



2 February 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your email of 14 December 2023, requesting information about minimum processing standards, benefit data, benefit information, and information sharing agreements. I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

1. *The latest minimum processing standards please (I received a copy in Feb this year but want to keep up to date with any changes)*

I refer you to **Appendix One**, which contains the current minimum processing standards guidelines. I have redacted some information, as it is out of scope of your request.

2. *I would like some data on the wait time from date of first contact to when a benefit is granted. Note this is not the commencement date, as this is backdated, but the date that benefit is actually granted. Lets get it over the last 12 months, for each month I would like the maximum wait time, minimum wait time and the average wait time. Can I then get this as an overall average over the last 12 month*

Please see **Appendix Two**, which includes:

- **Table One:** The minimum, maximum and average wait time to grant a benefit, for all ages and all benefits, from 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023, broken down by month; and
- **Table Two:** The minimum, maximum, and average wait time to grant a benefit for working age, and main benefits from 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023, broken down by month.

Delays in clients providing all information necessary to grant a benefit can impact processing time.

3. *Could I please have the number of sanctions applied to peoples benefits over the last 12 months, and then the number of people who were not advised before the obligation failure was initiated e.g. via letter or phone conversation (note calling a phone and the client not picking up does not count as advising the client)*

I refer you to **Table Three of Appendix Two**, which includes the number of sanctions applied to all ages and benefit types from 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023, broken down by month. **Table Four of Appendix Two** shows the number of sanctions applied to working age and main benefits from 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023, broken down by month.

When clients do not meet their obligations, a letter is automatically generated and sent to the email address held on their client record. All clients are informed of their failure to meet an obligation before a sanction is applied to their benefit payments.

4. *All process and policy documents (I am thinking of doogle here) relating to when a client returns from overseas and restarts their benefit. I am hearing that clients are returning from short trips overseas (where they have advised MSD of departure), and then on return are being asked to do a full application instead of just being able to confirm their return date and having their benefit restarted. Why are some people able to restart their benefit by just letting W&I know, and other people are asked to do a whole new application? What is the legislative rationale for this?*

Clients have an obligation to notify the Ministry of any planned absence from New Zealand before their departure. Generally, clients can be paid for 28 days while overseas; however, some clients that have work obligations may only be permitted to travel outside of New Zealand for approved reasons before their benefit payments are suspended. Upon a client's return to New Zealand, the Ministry will consider the circumstances of the person's absence from New Zealand to determine if their benefit will recommence or if a new application is required.

When clients return from overseas travel on the 29th day after their departure from New Zealand or earlier, their benefit can be restarted without completing a new application. When clients acquire prior approval for extended overseas travel, they will not have to complete a new application form upon their return.

Further information can be found here:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/emergency-maintenance-allowance/changes-and-reviews-emergency-maintenance-allowance/action-on-return-to-new-zealand-01.html

Section 219 of the Social Security Act 2018, which stipulates how the Ministry must treat payments to people who are absent from New Zealand can be viewed at this link:

www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783585.html

5. *What is the process for when someone has a medical certificate that says 'never reassess' e.g. a permanent condition, and then they go off benefit for a period, come back on to benefit, and then are asked to provide a whole new medical certificate. What is the rationale/process/policy here as their previous med cert covers them? If this varies via benefit type (e.g. JS, DA, SLP, TAS) I would like a breakdown of the policy and rationale for each benefit type please.*

A work capacity medical certificate is one source of information that the Ministry uses to assess work capacity. A General Practitioner may indicate that a client's condition is unlikely to change in terms of diagnosis, meaning it never gets reassessed, however this does not mean that their work capacity does not change. In the situation referred to in your question, there has been a change in situation and the clients work capacity will have changed in order to go off a benefit, so when returning a new work capacity will need to be completed to assess the change in situation.

