***INSTRUCTION PAGE i***



**Following is a template letter** that can be used in the situation where one of your loved ones is in a rest home and you have been informed that you are not able to visit.

If you have been forwarded this letter by a friend, family member or colleague then please go to <https://voicesforfreedom.co.nz/resources> to see the outline of the employment process, to get access to the other letter/s, and to get access to the employment webinars hosted by Voices For Freedom. There are alternative letters for other roles that have been mandate.

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***INSTRUCTION PAGE ii***



**HOW TO USE THIS LETTER?**

1. Read the letter carefully so that you understand what you are sending – this letter is **your letter**.
2. The points you need to complete or closely consider for your situation are highlighted yellow. Keep this information factual and do not hesitate to get it checked by a friend, colleague or family member.
3. This letter is only to be used if one of your family members is in a rest home and you have attempted to come to an agreement with the rest home about how you can visit your loved ones while ensuring the safety of all residents.
4. Do not forget to include your email in the letter so that the rest home knows where best to respond to you in writing.
5. Sign off the letter.
6. Print or email the letter – make sure you keep a copy. DO NOT include these first two pages of instructions.

The rest home will likely respond to this letter and if they do, then you will need to consider their response, your next steps, including a complaint to the Human Rights Commission and the Health and Disability Commissioner and may need to obtain advice specific to your situation.

**[Your Name**

**[Email address**

**[Any other contact details**

**[Rest Home Name**

**Address**

**Address]**

[Date]

FOR: [Manager | Executive Board]

**[NAME OF YOUR LOVED ONE]**

1. My name is [name]. My [family relationship] is currently residing at [Rest home name] and has done so since [date].
2. On [date], I was advised that I was not able to visit my [family relationship] due to the fact that I am not vaccinated.
3. I recognise your concern in relation to Covid-19 and agree that it is a valid concern. I am aware that residents at [rest home name] are particularly vulnerable and that we must all do our part to ensure their safety. I want to ensure that I also do all I can to assist with this.
4. I do not believe that my vaccination status should get in the way of my ability to visit my [family relationship]. Further, New Zealand now has high vaccination rates and reduced risk of reinfection for those who have recently recovered from COVID-19. The Government has updated the Covid-19 response (eg removing vaccine mandates even in health settings[[1]](#footnote-2)) based on the current assessed public health risk.[[2]](#footnote-3)
5. I discussed with [rest home name] previously, my proposed solutions to ensure that all rest home residents remained safe and that I was able to visit my [family relationship] and that both of our needs were also met. In particular, I suggested: [select all those that apply]
	1. I would obtain a negative Covid-19 test result prior to each visit. This would ensure that I did not have Covid-19 and am therefore not a risk to any residents. We are in the fortunate position in which there is an easily available way to ensure that visitors do not risk entering the rest home with Covid-19.
	2. I will hand sanitise upon entry and exit to the rest home.
	3. I will wear a face covering while in all common areas.
	4. If I am unwell, for any reason, I will not visit the rest home until I am feeling better.
	5. [any other proposals you made.]
6. I confirm again, that if I am unwell, I will not visit the rest home, in order to ensure that residents are protected not just against Covid-19, but against any illness that I may be suffering. I do not wish to put any of the residents at risk of any illness, given their vulnerability.
7. I note that in my [family relationship]’s contract with [rest home name], we have the following rights:
	1. [List any relevant contract clauses in relation to visitation and illness here.]
8. I also note that section 19[[3]](#footnote-4) of the *New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990* protects everyone against discrimination. Matters for which a person cannot be discriminated against are set out in section 21[[4]](#footnote-5) of the *Human Rights Act 1993* and include:
	1. Beliefs - I hold the belief that the Pfizer vaccine is not the best option for me.
	2. Disability - a disability includes a physical illness. Although I will have tested negative for Covid-19 upon each visit, presumably the reason for disallowing me entrance to [rest home name] is because of a concern that I may nonetheless, carry the virus. This is not a ground for discriminating against me.
9. Given the steps I have proposed, I do not think it would be fair to refuse me entry to [rest home name] and would consider it a breach of the contract my [family relationship] has with [rest home name] as well as a breach of the *Bill of Rights Act* and the *Human Rights Act*.
10. I invite you to again, consider my proposals so that we can come to an agreement over how we can meet my [family relationship]’s needs as well as my needs in being able to visit my [family relationship].

Sincerely

**Your Name**

**Your contact details**

1. <https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/vaccinations-and-work/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/managing-health-and-safety/novel-coronavirus-covid/covid-19-controls-at-work/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1990/0109/latest/DLM225519.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0082/latest/DLM304475.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)