



DRIVING MISS DAISY COVID-19 POLICY - Version #21 – 21st September 2021

Alert Level 3 – Auckland

Alert Level 2 – The rest of New Zealand

Overview

Driving Miss Daisy is classified as an Essential Industry Service under the transport and logistics section as a Small Passenger Service Vehicle as licenced for this under NZTA. <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-level/#essential-businesses>

As a national organisation servicing the needs of our elderly and potentially vulnerable clients, we are continuously looking for ways to enhance our “Best Practice” and better service the needs of our clients in any way we can.

All Franchise Owners and their Drivers already exercise the highest standards of cleanliness, hygiene and infection control behaviour (such as personal distancing, with a caring approach with clients) to avoid wherever possible the spread of a communicable disease. Our commitment during the annual influenza season to vaccination, hand sanitisation and car cleaning are some excellent examples of our current practices and we have a recommendation that all our Drivers personally have the flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine to again better protect themselves and our clients.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is a serious and concerning event for our country. We at Driving Miss Daisy are keeping a careful watch on the situation, which is changing daily. We will act upon the advice and direction of our Government and Ministries to take any operational changes needed to protect our clients, Drivers and community. This includes getting vaccinated for COVID-19 as soon as possible.

Recommendations to Franchise Owners and their staff

Driving Miss Daisy is recognised by its clients and numerous organisations we work with, as providing the highest level of service, with exceptional vehicle presentation at all times, including cleanliness and constant awareness of the need for hygienic practices. In addition to these standard expectations, we now implement the following activities, as advised by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Transport of NZ.

The following protocols are practised by Driving Miss Daisy Drivers and Shoppers:

1. We are vigilant about washing our hands, using **hand sanitisers** which are provided in our cars, many hospitals, medical centres, retirement villages, businesses etc.
2. We wash our hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, we use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol. There is hand sanitiser in our vehicles for our own and our clients use as required. The MOH recommendations:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/good-hygiene/hand-washing>

3. We take extra steps to **clean and disinfect** (with alcohol or hypochlorite/bleach wipes or solutions) frequently touched objects and **surfaces in cars**, especially door handles, seat belts and seats between different clients. This includes shopping bags and packages.
4. Close contact with people is required to spread the virus, so we exercise strict **social distancing practices** with a caring approach.
5. Every Franchise Owner and their Drivers legally must wear **Facemasks** while interacting with clients. All passengers/clients aged 12 years old or older legally must wear **Facemasks**.
6. The QR code poster is displayed in all vehicles and we follow the MOH **Contact Tracing** process. Additionally, we carry manual contact tracing forms approved by the MOH should a client not have the smart phone app.

Additionally,

In Level 2 our protocol is (where possible) that our client/s:

- Preferably sits in the rear passenger seat, diagonal to the driver.
- Sit as far away as possible from the driver. For example, if they are the sole passenger, sit in the rear left-hand side passenger seat, diagonally opposite the driver.
- The maximum number of passengers must be limited to the number of passenger seats in the back of the vehicle (in most cars there are typically 3 rear passenger seats).
- These practices will be to maintain at least two metres where we can, and we will avoid close contact with people in public places and do the same with our clients.

In Level 3 our protocol is to insist (where possible) that our client/s:

- Sit in the rear passenger seats only – **they must not** sit in the front passenger seat next to the driver.
- Sit as far away as possible from the driver. For example, if they are the sole passenger, sit in the rear left-hand side passenger seat, diagonally opposite the driver.
- The maximum number of passengers must be limited to the number of passenger seats in the back of the vehicle (in most cars there are typically 3 rear passenger seats).
- **Who clients can travel with:** Apart from the driver, only people from the same isolation group (household unit or 'bubble') can travel in the same vehicle. These practices will be to maintain at least two metres social distancing where we can, and we will avoid close contact with people in public places and do the same with our clients.

7. People with pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma, heart disease or are immune comprised, are at greater risk. Therefore, **we practise mindful coughing and sneezing etiquette at all times, by using either a tissue** or the inside of our elbow. This is especially important in the presence of clients and general public, particularly older clients, vulnerable people and younger children.

8. We consciously avoid putting our hands to our face and mouth where possible and particularly after being in public places.
9. All Franchise Owners/Drivers have access to PPE.
10. If one of our Franchise Owners, employees or clients is suspected of having COVID-19, or show signs of any virus, they should immediately get tested and then self-isolate at home until they receive their final negative result. The New Zealand Government and its ministries see this as a major component of preventing further spread of disease and is best practice for any event such as COVID-19.
11. If one of our Franchise Owners or a Driver contracts COVID-19 (or is otherwise unwell), or if they have a dependant that requires care for COVID-19 or some other illness, then they are entitled to sick leave. If no sick leave entitlement is available, they may be entitled to annual holidays – both in accordance with the standard parameters for dealing with illness and sick leave.
12. We are maintaining excellent communication with our Franchise Owners about the processes that are in place, with updated procedures, and they are fully informed re notifying Driving Miss Daisy Head Office about any further developments in their local communities, which is key to managing outbreaks such as COVID-19. We are also aware that some Franchise Owners and Employees may be experiencing elevated feelings of stress and anxiety, which make the communication of processes all the more important.
13. All our Drivers are police vetted, this includes a Children/Youth/Elderly and Vulnerable Adult check. In addition, this enables our Drivers to offer a secure pick up/drop off service for medical prescriptions.
14. As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, Driving Miss Daisy Head Office will always keep our Franchise Owners and Drivers updated on the changes, processes and decisions as required.

Further advice is always available from the Ministry of Health which we access on the following links:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-general-public/about-covid-19>

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