It is in the client's best interests to continue to assess work capacity. The Ministry is committed to the idea that employment has a significant impact on the wellbeing of all people and often leads to far better health and wellbeing outcomes long term. For many people, the ability to work changes over time. The Ministry's regular reassessment of clients' work capacity enables the Ministry to provide responsive support to clients when they need it.

6. *What other government agencies does MSD share (give or receive) client information with and for what purpose?*

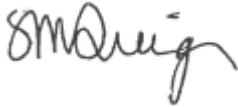
Please find attached **Appendix Three** which contains a table of our current operational information sharing agreements and their purposes.

I will publish this decision letter, with your personal details removed, 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.

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 or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

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

pp.

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Accepting forms

Forms are used to confirm a client's eligibility for financial assistance or action a request. They are evidence to verify the information the client has provided, as well as what the client has agreed to. It's important that all forms are completed and correct.

On this Page:

What is needed

When accepting a form, you must ensure:

- all questions are answered using a pen or typed to create a permanent record
- are signed and dated (for paper forms)
- any obligations have been agreed to and accepted (for online applications)
- all necessary documents required for evidence are provided or have been requested
- the office copy of the client's and partner's (if any) obligations and privacy statement, signature, and helper's statement (if any) must remain with the application form.

When forms are completed online, you only need to print the obligations form for the client to sign if they haven't agreed to or accepted these online.

When completing editable pdf forms on behalf of a client, you must ensure you:

- are satisfied it is for the right client (e.g. they have been successfully identified over the phone)
- advise the client of their obligations (if any), ensuring they understand and agree to them and record this in the client's file
- scan and save the form onto the client's file
- provide the client with the saved version of the completed form/summary by post or email, ask them to check the information and let us know if anything is incorrect
- record that all of the above actions have been completed on the client's file

Note: Do not send editable pdf forms to clients (whether blank or complete). Editable pdfs are only to be completed by staff on behalf of the client. If the client would like a form/s to complete, they should be directed to our website where forms can be downloaded or to visit one of our offices.

Incomplete or altered forms

If a form is incomplete or altered, you must:

- contact the client as soon as possible and
- determine if it's reasonable for the client to complete the form (refer to guidelines for applying discretion) and
- if possible, ensure that the client:

- corrects any errors
- initials any changes when its critical to entitlement and

- add notes to the client's file to record any follow up actions and
- save any altered or completed forms to the client's file.

Applying discretion

You can apply discretion to accept a form which is incomplete or has been altered if:

- the information is not critical for correct entitlement or
- we already hold the information in our systems or
- you can confirm the information with the client.

If you accept an incomplete or altered form, record your decision and the information in the client's file.

Ways we can accept forms

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload

Email – you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the clients file.

Face to face

Provide evidence at local office

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 02 June 2022

Agents

An agent can be appointed to act on a client's behalf in certain circumstances. Usually a client chooses their agent, what actions the agent can carry out on their behalf and how long they are to be their agent.

On this Page:

When an agent is appointed

An agent is a person or organisation who is authorised to act in the interests of another person. The client can choose which rights and responsibilities to assign to the agent. For example, when a client:

- is unable to visit or talk to MSD staff
- is subject to a trespass notice
- is working with a community-based provider such as budgeting services
- needs help with a complaint or review
- has a person with authority covered by an Enduring Power of Attorney or Court Order.

Appointing an agent allows the agent to do some or all of the following for the client:

- access information about the client (under the Privacy Act 1993)
- speak or make enquires on the client's behalf
- receive their mail
- complete and sign forms
- be allowed to deal with money they owe to MSD.

Agents are not able to access or update MyMSD on the client's behalf.

How an agent is appointed

If a client needs to have an agent act on their behalf, they need to provide:

- an Appointment of Agent form or
- a letter or privacy waiver that describes the circumstances in which we can share information and/or what information can be shared with the agent and
- the agent's identification:

for an individual, two forms of identification or

for an organisation, identification and evidence of their connection to the organisation (e.g. business card).

