

Emergency information 2023 – Upper North Island & Auckland [Auckland & Waitomo states of emergency]

29 January 2023

A State of Emergency was declared in the Auckland region on 27 January and for the Waitomo District on 28 January, following the impacts of a severe weather event and flooding. The States of Emergency are in place for 7 days. The National Emergency Management Agency has stood up its National Coordination Centre to support the response and coordinate any central government support that may be required.

The advice here is designed to help our members in all affected areas make good, safe, sensible and practical decisions in the event of an emergency situation. Please contact the Restaurant Association on 0800 737 827 if you have concerns or questions.

To report flooding, damage to drains, or stormwater issues in Auckland, please log your issue online: <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/report-problem/Pages/report-a-problem.aspx>

If life or property is threatened always dial 111 for Police, Fire or Ambulance.

-
- You can keep up to date with developing information on the **Civil Defence website**: www.civildefence.govt.nz and the [Civil Defence Facebook page here](#)
 - Local updates:
 - **Auckland**: www.aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz and on the [Auckland Emergency Management Facebook](#).
 - **Waitomo**: www.waikatoregioncdemg.govt.nz and on the [Waitomo District Council Facebook](#)
 - **Thames / Coromandel**: www.tcdc.govt.nz/Our-Community/Emergency-Management-Unit and [Thames-Coromandel District Council Facebook](#)
 - **Bay of Plenty**: www.bopcivildefence.govt.nz/ and [Bay of Plenty Civil Defence Facebook](#)
 - MPI has useful information on **food safety management** in the event of an emergency situation: www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/adverse-events/food-safety-in-natural-disasters-and-emergencies/
-

FLOODING

- Put safety first. Don't take any chances. Stay out of flood water.
- Do not try to walk, play, swim, or drive in floodwater: even water just 15 centimetres deep can sweep you off your feet, and half a metre of water will carry away most vehicles. Flood water is often contaminated and can make you sick.

- Keep children away from flood waters. It is not safe for them.
- If you come in contact with floodwater, thoroughly clean hands, clothes and any property touched.
- Watercare's water treatment plants are operating and water is safe to drink.
- If your property has been damaged, please take pictures for your insurance company and contact them as soon as you can.
- Help others if it is safe to do so, especially people who may require special assistance.

WATER SUPPLY & WASTEWATER NETWORK

It is important to keep up to date with the quality of your water supply and wastewater management information as this can change rapidly and it impacts on our operations significantly. We have included links to the relevant websites that will have up-to-date information on this.

- **Auckland:** <https://www.watercare.co.nz/About-us/News-media/Important-information-for-customers-following-the>
- **Waitomo:** <https://www.waitomo.govt.nz/our-services/emergency-services/>
- **Tauranga:** <https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/council/water-services/wastewater>
- **Coromandel:** <https://www.tcdc.govt.nz/Our-Council/News-Media-and-Public-Notices/Latest-News/WEATHER-COMMS-11am-29-JAN-2023>

FOOD WASTE

If you have food waste, consider donating if possible to your local City Mission, Kiwi Harvest (<https://www.kiwiharvest.org.nz/>), or Salvation Army (<https://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/>). They will have opportunities to redistribute to those in need.

EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

You may need to close your business if you are in an affected area, or you have suffered damage, or you may have employees who are unable to get to work. It may be difficult for employees to get in contact with you as phone and internet may be affected.

Transportation is also an issue, as some roads may be temporarily closed and public transport could be affected. Please bear these things in mind when dealing with your staff.

OVERARCHING EMPLOYMENT ADVICE FOR BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY AN EMERGENCY SITUATION

The key is communication. Like all emergency situations of this nature, you are faced with an unusual situation, and some of it is probably not covered by employment agreements. It is very important that employers and employees are talking to each other.

- Be flexible. where possible This is a time for employers and employees to be understanding and to take a common-sense approach to getting the business up and running.
- If employees are concerned about their safety in getting to, or going back to work, they should raise their concerns with their employer.
- If employers are asking employees to do work they don't normally do (for example, clean-up work), both sides need to ensure they're comfortable with this, and safety must be a top priority.
- People may want to (or need to) focus on family rather than work.

- Working with staff health and safety representatives and union representatives will be of assistance in some work places.
- Work together to find practical solutions.
- Recognise that this is a significant event
 - People react differently in these types of situations - some may need extra support
 - Some will want to focus on caring for their family
 - Others will be best supported by assisting to keep things running
- An individual employee has the right to raise concerns and refuse to do work they consider unsafe. Discuss the work and the concerns before it gets to this point.

ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Who decides if workers have to go to work if the business is open?

Employers and employees should talk to each other about what is happening with the workplace. Discuss and reach an appropriate agreement.

Whose responsibility is it to ensure the workplace is safe?

This is the responsibility of the PCBU / employer under the Health and Safety at Work Act. You should follow the advice of the local council.

My business is in the area that has been closed due to damage and / or my business is one of the those affected by road closures and flood management processes. What if it is a usual day of work for my employees and the business is closed. Do I pay employees? Should I pay them?

