

AT school buses under Alert Level 2 FAQs

This information only applies to Auckland Transport supplied school bus services. It does not apply to privately contracted school buses or buses supplied by the Ministry of Transport. We are aware many students take public buses (i.e. not dedicated school services) to schools and there is also some information about public buses in this document.

Will the buses have capacity for all students and is standing allowed?

We cannot guarantee there will be capacity for all students. Standing will not be permitted on any public transport bus including school bus services under Alert Level 2. This will mean buses will be able to carry fewer passengers than normal.

Will any additional school bus services be put on?

Yes, but this will not be possible for all services. AT has identified a priority list of school bus services with the most anticipated need and is working with bus operators now to find spare buses and drivers and remove some bus trips on public routes and use those buses on school bus routes. We don't expect to have this agreed until late Friday afternoon.

From Monday 18 May we will closely monitor the use of buses to make adjustments where we can.

What happens to students if the bus is already full when it arrives at their designated stop?

We are currently working to find additional buses and drivers and to shift existing resources to where they are estimated to be needed if we can. We cannot guarantee there will be capacity for all students.

If all available seats on a bus are taken, then the bus will not be able to accept any more passengers. We apologise if a school bus cannot accommodate all students who want to use it.

We recommend that parents of young children wait with their child at the bus stop in the morning and provide them with a way of contacting you in the afternoon in the event their bus is too full to take them.

Why do buses have the 1 metre distancing stickers on them for Level 2, when there are no restrictions for school buses?

Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Health and NZTA National Emergency Response Team (NERT) has determined that school buses can have less restrictive social distancing requirements than public buses, because they are considered to be in a controlled environment with all passengers attending known schools, so contact tracing can take place if the school keeps a list of students who use school buses.

Why can't the AT HOP card be used for contact tracing?

Unfortunately, we can't currently rely on AT HOP registrations for contact tracing of school students because not all cards are registered, some cards are incorrectly registered, and some students are travelling without using an AT HOP card. AT will contact schools in the near future to discuss ways of getting more students access to AT HOP cards and getting cards registered.

Why do the schools need to get bus passenger details?

In order to meet the standards, set by Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Health and NZTA National Emergency Response Team (NERT) which will allow us to put more people onto school buses than we can on regular public buses we require schools to create a register of students who use school buses, and what bus route they use when they do. This register doesn't need to be updated daily. It just needs to be created once. It will be used to narrow down the group of students who travel on each bus route should

this be needed. Not keeping this register will mean we will have to apply 1m physical distancing on school buses and this will mean fewer students will be able to travel on these buses.

Will the AT Mobile app show the capacity on school buses as it does with public services?

Yes. The AT Mobile app can be downloaded from your online app store.

Will buses have hand sanitiser available?

We are requesting that schools provide this for their students. AT has a limited supply available for schools that need some. Some buses may have some on board, but we cannot guarantee this. We would recommend bus passengers take their own hand sanitiser to be sure.

Does the school register have to be kept for each trip?

No. This register doesn't need to be updated daily. It just needs to be created once. It will be used to narrow down the group of students who travel on each bus route should this be needed. Student name, their contact details and the school bus route number they travel on is all that is required.

Will the capacity of school buses be displayed on the front of the bus like public buses?

Many buses that are used for school trips are also used for public bus routes as well. There will be a sticker on these buses advising of the capacity of the bus, however this information will only apply to public bus routes, not school trips. School bus trips will allow more people on board than the sticker indicates.

Buses that are only used for school trips will not have this feature.

What is the capacity of each school bus?

Varies due to the make and model of the bus used. Normal school bus capacity will be reduced with no standing passengers permitted and the seats around the driver not available.

Are school buses cleaned regularly?

AT buses are cleaned in accordance with Ministry of Health guidelines.

In addition to normal bus cleaning, high touch areas like grab handles, stanchions bus stop buttons are cleaned and disinfected up to twice daily, and all buses are sanitised inside using fogging system at night with the anti-bacterial product effective up to two weeks.

What happens if a school does not collect a register of their school bus passengers?

If a register of school bus passengers is not collected by a school, AT would then have to use 1m physical distancing on school buses to that school, meaning fewer students will be able to travel on these buses.

What is happening with public buses that are not school buses?

Public buses (i.e. not dedicated school buses) have additional physical distancing requirements with even fewer seats available for passengers. This is because public bus services do not have the ability for contact tracing that school bus services do. Seats on these buses are clearly labelled so passengers are not sitting too close to each other. Standing will also not be permitted on these buses.

Plan ahead use the online journey planner ([AT.govt.nz/journeyplanner](https://at.govt.nz/journeyplanner) or AT Mobile).

Are bus service still free under Alert Level 2?

No. Under Alert Level 2 (starting Thursday 14 May) buses will be charging fares for trips when people pay with an AT HOP card.

Buses will not be accepting cash to pay for fares, however they will accept students onto school buses (assuming there is room on board) if they do not have an AT HOP card.

What other measures are in place?

Passengers will enter and exit through the rear door only and the seats immediately behind the driver will be blocked from use, to maintain distancing between passengers and drivers. Drivers have been instructed to take extra precautions to ensure all passengers have safely entered or exited the bus when using the rear door. Where single door buses are used on school routes drivers may choose to step off the bus first to allow a safe distance from passengers when they exit or board.

Registering your AT HOP card to support contact tracing

AT encourages everyone to register their AT HOP card as an additional way to support contact tracing. Find out more about this at [AT.govt.nz/athop](https://at.govt.nz/athop)