All evidence relating to the agency and their rights and responsibilities, which may include a current Power of Attorney or Court Order, should be scanned and recorded into the client's record. An agent's identification should be scanned into the agent's own CMS record.

A client can consent to [appointing an agent temporarily](#).^{Out of scope}

We can receive forms and supporting documentation electronically.

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 02 May 2022

Applications

When processing applications for on-going financial assistance, you must ensure the right information is received and obtain approval (if required), to ensure the client receives their full and correct entitlement.

On this Page:

Request for financial assistance

When a client contacts us to request on-going financial assistance, a date of first contact must be recorded.

Out of scope

Application forms

We can accept application forms in the following ways (but not limited to):

- an online application
- a paper application
- an editable PDF to be completed by a staff member
- attached to an email (you must ensure the text in the form is readable)

Note: some applications for assistance are completed by staff via CMS Hardship Assistance.

For more information see:

Out of scope

Carers applying for or getting a sole parent rate of benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB) may be required to apply for child support. Some clients are exempt from applying, see: Out of scope

Applications for public (social) housing

After completing an application for public housing (housing assessment) you need to confirm the client's final priority rating, to do this you need to be satisfied that the individual or household's circumstances are correct.

As well as identification and income/asset evidence, the client will also need to provide evidence of their housing need if they have been given a risk rating of three or four under any of the five criteria.

If a client is receiving on-going financial assistance, this information may already be held in the system, check the client's file before requesting any evidence.

The following are examples of evidence of a housing need:

- a letter or report from the Family Court, Oranga Tamariki or a solicitor outlining custody arrangements which have resulted in overcrowding
- information from the Police, a solicitor, the courts, a community worker or another appropriate person or agency stating that the current accommodation is unsuitable for the client or members of the client's household are in physical danger, under serious threat and/or the client must find alternative housing
- confirmation from a medical professional/health practitioner, or other appropriate organisation confirming the client or a household member requires a modified house
- evidence that current housing costs have increased and as a result the client needs to move
- notice to vacate from current landlord
- information gathered from the Police, a solicitor or a social worker to verify claims of domestic violence, abuse, harassment or neighbourhood tension
- information from the Police, a health professional, school, community or church leader or private sector landlord outlining the detail and effect on the household as a result of discrimination
- information showing that the client is experiencing financial difficulties such as a letter, report or verbal confirmation from a bank, budget advisor, accountant, solicitor or any other appropriate person or organisation stating the debt and factors that have caused or contributed to the current financial crisis.

Clients who have been assigned a risk rating of either one or two points under any of the five criteria should not be asked to provide evidence if you are satisfied with the explanation of their circumstances.

Out of scope

Interview sheets

Interview sheets are mandatory and must be completed for the following benefit types:

Out of scope

However, an interview sheet **is not** required when the client is applying for Emergency Benefit because they are:

- a seasonal worker
- serving a sentence of imprisonment in a psychiatric hospital or
- a spouse/partner of a client who has entered long-term residential care.

When an application should be lapsed

The client has 20 working days to complete the application process. If the client does not complete the application process, their request for financial assistance is generally lapsed on the 21st working day.

Manager approval

A service centre manager must approve all grants for Unsupported Child's Benefit.

Outcome

You must advise the client of the outcome of their application and of their obligations, ensuring they understand them.

For more information see:

Out of scope

Specific situations

Sponsored clients

In all cases where there may be a sponsorship breakdown prompting a main benefit application, you must request the client provide details and evidence about the circumstances that led to the breakdown.

In the situation where it is deemed necessary to contact the sponsor for more information, you must advise the client that you will be doing this.

For more information see: Out of scope

Emergency Benefit

Emergency Benefit must only be granted and paid for as long as it is required.

Where the client may be entitled to receive a main benefit in the future, Emergency Benefit should only be granted until they are eligible for the main benefit.

