



Who is this guide for?

We have written this guide for people who like detailed information. It contains what you need to plan, book and attend a tour of Government House, Wellington:

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Part 1.

Introduction to the tour
programme at Government
House, Newtown, Wellington

Government House in Newtown, Wellington.

Government House is the home of Dame Cindy Kiro, the Governor-General of New Zealand and her husband Dr Richard Davies. Dame Cindy represents King Charles III in New Zealand. The house was opened in 1910.

Our tour programme

Tours are guided through the Visitor Centre, ground floor of Government House and (if the weather is fine and visitors are interested) the gardens. House tours are run by the Visitor Centre staff.

Tours are fully guided. There is no charge to come on a tour. We do not have refreshment facilities or a souvenir shop.

We do not run tours every day.

We run different types of tours:

- **Public tours.** Dates for these are on the Governor-General's website and places on these tours can be booked online. These tours take approximately 90 minutes [Select a public tour | The Governor-General of New Zealand](#)
- **Group tours** for clubs and schools and workplaces and other groups. These tours take between 1 hour and 2 hours. They are booked by contacting the Visitor Centre. Group tours are usually for 6-50 people. Schools can bring two classes (approx 65 students) to visit at the same time.

- **Private tours.** These are for people who have specialist needs, that may mean they need a small group or individual tour or a shorter tour. Examples of this are people who have compromised immunity, special learning, language or sensory needs, or other reasons that a larger/longer group tour would not meet their requirements.
- **Garden tours.** Tours which only focus on the gardens can be arranged. These are run by the garden team and are booked through the Visitor Centre.

Visitor Centre details: bookings@govthouse.govt.nz
or 04 3820837.

The Visitor Centre is not always staffed. Please check your junk and spam folders if you have not received a return email within 5 working days. If you cannot find a response from us, please email us again and include your contact number. You can also leave a phone message, and we will return your call.



Part 2.

Accessibility information

Accessibility information

If you have mobility needs

We have wheelchair access and accessible toilets in the Visitor Centre and House. We have 3 wheelchairs and a walking frame available. Some parts of the garden are not wheelchair accessible.

The walking route to Government House is hilly. If this makes getting here difficult, please contact the Visitor Centre before your tour bookings@govthouse.govt.nz or call 04 3820837.

Parking

We have 4 marked mobility spaces at the eastern end of the Visitor Centre carpark. There are approximately 20 other carparks available by the Visitor Centre.

If you use NZSL

Tours are in English. NZSL interpreters can be booked (dependent on availability).

If you have other needs which we should be aware of, please email bookings@govthouse.govt.nz or call 04 3820837.

Our aim is to make our tour programme accessible to everyone.



Part 3.

Booking a tour of Government House, Newtown, Wellington

Booking a tour

Bookings for places on public tours can be made online at [Select a public tour | The Governor-General of New Zealand](#) or by calling 04 3820837. Bookings close 24 hours before a tour or when a tour is booked out. A public tour will have a maximum of 15 people. This may be split into 2 smaller groups.

If you want to book a group tour, or a private tour, or garden tour, please email bookings@govthouse.govt.nz or call 04 3820837.

- Groups tours are for parties of 6 or more, for example workplaces, schools, community/family groups and resthomes.
- Private tours are for groups which have specialist needs, which might mean they need a small group or individual tour, or a shorter tour. Examples of this are people who have compromised immunity, special learning, communication or sensory needs, or other reasons that a larger group tour would not meet their needs.

If you need to change your booking or cancel your booking, email bookings@govthouse.govt.nz or call 04 3820837.

Tour reminders

We will send you an email to remind you about your tour. This should arrive 24 hours before your tour. If it does not arrive, check your junk/spam folders or call/email the Visitor Centre: bookings@govthouse.govt.nz or call 04 3820837.



Part 4.

Getting to your tour

When to get here for your tour

Public tours usually start at either 10am or 2pm. If you are coming on a private group tour, your group organizer has been sent information on your tour times.

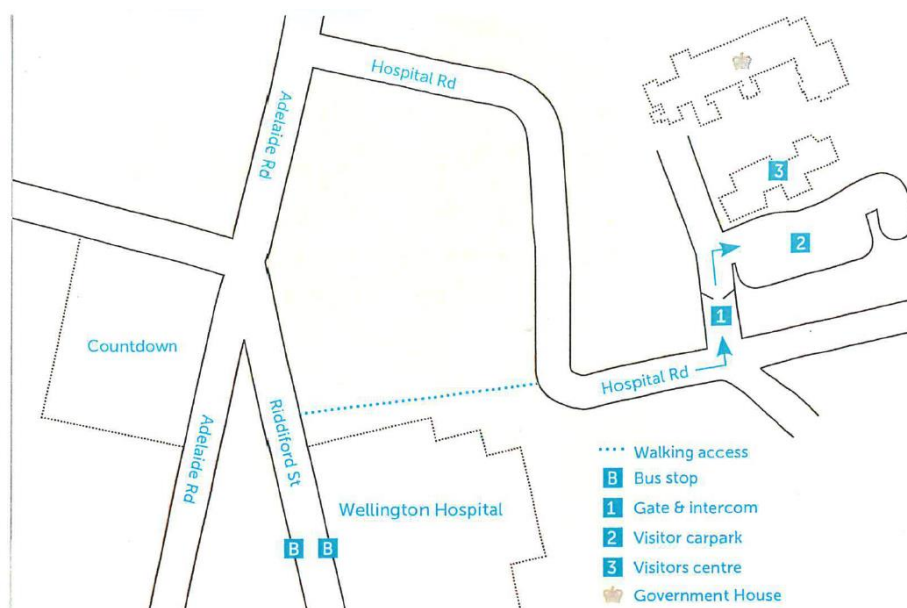
Please do not arrive more than 15 minutes before the tour start time. If you arrive before staff are ready for the tour, you might be asked to wait outside the gates.

