



15 August 2024

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 23 July 2024, requesting information about Emergency Housing.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

As noted in an email to you on 23 July 2024, the answer to your question "*Is the Staff in this case a MSD employee?*", the answer was yes.

You have asked "*What's the process for Emergency Housing provider and members of the community to raise anti-social behaviours with MSD?*".

Suppliers of emergency housing are able to contact Work and Income and make a complaint for any reason at any time. The following link provides information on how to make a complaint: [Making a complaint - Work and Income](#)

Suppliers of emergency housing can also contact their Regional Housing team directly via the following Work and Income link: [How emergency housing suppliers contact us - Work and Income](#)

Please find attached the document 'Resolution Framework' as requested, from which the document you received on 17 July 2024 titled 'Emergency Housing Resolution Escalation Process' was created.

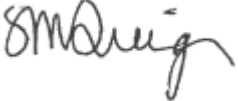
You may be interested to know that Government has recently announced further changes to create a clear, rules-based emergency housing system to ensure that only those in genuine need, who meet their responsibilities in EH may access support. This will support government intention of ending the large-scale use of motels and return emergency housing to its original intent – a last resort to be used for short periods only. You can read more here: [Over 1000 children no longer growing up in motels | Beehive.govt.nz](#).

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course. If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Magnus O'Neill', written in a cursive style.

Magnus O'Neill

**General Manager**

**Ministerial and Executive Services**

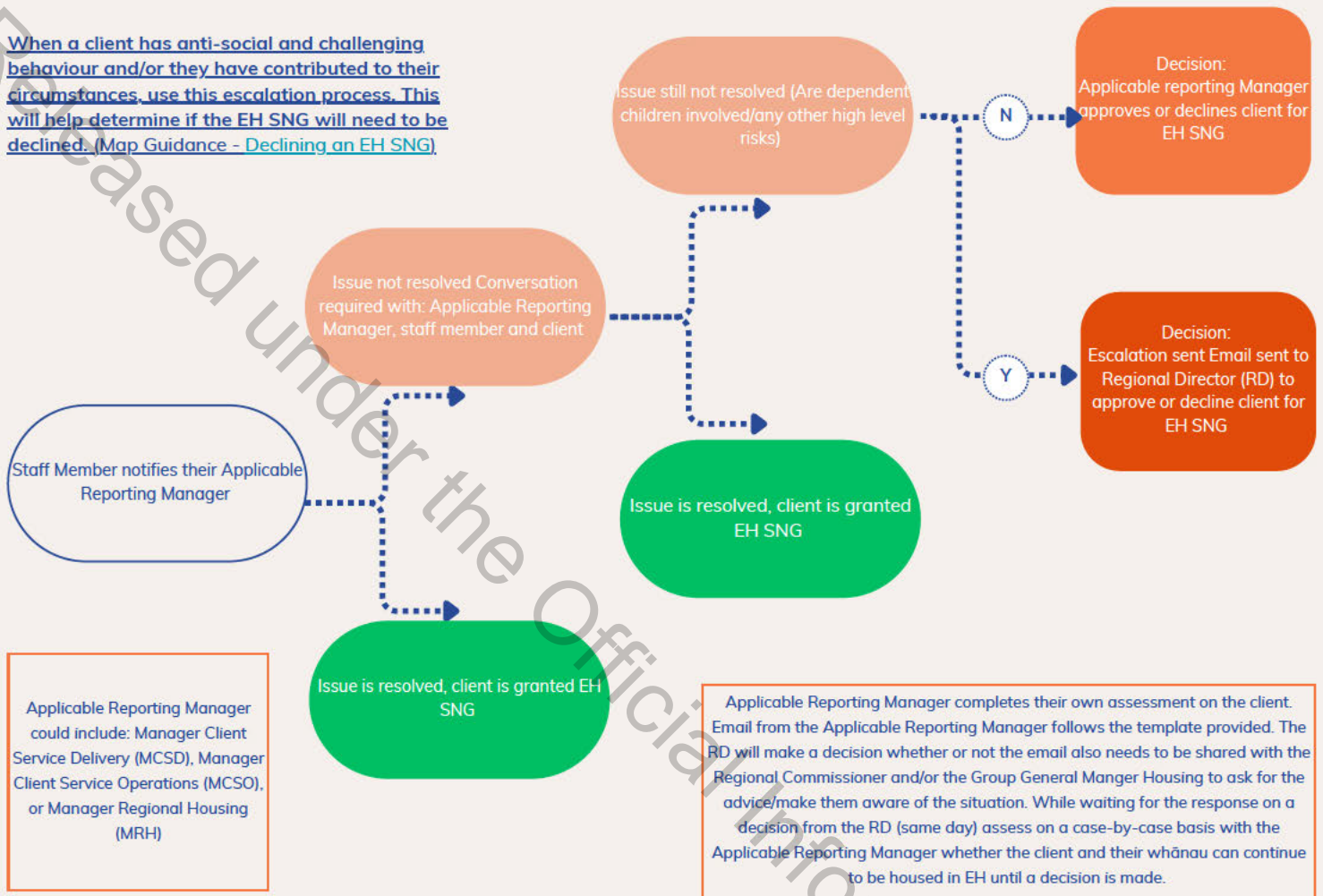
# Resolution Framework



This resource will support staff on when to consider declining an EH SNG or make it recoverable, and when to escalate decisions. It can be used at the time of an EH SNG application, when the client has contributed to their housing need, not followed the rules of stay or shown anti-social behaviour while in EH.