An expiry date which is relevant to the client's circumstances must be entered into SWIFTT, and a client event note added with the reason why Emergency Benefit was granted.

For more information see: Out of scope

Ways we can accept applications

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload

Email – you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the clients file

Out of scope

Face to face

Provide evidence at local office

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 18 April 2023

Home » Resources & Tools » Helping Clients » Processing standards » **Authentication**

Authentication

Authentication is part of our internal control process to ensure actions have met the required criteria and to give us assurance and confidence over the integrity of our payment systems. It also reduces the risk of errors and fraud.

On this Page:

What is authentication?

Authentication is a check by a second person to approve an action or release a payment.

When authentication is required

The following actions need authentication:

Benefit and NZ Super grants (for non-NZ born clients)

Bank account changes

Some hardship payments

System generated individual amounts to pay (or offset against debt) which are over \$3,000

All manually generated arrears.

These must be authenticated before payments can be released.

One-off cost applications are automatically approved, but the following need authentication:

Housing support products

Whiteware

Employment and work-related assistance

\$5K to work

Transition to work

Training Incentive Allowance

Course Participation Allowance.

Good quality notes should allow authenticators to check all actions needing authentication to ensure they have met the criteria and approval has been obtained.

Authenticator's responsibilities

An authenticator must check all actions, evidence and notes to ensure that:

they meet the minimum criteria

the payment matches what has been assessed

relevant supporting documentation is included

managers approval has been provided where required.

Authenticators must not work on records of anyone who is known to them personally or where they have been involved in any part of the processing of the payment.

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 02 May 2022

Home » Resources & Tools » Helping Clients » Processing standards » **Bank account**

Bank account

Bank account evidence ensures we are paying the correct person into their own or their agent's bank account. It also reduces the risk of errors and fraud.

On this Page:

When evidence is required

Bank account evidence is required when a client or their agent chooses to use a bank account that we don't already hold in our system. This means:

there's no bank account evidence recorded, and
we've not made any payments to this account for them before.

If the bank account has a different suffix to an account, we hold in our system then no evidence is required.

Low trust

Low trust clients must complete a Change of Bank Account form and provide evidence of bank account at their local office.

Acceptable bank account evidence

Bank account evidence must show the:

Bank logo and
Bank account number (does not have to show suffix) and
Account name(s).

Examples of acceptable evidence for bank accounts are:

A bank statement
A bank print-out stamped by the bank
A letter from the bank
ATM print-out
An internet banking print-out displaying the web address
Image of online banking (screenshot or photo).

Clients may also choose to complete a Change of Bank Account form to record the request to change their bank account number.

Business and trust bank accounts

Clients may request their payments to be made into their business or trust account. In these cases providing the account name contains the clients name, we can accept the bank account (with evidence if required).

You must ensure you discuss the possibility of other shareholders etc that may also have access to this bank account, and if using the business or trust account is the right choice for them.

You must leave a note on the client's record detailing your conversation with the client.

Ways we can accept bank account evidence

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload

Email – you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the clients file.

Face to face

Provide evidence at local office

Appointment – you sight evidence if the client logs into their online banking and shows you the information required, and record this on the clients file.

Legislation

Beneficiary must hold and give MSD details of bank account [section 111](#)
[\[http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783332.html\]](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783332.html) Social Security Act 2018.

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) **Last updated:** 02 May 2022

Bank accounts - Childcare and OSCAR centres

Bank account evidence ensures we are paying the correct childcare or OSCAR provider. It also reduces the risk of errors and fraud.

When evidence is required

Evidence of the childcare or OSCAR centre's bank account number is required when:

adding a new centre **or**
changing a current centre's bank account number.

There are several forms of evidence we can accept. See: Out of scope [redacted]

Evidence of bank account numbers must be batch filed.

For more information see:

Extra help

Out of scope [redacted]

Cancellations

Collecting information and/or evidence of the client's circumstances when they request a cancellation ensures we cancel their financial assistance from the correct date and assess any ongoing entitlement to other financial assistance.

