

**COVID-19 Protocols**  
for NZ Forestry Industry Operations under Level 3

# Recommended Practices for COVID-19: Forestry

This guidance would also apply if any forestry-related operation was given permission to operate at Level 4.

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# Recommended Practices for COVID-19: **Everyone**

## 1. Stay at home if you are unwell

- Everyone must self-assess their health prior to attending work. Anyone who feels unwell should not come to work and should phone Healthline on 0800 358 5453 to seek advice.
- Anyone who has been in another country or has had close contact with a probable or confirmed case, should self-quarantine and not come to work for 14 days.
- Assess worker fitness before work starts each day by asking them:
  - Are you feeling unwell, fatigued or not in a fit state to work?
  - Have you been in contact with anyone who is unwell or who has COVID-19?
- For more information see Appendix 3: Assessing wellness.

## 2. Minimise numbers on site

- Only workers necessary to carry out work should be on site. Any worker who can work from home should.
- Visitors to site should be minimised to essential work only.

## 3. General hygiene

Practise good hygiene at **ALL TIMES** including:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue
- Put used tissues straight into the bin
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, including before and after eating and after going to the toilet
- Use hand-sanitiser
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Clean and disinfect frequently used hard surfaces at regular intervals
- Clean and disinfect frequently used objects such as mobile phones, keys, wallets and work passes.
- Use PPE options as appropriate to the circumstances, which should include providing instruction on correct use
- Form workplace teams (bubbles) and minimise mixing e.g. staggered breaks, defined walkways, separate entry and exit times.

## 4. Have hygiene and cleaning products available on site

All works sites must have the following available:

- Soap and water
- Hand-sanitiser
- Cleaning products for wiping down areas
- Disposable paper towels to wipe down surfaces
- Tissues
- Gloves
- Bins / bags / waste areas to dispose of used cleaning items.

## 5. Physical distancing

Maintain physical distancing between people:

- **Level 3:** 1 metre in a controlled work environment, 2 metres outside home or on public transport
- **Level 4:** 2 metres, unless 1 to 2 metres unavoidable e.g. in processing

Separation can be assisted through staggering start / finish / and meal break times. As far as is possible, people should remain in their work 'bubble'.

General safety provisions need to be in place at all times and it is important that all businesses adapt safety measures to their specific circumstances.

Workers are only allowed to work with physical distancing of less than 1 metre in extraordinary operational circumstances. Additional safety measures such as screens must be applied, and these are described in guidance from Ministry for Primary Industries<sup>1</sup>.

The following requirements for distancing should be discussed and agreed with teams:

- Stagger breaks so that there are no communal lunches, smoko or other gatherings
- Maintain the required minimum distancing
- Handheld two-ways are to be used to reduce close contact between crew and visitors.

## 6. Site register

Ensure you have a register for all workers, including those travelling in work vehicles, visitors and service providers with contact details recorded to ensure contact tracing can be done by Ministry of Health if there is a COVID-19 case at your workplace.

## 7. Case management

Every workplace must maintain and implement processes for managing a positive COVID-19 detection in the workplace. See Appendix 4 for details.

If there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 at work or at home contact Healthline on 0800 358 5453.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that requests for evaluation of options other than screens that provide an equivalent level of protection can be put to NZ Food Safety.

## **8. Travel to and from work site**

- Wherever possible employees are to travel individually to and from a work site. Where this is not possible please see Appendix 5 for further details.
- At home maintain good hygiene and follow the latest Ministry of Health guidance on physical distancing, including what social and recreational activities are allowed.

## **9. Shared vehicle (split shifts, different users on different days etc)**

Where a vehicle or machine is shared between different drivers / operators, each user must wipe down at the beginning and end of each use:

- Interior (including high touch areas such as steering wheel, gear shift, seat belt and buckle, radio, window controls etc)
- Any handheld devices left in the vehicle (where possible individuals to retain their own handheld devices)
- Two-way radio
- Exterior high touch areas including door handles
- Keys and or remote sensor.

## **10. Returning home**

- Clean your hands: Avoid touching anything until you wash or sanitise your hands thoroughly
- Remove shoes. Don't walk through the house with your shoes on. Take them off at the door
- Wash clothes: Put your clothes and bags into a separate container from your family's clothes and wash them in a hot washing machine cycle (over 60 degrees)
- Shower: Have a shower and make sure to wash your hands, wrists, neck and anywhere else that has been exposed.

## **11. Fuel purchases**

- Use hand-sanitiser or wash hands with soap and water both before and after refuelling vehicles.

## **12. 'At-Risk' employees**

- Employees who are most at risk (see Appendix 2) should discuss options with their employer. Where appropriate, an employer may recommend such employees are relocated or assigned alternate duties for added protection.

