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| [Charities Services](https://charitiesupdate.cmail20.com/t/j-l-qmxkt-tkihwiie-r/) |
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| Kia ora koutou katoa,  We are contacting you because we have you listed as the primary contact for a registered charity: please pass this onto members of your board or committee.  You will have received a lot of information about COVID-19 over the last few weeks, and the significant steps being taken by the Government to reduce the spread and impacts of COVID-19 in Aotearoa New Zealand.  We want to assure you that our approach during this uncertain time will be as flexible and pragmatic as possible. We know that charities remain vital in both responding to COVID-19, and keeping us together as a nation.  We have compiled some information based on questions we have been receiving over the last few weeks. [You can find it here.](https://charitiesupdate.cmail20.com/t/j-l-qmxkt-tkihwiie-y/)  Some of the key points:   * We are open – from our homes. Staff from Ngā Ratonga Kaupapa Atawhai Charities Services remain contactable. If you have questions please email [info@charities.govt.nz](mailto:info@charities.govt.nz) – it may take us a little longer to get back to you. * We won’t have access to any post that has been sent, so please contact us via email. This will mean that annual returns, cheques and responses to questions that have been posted to us will have to wait until we return to the office. * Registered charities have six months after the end of their financial year to submit annual returns and financial statements/performance reports. We won’t be sending our regular reminder emails about annual returns being due, as we appreciate this may cause extra stress for some people. If you are unsure when your charity’s annual return is due, you can find this out by searching for your charity on the [online charities register](https://charitiesupdate.cmail20.com/t/j-l-qmxkt-tkihwiie-j/), and selecting the “Annual Returns” tab. * If your charity’s annual return is due shortly, but COVID-19 means you won’t be able to file your documents on time, you can ask for an extension. To do this, please email [info@charities.govt.nz](mailto:info@charities.govt.nz) and let us know how much extra time you need. We won’t be taking action on any late returns during the lockdown period, but we encourage you to get in touch with us if you can. * New Zealanders are expected to remain at home over the next four weeks, so your charity will not be able to hold its Annual General Meeting or other meetings if they bring people together physically. We recommend looking at ways of doing this remotely if possible. * The government’s economic package to support those impacted by COVID-19 extends to registered charities. Check out the details on the [Work and Income website](https://charitiesupdate.cmail20.com/t/j-l-qmxkt-tkihwiie-t/). * Please follow the guidelines and updates from the Government’s COVID-19 website [https://covid19.govt.nz/](https://charitiesupdate.cmail20.com/t/j-l-qmxkt-tkihwiie-i/). This website is updated regularly and covers all the key information you need to know.   Keep an eye on our [Facebook](https://charitiesupdate.cmail20.com/t/j-l-qmxkt-tkihwiie-d/) over the next few weeks. We’ll post any useful updates for charitable groups, informative podcasts, and some of the great stories from New Zealand charities. Let us know about your story by emailing [info@charities.govt.nz](mailto:info@charities.govt.nz) or sending us a message on Facebook.  Ha waka eke noa  We are all in this together.  Stephen Reilly, Acting General Manager Charities Services | |
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