

# Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall

Minister for COVID-19 Response  
Minister of Research, Science and Innovation  
Minister for Seniors  
Associate Minister of Health



27 JUN 2022

Chris Wardle  
fyi-request-19286-f0954916@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: OIA0711

Dear Chris Wardle

## Official Information Act request relating to COVID-19 legislation

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request to Hon Chris Hipkins, which was received on 8 May 2022. Your request was:

*“As it is now clear that the rest of the world has, or is in a state of repeal of the Covid emergency powers (and New Zealand has “caught up” with the level of infection and endemicity is being discussed) what criteria remain here that require the citizens of this country to have not have the same repeal process made by 30 June 2022 (as communicated previously) and why it should be held back until the end date set in May 2023.”*

The time frames for responding to your request were extended under section 15A of the Act by 10 working days because consultation was required before a decision could be made on your request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

An Epidemic Preparedness Notice came into force on 25 March 2020 in response to the initial outbreak of COVID-19. This Notice must be renewed every three months and is based on whether the Prime Minister is satisfied that the effects of the outbreak of COVID-19 are likely to significantly disrupt, or continue to significantly disrupt, essential government and business activity in New Zealand. As such, the Epidemic Preparedness Notice has been renewed every three months with the most recent renewal on 17 March 2022. You can find more information on the relevant Epidemic Preparedness Notice at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-response-planning/covid-19-epidemic-notice-and-orders#epidemic>

Additionally, New Zealand’s COVID-19 domestic outbreak is currently tracking behind most other countries. While it may be more appropriate in light of their domestic situations for other countries to ease restrictions faster than New Zealand, New Zealand needs to review its settings in light of its own domestic situation. This is to balance the impact of public health restrictions on New Zealanders and their communities against the need to minimise the spread of COVID-19 given the health, economic and social impacts of widespread community transmission.

As you are aware, the government assessed alternative strategies to help New Zealand transition from an elimination strategy, and the COVID-19 Protection Framework signalled our next step in managing COVID-19. Information related to the development of the Framework, set out in the table below, has been proactively released on the Unite Against COVID-19 website:

Item	Date	Document/Website Description	Website address
1.	10 Oct 2021	Update on Future COVID-19 Domestic Response Framework	<a href="https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/Update-on-future-COVID-19-domestic-response-framework.pdf">https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/Update-on-future-COVID-19-domestic-response-framework.pdf</a>
2.	19 Oct 2021	Targets for Transition to the COVID-19 Protection Framework	<a href="https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/Targets-for-Transition-to-the-COVID-19-Protection-Framework.pdf">https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/Targets-for-Transition-to-the-COVID-19-Protection-Framework.pdf</a>
3.	20 Oct 2021	COVID-19 Protection Framework Settings	<a href="https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/COVID-19-Protection-Framework-Settings.pdf">https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/COVID-19-Protection-Framework-Settings.pdf</a>
4.	15 Nov 2021	COVID-19: Transition to the COVID-19 Protection Framework and the Auckland Alert Level Boundary	<a href="https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/COVID-19-Transition-to-the-COVID-19-Protection-Framework-and-the-Auckland-Alert-Level-Boundary.pdf">https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/COVID-19-Transition-to-the-COVID-19-Protection-Framework-and-the-Auckland-Alert-Level-Boundary.pdf</a>
5.	22 Nov 2021	COVID-19: Implementing the COVID-19 Protection Framework	<a href="https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/COVID-19-Implementing-the-COVID-19-Protection-Framework.pdf">https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/COVID-19-Implementing-the-COVID-19-Protection-Framework.pdf</a>
6.	29 Nov 2021	COVID-19 Response: 29 November Review of COVID-19 Protection Framework Settings for New Zealand	<a href="https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/Review-of-COVID-19-Protection-Framework-Settings-for-New-Zealand.pdf">https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/Alert-levels-and-restrictions/10-December-2021/Vaccine-Certificates-and-CPF/Review-of-COVID-19-Protection-Framework-Settings-for-New-Zealand.pdf</a>

Further information related to the development of our approach to reconnecting New Zealanders with the world is publicly available on [www.covid19.govt.nz/about-our-covid-19-response/proactive-releases/](http://www.covid19.govt.nz/about-our-covid-19-response/proactive-releases/).

Accordingly, I have refused your request for this part under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information requested is, or will soon be, publicly available.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely



Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall  
**Minister for COVID-19 Response**