## **13. All meetings to be conducted remotely or to use physical distancing**

- All meetings should be conducted using either phone conference, video conference or other technologies which can be set up to be accessed by laptop, tablet or smartphone

- All communications for onsite meetings such as tailgate meetings should now take place in a way that maintains physical distancing or via phone or radio with participants.

## **14. Training**

- Any non-essential face to face training should be suspended. If training must be provided, then COVID-19 protocols must be met.

## **15. Work from home where possible**

- While this will not be an option for many employees, businesses must identify work from home options.

## **16. Worker engagement**

- Ensure your workers are involved in implementing these protocols and have a way to provide feedback on how things are working and when / if things need to change.

## **17. Working alone procedures**

- Review your working alone procedures and ensure they are fit for working in these circumstances.

## **18. Review and monitoring**

- Ensure you have processes in place to review and monitor the protocols you have implemented.

## **19. Emergencies**

- In an emergency the usual procedures apply but take extra diligence to minimise your risk to COVID-19.

### **KEEP YOURSELF AND OTHERS SAFE**

- **Maintain physical distancing: LEVEL 3: Stay 1–2 metres apart; LEVEL 4: 2 metres apart**
- **Wash hands for 20 seconds regularly with soap and dry thoroughly, or use sanitiser**
- **Clean and disinfect common contact surfaces frequently and keep other surfaces clean.**

# Recommended Practices for COVID-19: **Forestry**

The Forestry function includes all activities from the Establishment phase through to Pre-harvest.

It encompasses all activities which centre around growth of the forest crop and maintenance of the asset for the majority of the rotation.

- Tree nurseries
- Mechanical site preparation
- Aerial spraying
- Planting
- Manual spot spraying
- Silviculture (pruning & thinning)
- Inventory
- Pest control (animal & plant)
- Fencing & security gate work
- Other forest maintenance

## Forestry – Individual task analysis and controls

### Nursery – Seasonal workers

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Get to work	One bubble	If not travelling individually by private vehicle (in which case no multiple contacts), 1 bubble or crew per vehicle/ trip (dependent on vehicle seat numbers), clean interior surfaces of vehicle between trips to nursery.
Prepare for work including PPE options	One bubble	Bubbles to be assigned time at shed to prepare. Physical distancing to be enforced. Sanitisation practices between bubbles to be implemented.
Toolbox meeting	One bubble	Physical distancing in open area, outside shed.
Movement around nursery by foot	One bubble	All movements to maintain physical distancing.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Multiple Contact Engagements</b>	<b>Exposure Management Controls</b>
Cutting and Setting	One bubble	<p>Within field / shed maintain physical distancing, 1 cutter per hedge line, miss a hedgeline so individuals are walking their own alley way.</p> <p>Common surfaces such as boxes and trailers; QC and Boxy to wear protective gloves, Cutters not required.</p> <p>Only touch individual's box with cutting material.</p> <p>Shears / clippers cleaned and sanitised for storage.</p>
Lift and Pack	One bubble	<p>Within field / shed maintain physical spacing.</p> <p>Common surfaces such as boxes and packing bubbles/crates; QC and Boxy to wear protective gloves, Lifters not required.</p> <p>Only touch individual's box for packing.</p> <p>Shears/clippers/guillotines cleaned and sanitised for storage.</p>
Despatch	Two people	<p>1 person nominated as Despatch operator. Multiple transport operators.</p> <p>Despatcher to record onsite transport operators daily.</p> <p>Common surfaces such as forklifts to be sanitised between operators. Transport operator to load consignment.</p> <p>Maintain physical distancing at all times.</p> <p>Transport operator to wear gloves at consignment signoff.</p>
Smokos / Meal breaks	One bubble	<p>Bubble sizes to be set to allow work programme to be efficiently completed while maintaining physical distancing.</p> <p>If more than 1 bubble within the nursery, stagger smoko / meal breaks at common shed. Sanitisation practices implemented between bubbles. Clean common areas daily.</p>

## **Nursery – Crop growing**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Multiple Contact Engagements</b>	<b>Exposure Management Controls</b>
Get to work	None	1 person per car.
Prepare for work including PPE options	Two people	Permanent staff gear location assigned. Physical distancing to be enforced. Sanitisation practices between permanent staff and bubbles (if operating) to be implemented.
Toolbox meeting	One bubble	Physical distancing in office. Individuals to take physical notes on work programme.
Tractor driving	None	1 person driving common tractor. At completion of operation sanitise tractor cab (steering wheel, gear levers, controls).
Crop conditioning	Two people	1 person driving tractor, second person on implement maintain physical distancing. Sanitise tractor and implement common surfaces at completion.
Maintenance	One person	1 nominated person to run workshop, complete maintenance requirements.