On this Page:

Cancellation

When a client requests a cancellation of main benefit, details from the client of their change in circumstances must be obtained.

You must:

confirm the client's current address and contact phone number

send a cancellation letter outlining full details of any debt (including total balance owing), this must also include review rights

add a note on the client's file, including income details when available and attach any scanned income evidence the client has provided

Depending on the client's circumstances you should also:

obtain any employment details (including the employer's name, address and date commenced)

offer debt recovery suspension

offer an exit interview

check if the client is a social housing tenant or on the social housing register, if so you should also remind them:

they still have an obligation to promptly advise us of any change in circumstances that might affect their Income Related Rent or eligibility for social housing

they will need to set up an automatic payment as their redirection will stop.

For more information see: Out of scope

Death of a client

If a client has died, you must be satisfied you have identified who the deceased client is and have evidence of this before taking any action to stop their benefit. This must be detailed in the client's file.

Examples of evidence could include:

bereavement notice

notification (including verbal) from a funeral director, solicitor, the rest home (where the deceased resided), the executor of the deceased's estate

notification (including verbal) by a family member or authorised agent.

Where there is a surviving spouse or partner, you must review all entitlements and invite applications for other assistance where appropriate.

For more information see: Out of scope

Child changes

Evidence of the start or end of a client and child relationship ensures we pay the client their full and correct entitlement from the correct date.

On this Page:

Child inclusions

When evidence is required

Every client applying to include a child in their financial assistance must have an interview and provide a written statement or complete a 'Child Inclusion' [form \[https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#c\]](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#c).

Acceptable child inclusion evidence

When a client applies to have a child included in their financial assistance, the following evidence must be provided:

[identification for the child](#) Out of scope

a letter or email from previous caregiver (if applicable)

any additional information to support the inclusion. For example, a letter from Oranga Tamariki

a [child support](#) Out of scope

application (if assessed as being required to apply for child support)

For more information see: [Child inclusion interview](#) Out of scope

Child exclusions

When evidence is required

When excluding a child from a client's financial assistance, evidence must be obtained that the child is no longer in their care.

Acceptable child exclusion evidence

Evidence may include, but is not limited to, a letter or email from:

the client (a Personal details form can also be accepted)

EOSY online form

the child's school

Plunket.

Excluding a child from the client's benefit may result in a change to the client's obligations. You must ensure all changes (including benefit rates) are explained to the client.

Evidence is not required for excluding a child for social housing purposes.

Ways we can accept forms, of child changes

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload

Email – you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the clients file.

Face to face

Provide evidence at local office

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 02 May 2022

Child identification

Child identification evidence ensures we establish the child's identity and pay the full and correct entitlement to their parent/caregiver.

On this Page:

When evidence is required

Child identification evidence is required when we don't already hold it in our system and a client:

applies for [on-going financial assistance](#) Out of scope (including public housing applications),

applies for [one-off financial assistance](#) Out of scope (when required) or

requests a [child inclusion](#) Out of scope

Acceptable identification evidence

Examples of acceptable evidence for child identification are:

a birth certificate

If a child's birth certificate is not immediately available, we can also accept:

Plunket records (for example: the child's Well Child Tamariki Ora My Health Book, which should have a pre-printed sticker with details to confirm the mother's details and the child's date of birth)

confirmation from the client's midwife or doctor of the date of birth of the new child or hospital papers

Where a person is applying for assistance for a child that is not their own, such as Unsupported Child's Benefit, other documentation can be accepted. This could include a letter or report from the Family Court, Oranga Tamariki, a solicitor outlining custody arrangements or another appropriate agency.

SmartStart birth registrations

SmartStart is an online tool that makes it easier for new parents to access government services and support and set up their child for the future.

If a client registers the birth of their child online and chooses to share that information with us, DIA send us the birth registration details for their new-born baby. Centralised Services use this information to establish a CMS record for the child and a copy of the birth registration details is noted in a Client Event note.

