



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Request to Make COVID-19 a Quarantinable Disease under the Health Act 1956

Portfolio **Health**

On 9 March 2020, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** that novel coronavirus capable of causing severe respiratory illness was made a notifiable infectious disease on 30 January 2020, by placement on Section B, Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Health Act 1956 by Order in Council;
- 2 **noted** that since COVID-19 became a notifiable infectious disease, the World Health Organization has determined the event constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, and the Ministry of Health has assessed the likelihood of one or more imported cases in New Zealand as 'high';
- 3 **noted** that effective border management is very important to protect New Zealanders from the health and other effects of the disease's entry to and spread in this country;
- 4 **agreed** to the addition of 'Novel coronavirus capable of causing severe respiratory illness' and 'COVID-19' to Part 3 of Schedule 1 of the Health Act by Order in Council so that the quarantinable disease provisions in the Health Act and the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006 will apply;
- 5 **agreed** to update the notifiable disease name, regarding novel coronavirus, at Section B, Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Health Act to align with paragraph 4;
- 6 **authorised** the submission to the Executive Council of the Infectious and Notifiable Diseases Order (No 2) 2020 [PCO 22726/6.0];
- 7 **noted** that a waiver of the 28-day rule is sought:
 - 7.1 because of the serious and rapidly evolving global and domestic situation,
 - 7.2 so that the Order can come into effect on 11 March 2020 to enable communication and effective implementation with health, border and other agencies;

8 **approved** a waiver of the 28-day rule so that the Order can come into effect on 11 March 2020.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

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Deputy Prime Minister
Minister of Health

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