

New Zealand lifts Auckland virus lockdown

August 31 2020



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Schools across Auckland reopened Monday as New Zealand's largest city emerged from lockdown, with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern expressing confidence a second-wave outbreak of coronavirus was under control.

While Aucklanders were allowed out of their homes, the government

limited non-school social gatherings in the city to 10 people and made masks compulsory on [public transport](#) nationwide.

The Auckland lockdown began on August 12 after four cases were detected in the city of 1.5 million, ending 102 days free of community transmission when it appeared New Zealand had beaten the virus.

The cluster of infections has since grown to 141, with four new cases of community transmission reported on Monday, making it the largest recorded in New Zealand.

The origin of the outbreak has not been found and Ardern said it was "inevitable" there would be more [cases](#) linked to the cluster.

But even though it continues to grow, Ardern said it was safe to lift the lockdown.

"We have a plan that we know will work," a masked Ardern told reporters in Auckland.

"We just need everyone's compliance and help. If everyone sticks to the guidelines and rules, coupled together with all our [public health measures](#), we can make this work."

Ardern, who delayed New Zealand's [general election](#) by a month to October 17 because of the outbreak, urged fellow Kiwis to "do their bit" in fighting the virus.

"It's natural that we feel tired, the whole world is," she said.

"But relative to others we're doing really well. We'll be able to get back in front of the virus if we follow the guidelines."

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