

## **COVID-19 – INFORMATION FOR CLIENTS**

Following the World Health Organisation having declared Covid-19 as a global pandemic, Gifford Devine is actively taking steps to ensure our offices remain a safe place to work and visit. It is important that we keep you informed of the steps we are taking to protect our clients and staff.

Here is what we will be doing at alert level 2:

### **We have an emergency remote work plan**

This plan takes steps to ensure that in the event our staff are not able to work from one of our offices that we can continue to provide you with the high level of legal advice that you have come to expect from us.

### **We are changing the way we meet with our clients**

Please consider whether you need to come into our office or if it is possible for us to communicate with you in a different way.

We have access to FaceTime, Zoom and Teams teleconferencing facilities in the event that a face to face meeting is not feasible. In addition to this our staff continue to be contactable by telephone and email.

Please DO NOT attend our office if:

- a. You are required to be self-isolating in accordance with any governmental directive;
- b. In the preceding 14 days, you have been overseas, in a part of New Zealand that is subject to level 4 restrictions or in contact with anyone that either has Covid-19 or has Covid-19 symptoms; or
- c. You are unwell or are accompanied by others who are unwell.

Our staff will not meet with you face-to-face in these circumstances. Our staff have been directed that if they are in doubt about your health status they are to refuse to meet with you in person and arrange an alternative method of communicating and providing legal services to you.

### **We are increasing our office cleaning programme**

Like other businesses around New Zealand we need to manage our offices in a way that protects both our staff and our clients. We have introduced new office hygiene standards to reflect the need to clean surfaces more regularly.

### **We have new in-office protocols**

To keep our staff and clients safe we have refined our office protocols.

We will have contact registers in place to record everyone who comes onto our premises.

Clients will be required to wear face coverings when visiting our offices. Our staff will also wear face coverings when meeting with you.

Please do not be offended if we do not shake your hand or if you find us standing a step or two further away from you. Current guidelines are that we should be 2m distance from each other at all times.

Please do not come to our office unless you have an appointment.

### **We are listening to the experts**

To ensure that Gifford Devine is following the correct protocols we are taking best practice advice from the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health's website provides a comprehensive overview of best practice systems which you can view on the attached link: [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz).

Gifford Devine is committed to taking well-measured and practical steps to keep our staff and clients safe in our offices.

Covid-19 is a significant global event and we want to reassure our staff and clients that we are doing everything in our power to prepare, plan and protect.