The answer to these (and similar questions) will depend on the employment agreement in place. If the employment agreement is clear about what to do, you should be guided by your agreement. The Restaurant Association's Permanent Employment Agreement has a business interruption clause which can be enforceable where business operations are interrupted by unforeseen events beyond your control.

Where a business is closed due to circumstances beyond the control of the Employer (even for a couple of days) it is a business interruption. The clause in the updated agreements states that an employer will consult with an employee about any decision regarding payment for the day(s) the business is closed. Therefore, we advise business owners to speak with their employees before making a decision on whether they will be paid or not.

This conversation may include discussions about whether there was alternative work available elsewhere for the employee, and if not, whether it was appropriate that the employee be paid, take leave without pay, or take annual leave etc. If the decision was made not to pay the employee, it is open for the employee to challenge it, however, if the above process is followed you will be unlikely to have any problems.

NOTE: under current employment legislation your employment agreements should have a cancellation clause in your employment agreement and this clause may also be used in these types of circumstances. You'll need to be sure that any shift cancellation does not affect any agreed hours with an employee.

PROPERTY DAMAGE / INSURANCE

Contact your insurer asap if you have damage to your property / business. Take photos and if you need to make urgent repairs please record the work done, take before and after photos, and keep copies of the bills you paid.

CROMBIE LOCKWOOD: Please be aware that members can call our insurance partners, the Crombie Lockwood team on 0800 276 624. They will have access to the best advice available. The Crombie Lockwood claims number is 0800 252 461.

Crombie Lockwood have useful information on assistance that is available and making a claim on their website: <https://www.crombielockwood.co.nz/news/auckland-flooding-information-for-clients/>.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Westpac relief options

Restaurant Association partner, Westpac, is offering financial support to personal and business customers affected by flooding. The relief package features a range of possible support options for both business and personal customers. These may include:

- Suspension of principal payments for up to three months on home loans and business loans;
- Deferred payment on business credit cards for up to three months;
- A temporary overdraft facility for business customers.

If you have been affected by the current situation and are needing support call the Westpac contact centre on 0800 400 600.

Financial support from Work and Income

Support and assistance is available if you, or your staff, have been directly affected by the flooding in Auckland. Let your team know that Work and Income can help and can point you in the right direction based on your situation. You don't have to be on a benefit.

In emergencies, Work and Income can help with costs if you don't have any other way of paying. They can help with:

- medical costs
- bedding
- food
- power bills
- repairs or replacing appliances
- emergency accommodation costs
- loss of income because you can't work.

Work and Income also provides other help such as benefits and housing assistance.

Website: www.workandincome.govt.nz/urgent-costs

Call on 0800 400 100 for help with emergency costs:

- Saturday 28 January 2023 - 7.00am-5.00pm
- Sunday 29 January 2023 - 8.00am – 5.00pm
- Monday 30 January 2023 - 8.00am – 5.00pm.

Civil Defence Payments

Civil Defence Payments are available for people who have been affected by the flooding. You don't have to be on a benefit to qualify for a Civil Defence Payment. In most cases it doesn't matter what your income is or what assets you have.

These can help with:

- emergency food, clothing and bedding if yours has been damaged or destroyed.
- accommodation costs if you have been evacuated and are staying in accommodation such as a motel, hotel or temporary rental accommodation.
- loss of income due to an inability to work caused by the flooding.
- A payment if you have evacuees staying with you in places such as a private home, marae or community centres.

Call Work and Income on 0800 400 100 for more information from:

- Saturday 28 January 2023 7.00am - 5.00pm
- Sunday 29 January 2023 8.00am - 5.00pm
- Monday 30 January 2023 8.00am - 5.00pm.

MENTAL HEALTH

Situations like these can affect us, our teams and communities, in different ways. Please be aware that we can help with these matters through our partnership with [EAP](#). We also have a number of wellness and mental health resources made in collaboration with the Mental Health Foundation on our [website](#).

To help you prioritise your health and wellbeing, we have also secured some free Clearhead subscriptions for members. Clearhead is an online mental wellbeing platform and support service, offering real-time consultations with a digital councillor. Clearhead is powered by smart AI technology that mimics a consultation with your GP. This online conversation is a non-judgmental space where you can discuss what you are going through and receive support. Clearhead will create and guide you through your own personalised wellbeing plan, based on your unique situation. This plan can be worked through at your own pace and will offer you mental health tools and lessons. Find out more about Clearhead on their [website here](#). To register for one of these free subscriptions please [signup here](#).

Please note that you can call or text 1737 for 24/7 for confidential support.

REMEMBER...

Our RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION HELPLINE - 0800 737 827 - is available. We are happy to hear from you regardless of your situation so please do not hesitate to call the helpline. Information is also available on the Restaurant Association website, www.restaurantnz.co.nz.

We have a number of team members who are on the road so let us know if you would like one of the friendly team to stop by for a visit by calling 0800 737 827.