For more information see the [SmartStart questions and answers](#) Out of scope page.

Children born overseas

If the child was born overseas, and access to the birth certificate is difficult or too costly you can include the child using the child's passport (current or expired).

Where the child's passport is not available you can use the parent's passport or certificate of identity (for refugees and protected persons) when the child's full name and date of birth are recorded.

Ways we can accept child identification evidence

Post/Fax

Online

Upload via MyMSD

Email - you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details onto the client's file.

Face to face

Provide evidence at the local office (provided at reception or during an appointment).

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) **Last updated:** 02 May 2022

Client identification

Identification evidence ensures we verify the identity of every person who applies for assistance. It is how we ensure clients are who they say they are, and the key to reducing the risk of benefit or social housing fraud by people using fake or stolen identities.

On this Page:

Changes to the Identity Processing Standards

In May 2023, we strengthened the identity processing standards for clients to better ensure the safety and security of client identity by requiring them to provide their government-issued ID at a service centre.

From 20 November 2023 we introduced Identity Check, a new tool developed by the Te Tari Taiwhenua - Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) to further strengthen and streamline this process. The changes are:

New business or returning clients applying online for a main benefit, New Zealand Superannuation or Extra Help (non-beneficiary) ongoing financial assistance with no primary ID on file will now have the option to verify their identity digitally using the Identity Check.

A change in CMS was introduced where clients who successfully use the online Identity Check will have a green tick displayed on their home page.

Clients can still bring their primary ID to be sighted and saved onto CMS if they are unable to, or wish not to use the Identity Check.

only Service Centre staff that have viewed the ID should be saving it as "sighted"

if you haven't viewed the ID yourself it will need to be saved as unsighted

If an agent is supporting the client, they need to provide both their ID and the client's ID to a service centre

Note: MSD will not keep a record of the live photo, passport/drive licence number, or any biometric information when using Identity Check. This information will only be used by DIA to verify the client's identity. The new 'Identity' tab on CMS will display the name and date of birth information that the client has used to verify their identity through the Identity Check.

If partners are also required to provide their primary government-issued identification documents, they will need to present this in person at a service centre.

These changes do not apply to StudyLink applicants (including their partners) and Youth Service applicants for Youth Payments and Young Parent Payments.

Online Identity Check

When completing an online application through MyMSD, clients will be given the option to verify their identity digitally through the online Identity Check. They will be directed to the service, managed by DIA, where the identity information they provide, along with a live photo they take, will be matched to information held by DIA (passport) or Waka Kotahi (drivers licence).

To use this service the client must have a:

NZ passport that is current, or expired for no more than 2 years, or

a NZ driver licence that is current, not expired or suspended.

If the client has been successful in using the service, an identity verification tick will be displayed on their CMS profile. The client will be verified for 5 years before they will need to verify their identity again.

If the name or date of birth information that the client uses to verify their identity using the service does not match the information already held in CMS, it will need to be reviewed by a Case Manager or Processing Officer and the event status will either be accepted or rejected.

If the client has been unsuccessful in using the Identity Check, or you are unable to verify their identity based on the information they have provided using the service, you will need to advise them that their identity documents will need to be sighted in person at a service centre.

Note: Staff should check CMS for existing information which matches the information that DIA hold. If no evidence is found, we will need ID documentation which confirms the different information, and confirmation from the client before any changes to CMS are made.

Verifying identity in person

New business or returning clients applying for ongoing financial assistance can still choose to take their primary ID into a service centre to be seen by our staff in person if a they cannot use the Identity Check or does not wish to use the service,

their primary identification must be sighted in person and saved to their CMS file.

When the client presents their primary ID in-person staff will need to:

Check the client's primary ID (refer to identification - client for primary ID)

Check the primary ID matches the client's personal information they've provided in their application (update if required)

Scan, pull through, then save using the drop-down 'sighted' function, and link the verified ID to the application note in CMS.