## **Mechanical site preparation**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Multiple Contact Engagements</b>	<b>Exposure Management Controls</b>
Work prescription, hazard ID and shape file data files are prepared by forest company	None	Forest company emails pdf and uploads shape files directly to contractors' GPS device.
Contractor prints out documentation, signs it and scans / emails back to forest company	None	Contractor completes task at base prior to field work.

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Contractor and forest manager discuss the prescribed job over the phone.	None	Discuss on phone.
Contractor transports machine to site	None	Contractor drives light vehicle to site transport company. Have 1 person driving truck to site with excavator. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio is used to communicate when at site</li> <li>• Truck driver unhooks excavator and then retreats to cab</li> <li>• Contractor drives excavator off truck</li> <li>• Truck driver then leaves site</li> <li>• No contact between two parties.</li> </ul>
Forest gate opening and closing	None	Contractor to open and close gates. Wash or sanitise hands as soon as possible.
Sign in and out of property if appropriate	None	Contractor uses online app if available otherwise use gloves to sign in and out of book.
Carry out spot cultivation	None	1 person working on site at all times.
Forest company representative onsite supervision and compliance.	Two people	1 forest representative and 1 machine operator can communicate via radio or to maintain physical distancing.

## **Aerial spraying**

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Work prescriptions and aerial shape file data files are prepared by forest company	None	Forest company emails pdf and uploads shape files directly to contractors' GPS device.
Aerial contractor prints out documentation and uploads GPS shape files into	None	Contractor completes task at base prior to field application.

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Chemical is collected from storage facility and handled	Two people	1 person on loader and 1 driver securing vehicle load for transportation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nominated person open / close facility</li> <li>Manhandling containers – two people as required 1 metre distancing minimum and wearing gloves.</li> <li>Driver only secures load</li> <li>All other movements maintain physical distancing.</li> </ul>
Forest owner representative drives to application site	None	1 person in own vehicle.
Chemical transported to field for application by ground crew	None	1 person in own vehicle.
Water cart transported to field for chemical mixing (optional if no pond source)	None	1 person in own vehicle.
Forest gate opening and closing	None	1 nominated person to open and close gates. Wash hands or sanitise as soon as possible.
Onsite setup and mixing of chemicals	None	1 person operation. If second person maintain physical distancing.
Water tanker filling at aerial ground crew	Two people	Tanker driver controls the fill operation. Aerial ground crew maintain physical distancing.
Ground crew loading helicopter chemical and fuel	Two people	1 ground crew working alone, the pilot is isolated in the helicopter.
Forest company representative onsite supervision and compliance.	Two people	1 forest representative and 1 ground crew or 1 pilot can communicate via independent radio or maintain physical distancing.

## Planting

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Work prescriptions and maps are prepared by forest company	None	Forest company emails prescriptions and maps to the contractor.
Contractor prints out documentation or loads onto field device	None	Contractor completes task at base.
Crews are allocated to vehicles and limited to only have direct contact with their assigned crew	Limit to as few as possible	<p>Driver/crew leader.</p> <p>Variable crew size depending on scale of operation.</p> <p>Crews depart from allocated pick up point, do not come to central point or depot.</p> <p>All personal belongings removed from vehicle every night at drop off.</p> <p>Driver cleans and disinfects the vehicle every night. See Appendix 5.</p>
Contractor / supervisor manages field operations	None	1 person in own vehicle maintains physical distancing on site, communicates via radio wherever possible or maintain physical distancing.
Forest gate opening and closing	None	1 nominated person to open and close gates. Wash hands or sanitise as soon as possible.
Each crew allocated a separate work area or block	Limit to as few as possible	Clearly marked or mapped area allocated to each crew, may be part of a block adjacent to other crews providing physical distancing is maintained.
Quality control	None	1 person in own vehicle. Maintain physical distancing. Data delivered electronically.
Trees delivered from nursery, chemical or fertiliser delivered	None	Trees, chemical, fertiliser delivered without contact with crew.

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Collect boxes from bubbles or trailers, fertiliser or chemical	Limit to as few as possible	Each crew allocated individual bubbles / storage on site, separated to allow physical distancing.
Return empty boxes to bubbles / storage	Limit to as few as possible	As above.
Accommodation (if provided)	Limit to as few as possible	Maintain crew bubble.

