



# Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

## Minute of Decision

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### Initial Steps to End the Large Scale Use of Emergency Housing


**Portfolio**                      **Housing / Social Development and Employment / Associate Housing (Social Housing)**

On 6 March 2024, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee, having been authorised by Cabinet to have Power to Act [CAB-24-MIN-0053]:

- 1        **noted** that the paper under SOU-24-SUB-0008 outlines initial steps the Government is taking to end the large-scale and long-term use of motels for Emergency Housing (EH) and immediate actions to get families out of EH and into permanent housing more quickly;
- 2        **agreed** to establish a Priority One fast track in April 2024 within the Social Housing Register that prioritises eligible families in EH to deliver on the Government’s 100-day plan commitment to “establish a priority one category on the social housing waitlist”;
- 3        s 9(2)(h) [REDACTED]
- 4        **agreed** that families eligible for the Priority One fast track are those that:
  - 4.1      have children that meet the definition of “dependent child” used in Schedule 2 of the Social Security Act 2018, which includes those under 18, as well as 18-year-old children still at school covered by section 103 of the Social Security Act 2018;
  - 4.2      have lived in EH (commercial accommodation paid for by Emergency Housing-Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs)) or a Contracted EH motel for 12 consecutive weeks, including breaks of no more than 28 days; or
  - 4.3      at the Ministry of Social Development’s (MSD) discretion (using exceptional circumstances), have lived in EH for a cumulative 12 weeks across multiple stays;
- 5        s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]
- 6        **agreed** that the Oranga Tamariki and Rheumatic Fever fast tracks will have higher priority than the Priority One fast track;
- 7        **agreed** that announcements on the Priority One fast track signal increased consideration of an applicant’s circumstance, to help ensure EH is accessed only where absolutely necessary, and to help mitigate perverse incentives;

8 **agreed** that the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and MSD undertake the policy, legislative, and operational design to tighten the gateway to EH and further mitigate any perverse incentives created by the Priority One fast track, including:

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



9 **authorised** the Minister of Housing, Minister for Social Development and Employment, and Associate Minister of Housing (Social Housing) (joint Ministers) to take decisions on policy and operational advice, as outlined in paragraphs 2 and 8 above, required to establish the Priority One fast track and tighten the gateway to EH;

10 **noted** that Priority One will be implemented by April 2024, and legislative changes to tighten the gateway will be fully implemented by the end of August 2024;

11 **noted** that, in isolation, the Priority One fast track would have limited impact on the Government's overall objectives so a series of additional actions (some existing) are being progressed alongside the fast track and tightening of the EH gateway;

12 **noted** that joint Ministers have requested a report back from officials with further advice on a broader approach to end the large-scale and long-term use of motels for EH and will provide an update on this broader plan as well as supplementary analysis of changes to tighten EH gateway to Cabinet by July 2024.

Rachel Clarke  
Committee Secretary

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**Present:**

Hon David Seymour  
Hon Nicola Willis (Chair)  
Hon Erica Stanford  
Hon Paul Goldsmith  
Hon Louise Upston  
Hon Mark Mitchell  
Hon Tama Potaka  
Hon Matt Doocey  
Hon Melissa Lee  
Hon Nicole McKee  
Hon Casey Costello  
Hon Penny Simmonds  
Hon Chris Penk  
Hon Karen Chhour

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Office of Hon Louise Upston  
Ministry of Social Development and Employment  
Ministry of Housing and Urban Development  
Officials Committee for SOU