If you are running late or you are lost, call us **04 3820837** or email **bookings@govthouse.govt.nz**.

How to get here

Tour entry is through the gates on Hospital Road. Visitors can walk or drive. There is parking available at Government House for people on tours. There are marked mobility parks.

The driving route to the entry gate is up Hospital Road. Our driveway is on the left opposite the Hospital staff carpark. The dotted line shows the walking route from the nearest bus stop. The walking route and the Hospital Road route are hilly. Here is the google map reference [Government House visitor centre - Google Maps](#)



You cannot use the gate at the Basin Reserve.

Entry gate on Hospital Road



For a public tour, there should be a staff member or police officer at the gate. Their job is to check the names of visitors booked on tours. They will be at the gate 15 minutes before the tour is due to start. They may ask to see identification or ask for your address.

If you arrive before the check in time for a public tour, or if you are on a private or group tour, use the intercom to ask to enter the grounds. We will let you know if you can come in straight away, or if you need to wait to come in.

If the gate is already open because someone else is arriving or leaving, still use the intercom. Do not come through the open gate. We must know who is coming onto the grounds.

The intercom button looks like this. Push it and then let go. The duty officer will answer. They will ask for your name and tell you what to do.



Intercom button. Press and release to activate and speak to the duty officer.



Part 5.

Staff at Government House and health and safety information

Staff at Government House

The Visitor Centre staff will run the tour.



Richard Chapman, Kate Olsen and Heather Mills run the tours programme at Government House.



This is Dame Cindy Kiro. She is the Governor-General. Government House is her home. Sometimes she is at Government House while a tour is on.



Dame Cindy and her husband Dr Richard Davies, have 2 small dogs Pebbles (on the left) and Lucy (on the right). You may hear them in an office. They are friendly dogs.

Health and safety information for the tour:

- Bags must be left in the Visitor Centre. The Visitor Centre doors will be locked while the tour is on. Bags can also be locked in the Visitor Centre Office. If you need to carry items with you for your personal wellbeing, speak to the Visitor Centre staff.



Cubbyholes for bags are by the Visitor centre toilets.

- There are toilets in the Visitor Centre. If you need to use the toilet while the tour is in Government House, let a staff member know.
- Visitors must stay with the tour group.
- Most items in the house should not be touched. Staff will tell you what can be touched.
- You may sit on the chairs and sofas, except for the thrones in the ballroom. The thrones are used by the King and Queen or by the Governor-General and her husband.



These are the thrones.

- You can take photos on the tour. You can't film or video during the tour. Do not ask the Governor-General for a photo.

If there is an emergency:

- If there is a fire alarm, the tour will go back to the Visitor Centre or to the Visitor Centre carpark.
- If there is an earthquake please drop, cover, hold and stay with the group. The Visitor Centre and house are earthquake strengthened.
- If there is a medical emergency, we have staff with first aid training and we have defibrillators.
- If you feel unwell, let a staff member know.

If you need to leave the tour early, ask a staff member to walk you back to the Visitor Centre.

If you need a quiet place to sit for part of the tour, you can let a staff member know.

Visitors must not leave the tour group without talking to a staff member.



Part 6.

What happens on your tour of Government House?

What happens on the tour

The tour will start in the Visitor Centre.



This is the Visitor Centre Building. You park just outside the Visitor Centre.

Visitors are sometimes given a lanyard to wear, to show they are part of a tour.



The Visitor Centre has wheelchairs and a walking frame available for visitors. Ask the staff if you need these.

The Visitor Centre has displays and touch screens. The tour group might see a short film about the history of the house and the job of the Governor-General. The tour will be in the Visitor Centre for approximately 30 minutes. The rest of the time will be spent in Government House and in the gardens.



We will walk from the Visitor Centre to Government House.

This walk is approximately 50 metres. We will go inside Government House via the official entrance or the ballroom entrance. Both are fine for wheelchairs.



We will be inside Government House for about one hour.

The tour will look through the ground floor of the house. We do not go upstairs. Upstairs is for the Governor-General and her guests.



These are some of the rooms we will see on the tour.

If you are overwhelmed by spaces, colours or patterns, please talk to a staff member.



After walking through the house, the tour might visit the gardens. The gardens include the remains of the 1873 Mt View Asylum. The asylum was on this site before Government House was built.



The remaining part of the Asylum is the wall of an 'Airing Courtyard' where patients could get fresh air. The bricks were made by prisoners at the Terrace Goal and are stamped with arrows. Some bricks have etchings done by patients (or later by Government House staff).

Some people prefer not to visit the remains of the Asylum. Let a staff member know if you would prefer not to visit that site. This section of the gardens is not wheelchair accessible.

At the end of the tour

A public tour will return to the Visitor Centre at approximately either 11:30pm or 3.30pm.

On returning to the Visitor Centre, please take some brochures, bookmarks and stickers. You are welcome to sign the visitors' book.

The tour will finish at the Visitor Centre.

Return your lanyard.

Your bags can now be collected from the Visitor Centre cubby holes or from the Visitor Centre office.

Staff will open the gate for you, or you can use the intercom and ask for the gates to be opened.

If you have any questions before, during or after your tour please ask.