## Silviculture (manual spot spraying, pruning, thinning)

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Work prescriptions and maps are prepared by forest company.	None	Forest company emails prescriptions and maps to the contractor.
Contractor prints out documentation or loads onto field device	None	Contractor completes task at base.
Crews are allocated to vehicles and limited to only have direct contact with their assigned crew	Limit to as few as possible	<p>Driver/crew leader.</p> <p>Variable crew size depending on scale of operation.</p> <p>Crews depart from allocated pick up point, do not come to central point or depot.</p> <p>All personal belongings removed from vehicle every night at drop off.</p> <p>Driver cleans and disinfects the vehicle every night. See Appendix 5.</p>
Forest gate opening and closing	None	1 nominated person to open and close gates. Wash hands or sanitise as soon as possible.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Multiple Contact Engagements</b>	<b>Exposure Management Controls</b>
Contractor / supervisor manages field operations	None	1 person in own vehicle maintains physical distancing on site, communicates via radio wherever possible or maintain physical distancing.
Each crew allocated a separate work area or block	Limit to as few as possible	Clearly marked or mapped area allocated to the crew, may be part of a block adjacent to other crews providing physical distancing is managed.
Quality control	None	1 person in own vehicle. Maintain physical distancing. Data delivered electronically.
Accommodation (if provided)	Limit to as few as possible	Maintain crew bubble.

## **Inventory**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Multiple Contact Engagements</b>	<b>Exposure Management Controls</b>
Manager preparation – Work prescriptions, mapping, hazard ID, plot locations, permits and security keys.	None	Forest company emails pdfs and plot data and ensures systems are set up electronically.  Disinfect keys. Maintain physical distancing.
Task preparation – Inventory supervisor / contractor prints out paper maps if required or uses electronic systems such as Avenza maps.	None	Supervisor or contractor completes task at base prior to field application and assembles all necessary equipment.

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Driving – Inventory Contractor or forest supervisor/s drives to site. Depending on inventory task this can be one or two people.	Limit to as few as possible	Limit bubble size by vehicle occupant numbers. See Appendix 5.
Equipment and devices	None	All electronic equipment or manual equipment is not to be shared. This includes tablets, allegros, GPS, phones, tape measures, clinometers etc.  All equipment is to be disinfected daily.
Data – Try to utilise digital systems / apps such as survey 123 if possible.	None	All data is to be supplied electronically.  If paper-based systems are used this is to be sent by photo, original paper copies to have an incubation period before being handled by another party.
Forest gate opening and closing	None	1 nominated person to open and close gates. Wash hands as soon as practical.
Traceability	None	Record track logs via GPS or using your smart phone ensure location icon is activated.  Record any other activities or human contact at the site. Always maintain physical distancing.
Accommodation – If camping away	None	Separate motel units for individuals.
ATV – side by sides or quads	None	As per vehicle utilising 1 designated driver in a side by side or individual quads.
Utilisation of Drones – UAV operators when collecting data	None	When carrying out and operating UAV's as an individual they need to apply all the rules as above.

## **Animal pest control**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Multiple Contact Engagements</b>	<b>Exposure Management Controls</b>
Work prescriptions and maps are prepared by forest company	None	Forest company emails map files to the contractor.
Chemical / ammunition / traps are collected from storage facility and handled	None	1 person in own vehicle.
Contractor drives to site	None	1 person in own vehicle. If vehicle shared disinfect before and after.
Forest gate opening and closing	None	1 nominated person to open and close gates. Wash hands as soon as practical.
Forest company representative onsite supervision and compliance.	Two people	1 forest representative and 1 contractor can communicate via independent radio or maintain physical distancing.

## Weed spraying

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Work prescriptions and maps are prepared by forest company.	None	Forest company emails map files to the contractor.
Chemicals are collected from storage facility and mixed.	None	1 person in own vehicle and sprayer.
Contractor picks up second person (if required) drives to site	Two people	Hands sanitised before entry and after exit of vehicle. See Appendix 5.
Application of chemical to weeds via pressurised hose / knapsack sprayer	Two people	Maintain physical distancing at all times. No swapping of tools / roles.
Forest gate opening and closing	None	1 nominated person to open and close gates. Wash hands as soon as practical.
Forest company representative onsite supervision and compliance.	Three people	1 forest representative and 2 contractors can communicate via independent radio or maintain physical distancing.

## General maintenance

Installation or maintenance of signs / gates / fences / cameras etc.

Task	Multiple Contact Engagements	Exposure Management Controls
Work prescriptions and maps are prepared by forest company	None	Forest company emails map files to the contractor or staff member.
Collection of tools / signs / other items	Two people (if items are purchased)	Masks to be worn if purchasing items. Disinfect items purchased. Sanitise hands if handling items before disinfecting.
Contractor / staff drives to site	None	1 person in own vehicle. If vehicle shared disinfect before and after.
Forest gate opening and closing	None	1 nominated person to open and close gates. Wash hands as soon as practical.
Forest company representative onsite supervision and compliance.	Two people	1 forest representative and contractor can communicate via independent radio or maintain physical distancing.

### KEEP YOURSELF AND OTHERS SAFE

- **Maintain physical distancing: LEVEL 3: Stay 1–2 metres apart; LEVEL 4: 2 metres apart**
- **Wash hands for 20 seconds regularly with soap and dry thoroughly, or use sanitiser**
- **Clean and disinfect common contact surfaces frequently and keep other surfaces clean.**

