyone involved in your event, from the venue, to the catering, speakers, artists, photographers, and anyone else who should know your plans in case we do move Alert Levels.

If you have a postponement date, check whether they can still make it on that date, or if they feel comfortable (they may not be vaccinated) being at an event during Alert Level Two. It's vital that the safety and comfortability of your team is a priority.

It's subsequently a good idea to communicate this with your audience. There will be a section on your [aucklandpride.org.nz](http://aucklandpride.org.nz) event listing specific to your COVID plans, but make sure it's also visible on your Facebook and EventBrite events. This will increase public confidence in your event, as they'll know you're prepared and have a plan.

Auckland Pride will manage the overarching communications to media and our festival audience in the event of a change in COVID-19 Alert Levels. We have these communications prepared and have the ability to release them within minutes of the Government's announcement. We encourage you to share these communications with your individual audiences once they are made from Auckland Pride.

### **Contracts and force majeure/cancellation clauses:**

This is where things get technical, and where the legal disclaimer at the start really applies. Whether you have a contract with your venue, a written agreement with your artists, or have a funding agreement that allows your event to go ahead - it's incredibly important to thoroughly read, understand and have your own force majeure and cancellation clauses.

A force majeure clause is essentially the clause that outlines what would happen should the event be cancelled for a reason outside of either party's control. Usually things listed include war, weather, strike, but importantly it includes pandemic. Because it is possible an event cancellation could come as a result of the pandemic and therefore force majeure, this clause is vital.

First, not all force majeure clauses are equal. Each organisation, funder, or venue may have different force majeure clauses. It's important to have consistency across your force majeure obligations. For example, in a force majeure event you may be forced to return all of your funding, but still have to pay for half the venue - meaning you'd end up out of pocket.

So if your event is being funded, apply that clause as much as possible across the board. Build it into your other agreements and clauses so that there's consistency so that in case we suddenly returned to a higher alert level you wouldn't lose money! Other tip that applies regardless, is if there's money involved, put it in writing.

Get clarity around the force majeure clauses in your contracts. To some, a move to alert level two may not count as a force majeure because it can be planned for and the event can be executed (in most circumstances). Planning and executing an event in Level Two could be within a party's control, and therefore the event being cancelled may trigger the cancellation clause rather than the force majeure clause. So it's important to ask, would a cancellation because of AL2 be considered a force majeure, or just a cancellation? What about AL2.5? This will also inform your above decision making around whether to go ahead at what levels, as cancellation will incur higher costs than a force majeure.

Ensure that whatever you agree on is written into the contract, so that you're both covered in the case of moving to a higher alert level. It's worth a reminder that contracts are legally binding documents - so get it right before you sign it.

## Contact Tracing and QR Codes:

It's a requirement of all Auckland Pride events to be able to register participation in advance through EventBrite, this allows Auckland Pride to keep details in case Ministry of Health Contact Tracers need to contact trace the event and its participants.

It's important that you keep a record of who attended (EventBrite allows you to scan tickets in) so that there's an accurate record. You should also ensure the venue has a NZ COVID Tracer QR code, so that everyone can sign in using this QR code to also assist with contact tracing. If not please make your own, [the link to create a code is here](#).

## Conclusion:

The advice contained in this document can be summarised by: plan ahead, be transparent, and be consistent.

Plan ahead by understanding your contractual obligations, the limitations of your venue and the nature of the event, as well as understanding the different regulations at different alert levels. Plan ahead by knowing what your event will look like at each level, along with when you'll make your decision.

Be transparent by communicating with the team involved with your event, venues, artists, Auckland Pride, as well as with your audience to allow for a smooth transition of your event should the situation arise. It will also provide confidence to all those who want to come to your event, that you have a plan and that it'll be safe.

And be consistent, be consistent in the delivery of your event and make sure you follow all of the guidelines, to be consistent in your contracts and obligations, as well as being consistent with the rest of the events in the Auckland Pride Festival, providing a cohesive experience for our rainbow communities.

Ultimately, this is all for the safety of our communities. This is about minimising the risk of someone from our community contracting COVID-19, as well as mitigating onward transmission by enabling fast and effective contact tracing. It's also about doing everything right, so in the worst case scenario we can minimise the risk of the public weaponising our identities and setting our progress back.

Auckland Pride wants to once again responsibly deliver a Pride Festival in the midst of a pandemic, and to do so it takes all of us to be responsible, to ensure the safety of our community is paramount, and for all of us to follow the rules and guidelines provided to us by the Government.

Ultimately, we've done this before and we received a high level of praise from the events sector, our event organisers, and our community. We're best placed to be able to do this again successfully, and ensure another incredible Auckland Pride Festival.

If you have any more questions about this resource, or want to get a higher level of detail than what's been provided here, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our team. You can reach our Executive Director, Max, at [director@aucklandpride.org.nz](mailto:director@aucklandpride.org.nz).

**Auckland Pride 2022: 1 - 27 February. [aucklandpride.org.nz](http://aucklandpride.org.nz)**