## Escalation Process

When a client has anti-social and challenging behaviour and/or they have contributed to their circumstances, use this escalation process. This will help determine if the EH SNG will need to be declined. (Map Guidance - Declining an EH SNG)



## MSD Support

- Accommodation Supplement
- Advance payment of Benefit
- Assess and review F.A.C.E
- Building Financial Capability products and services
- Whānau Violence Coordinator
- Flexi-Fund
- Housing Broker referral
- Housing Support Products
- Integrated Service Response Case Management
- Navigational Services
- Oranga Tamariki referral
- Project Coordinator referral to training programmes
- Public/Social Housing assessment
- Ready to Rent programme
- Recoverable Assistance Payments
- Regional Health & Disability support and advice
- Temporary Additional Support
- Tenancy Costs Cover
- Transitional Housing referral
- Work Broker referral
- Youth Services Support Unit

## Reasonable Steps by a Client

Map Guidance - Client has not made a reasonable effort

## Client Contributes to EH Need

Map Guidance - Client contributes to EH Need

### The client has:

- been looking for employment (if applicable)
- completed the Public Housing Assessment process
- been looking for other places to stay i.e. with whānau or friends
- registered with Rental Agents and has been applying for private rentals
- met with the Work Broker
- met with the Housing Broker
- attended a Ready-2-Rent programme
- appointed an agent/support person for help when engaging with landlords
- met with a Budget Advisor
- agreed to and is working with a Navigator/Support Service
- attended face-to-face appointments with a Case Manager or an Integrated Service Case Manager (including at 2nd subsequent grant)

- Moved regions for no reason
- On their way back to a region (just travelling through)
- Significant damages in their previous EH or Transitional Housing placement
- Breached/did not comply with EH supplier's rules of stay and was asked to leave/evicted from accommodation
- Evicted from EH accommodation due to anti-social or dangerous behaviour incident
- Due to situations involving anti-social and/or dangerous behaviour, client has exhausted all EH options in the region with suppliers refusing to accommodate/house the client and their whānau
- Refused other options including but not limited to Transitional Housing
- Did not attend follow-up appointments with MSD, without a good and sufficient reason

# Consider a Client's Needs and Options

Understand the client's emergency housing (EH) situation – are they able to continue to be independent? (Map Guidance - [Immediate EH Need](#))

You must consider the circumstances of the client and their whānau when determining this (particularly when dependent children are involved). This includes considering:

- if the client has made a reasonable effort in their circumstances to access other sources of housing assistance (and whether they agreed to this for their previous grant).
- if the client has unreasonably caused or contributed to their immediate need e.g. damaged their current rental or current EH accommodation.
- if there are any identified risks to the client or their immediate whānau's welfare, or if they would be in serious hardship if the grant was not paid.
- if it would worsen the client or their immediate whānau's position if the grant was not paid.

Note: If whānau harm is involved, this must be addressed immediately.

Explore other options. Discuss other housing assistance, accommodation options and barriers. (Map Guidance - [Explore Accommodation Options](#))

Have you considered all the MSD support available to the client and their whānau?

Consider the client's and their immediate whānau's circumstances and decide if there are other options available to them.

This includes considering:

- Would employment assist the client and their whānau?
- Has the client been referred to a work broker or housing broker?
- Could MSD financial assistance or support help the client?
- Could they stay with whānau or friends?
- Is Transitional Housing an option?

Barriers could include:

- Previous tenancy issues or issues with the tenancy tribunal
- Client does not have whānau to stay with

If there are no other options, assess the client's eligibility for EH and review their full and correct entitlement. Then:

- Decide if the payment should be granted as non-recoverable or recoverable (consider the circumstances of the client and their whānau when determining this). (Map Guidance - [Making EH SNG Recoverable](#))
- Discuss and set reasonable steps the client must take to try and resolve their housing need while in EH.
- Consider the support needs of the client, and what is preventing them from keeping and finding short or longer-term accommodation, e.g. mental health needs.

If you decide to decline the client for an EH SNG, you must consider the circumstances of the client and their whānau when determining this (particularly when dependent children are involved). (Map Guidance - [Declining an EH SNG](#)) The client may be seen as causing or contributing to their EH need if:

- they are continuing to not take reasonable steps (that they have agreed to in previous grants) to access other adequate housing options that could resolve their housing need.
- they are no longer able to stay in their current EH due to breaking the rules of stay or other anti-social behaviours.

(Map Guidance - [Client contributes to EH Need](#), [Client has not made a reasonable effort](#))

If the client has exhibited anti-social behaviour in previous EH SNG grants or in their current EH placement, or has contributed to their EH need, refer to the escalation process.

## If you grant...

Explain to the client the conditions and responsibilities of the EH SNG grant:

- that they are expected to follow the supplier's rules of stay, and are responsible for any loss, including damages caused by them or anyone staying with them.
- that they are required to take the reasonable steps discussed, including the consequences of them not taking the agreed reasonable steps, e.g. further EH assistance may be declined or made recoverable.
- that if they cause or contribute to their need for EH (e.g. break the supplier's rules of stay and are asked to leave), we may not be able to pay further EH SNGs.
- that they must attend all follow up booked appointments, and that for all further EH grants (after their first week of stay in EH), these must be booked face-to-face appointments.

Get the client to sign their EH SNG form to confirm they understand and agree to the conditions and responsibilities of payment.

Provide the Client Guide which tells them what they can expect from the supplier and how to make a complaint.

Refer the client for intensive case management while they are in EH.

If the client is not on the Social Housing register, complete screening/assessment and/or book client a Public Housing Assessment Appointment.

If the client is on the National Public Housing register:

- make sure the client's current circumstances are reflected in their application by updating any new information into their CMS Housing Application.

Note: Attending a Public Housing assessment can be set as a reasonable step.

### Important

Record any complaints in the HIYA complaints system. Record notes about the client's EH situation. This includes when they have not made a reasonable effort or unreasonably caused or contributed to their EH need, and any behaviour issues while in EH.