



Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Social Security (Accommodation Supplement) Amendment Bill: Approval for Introduction

Portfolio **Social Development and Employment**

On 16 November 2022, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

- 1 **noted** that in June 2022, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee agreed to align Accommodation Supplement legislation with current practice when one member of a couple is in residential care and the other is in the community [SWC-22-MIN-0124];
- 2 **agreed** to include the Social Security (Accommodation Supplement) Amendment Bill (the Bill) in the 2022 Legislation Programme with a Category 2 priority (to be passed in 2022);
- 3 **agreed** that the purpose of the Bill is to:
 - 3.1 amend the Social Security Act 2018 and Social Security Regulations 2018 – with consequential amendments to the New Zealand Superannuation and Retirement Income Act 2001 and the Veterans’ Support Act 2014;
 - 3.2 recognise an individual, whose partner is in long-term residential care, as single for the purpose of calculating entitlement for the Accommodation Supplement;
- 4 **noted** the following forecast changes to the cost of Accommodation Supplement with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net debt, arising from the finding that the Ministry of Social Development’s operational practice in respect of individuals whose partner is in long-term residential care does not align with legislative requirements:

	\$m – increase / (decrease)				
Vote Social Development Minister of Housing	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 & Outyears
Benefits or Related Expenses: <i>Accommodation Assistance</i>	(0.196)	(0.330)	(0.321)	(0.312)	(0.304)

5 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to provide for the decision in paragraph 4 above with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net debt:

	\$m – increase / (decrease)				
Vote Social Development Minister of Housing	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 & Outyears
Benefits or Related Expenses: <i>Accommodation Assistance</i>	0.196	0.330	0.321	0.312	0.304

- 6 **agreed** that the change to appropriation for 2022/23 above be included in the 2022/23 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply;
- 7 **agreed** that the expenses incurred under paragraph 5 above be charged against the between-Budget contingency established as part of Budget 2022;
- 8 **approved** the introduction of the Social Security (Accommodation Supplement) Amendment Bill [PCO 25060/1.14], subject to the final approval of the Government caucus;
- 9 **agreed** that the Bill be introduced by 17 November 2022 and passed through all stages under urgency.

Rachel Clarke
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Grant Robertson
 Hon Kelvin Davis
 Hon Dr Megan Woods
 Hon Chris Hipkins
 Hon Carmel Sepuloni (Chair)
 Hon Andrew Little
 Hon Jan Tinetti
 Hon Kiri Allan
 Hon Priyance Radhakrishnan
 Hon Aupito William Sio
 Hon Meka Whaitiri

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
 Office of the Chair
 Officials Committee for SWC