# Health and safety for collecting

## COVID-19

Blind Low Vision NZ is continuing to monitor government guidelines from [covid19.govt.nz](https://covid19.govt.nz/) and the [charities services website](https://charities.govt.nz/covid-19/how-can-i-fundraise-at-alert-levels-1-2-3-and-4/) and we recommend that you do the same. At the current Covid Protection Framework, we are allowed to collect even at red light but have to follow some guidelines. Depending on circumstances closer to the event date, we are also prepared to cancel some areas and yet proceed elsewhere. We will stay in contact and will let you know as soon as possible if anything changes in your area.

We assume that most volunteers will already have their own masks but if you feel you need some supply, please let us know beforehand and we will try to source this out.

Our advice for all volunteers is: **Stay home if you are sick,** wash your hands thoroughly and often, bring hand sanitizer with you and use it regularly, cough or sneeze into your elbow, keep donations contactless (avoid touching money if possible), follow government advice regarding the use of masks during the collection.

### Covid-19 guidelines:

* **Stay home if you are sick!** (but please let your coordinator know)
* Wash your hands thoroughly and often
* Bring hand sanitizer with you and use it regularly
* Cough or sneeze into your elbow
* Keep donations contactless – there should be no need for you to handle money
* Follow government advice regarding the use of masks during the collection

**Mandatory Vaccination**

From 1 December 2021, all staff and volunteers working on behalf of Blind Low Vision NZ will need to be vaccinated and provide proof of full Covid-19 vaccination status. We have incorporated this into the recruitment process so anyone collecting have indicated that they are fully vaccinated.

## Traveling to and from your collection site

Please arrive at your collection site 5 minutes before your collection time and let your coordinator know ASAP if you are unable to collect or will be arriving late. A late arrival or failure to show up can leave another collector on their own or with no-one to pass buckets to. Please take care when traveling to and from your collection site and don’t take any unnecessary risks. In an emergency call 111 before calling your coordinator or Blind Low Vision NZ.

## Collecting at your site

Please do not take any unnecessary risks to protect the money, your safety comes first! If somebody attempts to steal a bucket or to take money from it then it should be handed over with no resistance. To reduce the risk of theft we strongly advise that volunteers do not collect on their own and ask that you **do not open your collection bucket under any circumstances**. Thefts should be reported to the police, to your coordinator, and to the site.

Please check your collection spot for any potential hazards and speak to your coordinator immediately if you have any concerns or if you feel uncomfortable. Please let your coordinator know if your bucket is getting too heavy for you and they will come and replace it as soon as possible. If you are collecting for a long shift, then please consider how you will take comfort breaks and ensure that you have sufficient food and water with you. Some sites can also provide seats if needed, so please check with your coordinator.

**Please notify your coordinator of any accidents, incidents or near misses.**

## Collecting with children

All children under the age of 14 should be accompanied by a responsible adult. Supervision cannot be provided by Blind Low Vision NZ or by your coordinator.

No-one under the age of 18 should collect on their own. Please let your coordinator know if you need someone to collect with, or ask a friend or family member to join you for the collection.

## Adverse weather

Please be aware of any adverse or extreme weather conditions and ensure that you are adequately prepared. Not all collection sites are able to offer shelter, so please let your coordinator know if you need a spot inside.

## Collecting with a dog

Collecting with your canine companion will help you raise more money, but it’s important to consider your dog’s personality, temperament, and comfort before deciding to bring them along.

### Important things to remember before your collection:

* Not all collection sites allow you to collect with a dog (excluding guide dogs or guide dogs in training), so please check with your coordinator
* Bring a towel, blanket or bed for your dog to sit on
* Bring fresh water, treats and a favorite toy with you
* Take regular breaks and limit your collection time to 2 hours

### Please DO NOT bring your dog with you if it:

* Doesn’t like crowds or barks at strangers
* Doesn’t like being touched or approached
* Is not trained to sit, lie down, and stay on command
* Is scared of children
* Growls when protective or suspicious
* Nips or bites when provoked
* Is not fully vaccinated or is unwell

Blind Low Vision NZ is not responsible for the welfare of your dog while you are out collecting. Volunteers bring their dogs along at their own risk and pet dogs do not have the same access rights as guide dogs during the collection. Blind Low Vision NZ cannot provide you with a guide dog or guide dog in training to help you collect.