

COVID-19 Alert Levels 3 and 4 Messages for Total Mobility operators and clients 8 April 2020

Context

The Total Mobility scheme is part of New Zealand's public transport system and is designed to be used when standard public transport services are not accessible for the Total Mobility user.

Total Mobility will be fare-free for eligible users up to the regional fare subsidy cap, while New Zealand is at COVID-19 pandemic response alert levels 3 and 4, up until 30 June 2020. This aligns with the similar COVID-19 fare-free public transport policy.

Reducing fares for Total Mobility services is a way to help ensure that essential service workers can get to work, and the general public can access essential services.

The fare reduction policy takes effect from Tuesday, 14 April 2020.

What is Total Mobility and who can use the services?

Total Mobility is part of our public transport system and is designed to help people who can't access standard public transport services. It provides door to door transport for those with long term impairments who are unable to use public transport.

There is no change to the existing eligibility requirements for Total Mobility.

Additional information about Total Mobility can be found here:

www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/total-mobility-scheme/total-mobility.html

When does the fare reduction policy start and when will it finish?

The fare reduction policy takes effect from 12:01am Tuesday, 14 April 2020.

This will remain in place while New Zealand is at COVID-19 alert levels 3 and 4, up until 30 June 2020.

This may be reviewed earlier if the COVID-19 alert is reduced to levels 1 or 2.

Are all Total Mobility trips completely free?

From 14 April 2020, Total Mobility trips will be free for clients, up to the regional fare subsidy cap of \$70.

This means that Total Mobility clients will only pay a fare if their trip exceeds the regional fare subsidy cap.

What is a fare subsidy cap?

Regional fare subsidy caps are also referred to as maximum contributions per trip and these amounts differ across New Zealand.

Further information about regional schemes can be found here:

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/total-mobility-scheme/docs/total-mobility-around-new-zealand.pdf>

Why are Total Mobility fares reducing?

It's important that people have equal access to essential goods and services.

Reducing fares for Total Mobility is in line with public transport fares being removed during alert levels 3 and 4, up to 30 June 2020.

This is one way to help New Zealanders who may be essential workers and need to travel, or who may need help traveling to essential goods and services.

Will reducing fares encourage more travel during lockdown?

Both public transport and Total Mobility services are operating for essential travel only during alert levels 3 and 4.

People should only be travelling if they are an essential worker or need access to essential services.

Everyone should stay at home as much as they can. Any unnecessary travel could spread COVID-19. Don't travel far from home and stay local.

Your local area means the area near your home that you regularly visit for essential services.

For more information on travel restrictions, please go to:

www.covid19.govt.nz/individuals-and-households/travelling-and-moving-around/

Does Total Mobility do deliveries or courier services?

No, Total Mobility is a public transport alternative for people with disabilities, not a delivery service.

There are other more efficient home delivery options available to both Total Mobility cardholders and other people more vulnerable to COVID-19 (e.g. people over 70 and those with underlying health conditions).

Please see further advice on the COVID-19 website:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/individuals-and-households/home/help-accessing-essential-goods/>

What messaging has been provided to the small passenger service providers regarding non-essential travel?

Police have provided clear messaging that small passenger service providers are to refuse trips to clients undertaking trips for non-essential travel - this includes Total Mobility trips.

Taxis may be stopped at checkpoints to ensure clients being transported are doing so for essential travel purposes.

What do I have to do differently (client)?

There is no change to your experience - you will still swipe your Total Mobility card at the start of each trip like normal. You won't be charged a fare at the end of the trip unless the fare has gone over the regional subsidy cap, in which case you will need to pay the driver the balance.

What do I have to do differently (Transport Operator)?

The client will swipe their card or use a voucher as normal. Collecting a fare will only be required if the cost of the trip exceeds the regional cap.

Most taxi payment systems will be altered so that the Total Mobility client portion of the fare (under the regional fare subsidy cap) is automatically calculated as zero when the driver enters the total trip value. However, in some systems the driver may need to manually calculate the over-cap payment.

Transport Operators should check with their in-vehicle payment system provider to find out if any changes are required for the system they use, and inform their drivers.

How will Transport Operators and drivers be paid for these trips?

Transport Operators will receive payments from councils as they do now, but will also need to invoice for the portion that would normally be paid by the Total Mobility clients. Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is working with councils to ensure that these payments can be made weekly instead of monthly.

Transport Operators should contact the council they have a contract with for more information on the process that will need to be followed, as this may vary by region.