Note: Overseas passports that have residency confirmation separate to the passport will need the passport set to "Overseas Passport - with PR"

If something about a client's ID doesn't seem right, please talk with your manager or capability developer. If you're still not sure, you can escalate it. If a client presents sovereign citizen documents and you need guidance, please reach out to the legal team: Out of scope

Acceptable identification documents

Clients only need to verify their ID at the time of their new application. This does not need to be re-verified in every subsequent application. One form of primary ID is sufficient to verify the client if other supporting identification is provided or uploaded. Existing clients applying for ongoing financial assistance only need to come into a service centre if they don't already have ID on file, or the ID on file is more than two years past expiry. Staff should let clients know if this applies to them.

When in-person ID verification is required, a client must provide either:

two forms of primary identification (only accept original documents) - current or expired within the past two years, or one form of primary identification and one form of supporting identification (non-government supporting identification must have been issued within the last 6 months).

Note: Clients only need to verify their ID at the time of their new application. This does not need to be re-verified in every subsequent application. One form of primary ID is sufficient to verify the client if other supporting identification is provided or uploaded.

Types of identification evidence

<p>Primary Documents</p>	<p><i>Primary identification must show the client's:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full legal name (minimum of first name and surname) • date of birth <p><i>and must be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current, or no more than 2 years expired
<p>(Note: for clients not New Zealander by birth and have a NZ government issued ID i.e. NZ drivers licence. These are acceptable for "proof of identification" Proof of residency still must be obtained)</p>	<p>New Zealand clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZ passport • NZ driver licence • NZ firearm licence • NZ Birth certificate (note a Certificate of Date of Birth is not considered Primary ID) • Steps to Freedom release papers • Deportation documents • Temporary NZ passport • NZ Certificate of Identity (DIA) with photo • NZ Certificate of Identity (DIA) without photo <p>Overseas born clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseas passport (endorsed with permanent residence in New Zealand) • Certificate of Citizenship or refugee status • Certificate of Identity • Confirmation of permanent residence letter from New Zealand Immigration <p>Australian clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Australian birth certificate • Passport • Confirmation of residency visa or permanent NZ residency

	<p>Cook Island, Tokelauan and Niuean clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full birth certificate • Letter of confirmation • Certificate of Registration, or naturalisation • Certificate of Identity issued by Cook Islands • Certificate of Identity issued by Niue • Certificate of Identity issued by Tokelau
Supporting Documents	<p><i>Non-government supporting identification must:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have the client's full name</i> • <i>have been issued within the last six months (or a reasonable timeframe)</i>
	<p>Age Card (Hospitality industry)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiwi Access card • HANZ 18+ card
	<p>Household accounts (with clients address)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utility bills • tenancy agreement or documents from suppliers of goods and services such as: hire purchase agreements. <p>Note: if the client only has an electronic version of the bill or statement in PDF format, this is acceptable as supporting identification.</p>
	<p>Government issued documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marriage certificate • a tax summary • rates notice • car registration form and licenses from another country. <p>Note: a SuperGold Card can only be accepted as supporting identification if it includes a photo of the card holder.</p>
	<p>Employment related documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letter from employer ◦ payslips
	<p>Bank/insurance company documents (with bank logo)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bank account statements • mortgage papers • insurance policies
	<p>Health/education documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student identification card • school report • school leaving certificate • doctors bill • degree • trade certificate

	<p>Prominent community members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support letters from people such as: New Zealand Police, Justice of the Peace, doctor, kaumatua, clergyman or Women’s Refuge coordinator. <p>Note: The person providing the reference must not live at the same address, not be related to the client and must have known the client for over 12 months.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen printout from the prison and/or correctional facility known as 'Integrated Offender Management System' (IOMS) • Client released from prison may be issued the IOMS printout

Birth certificates as ID

We can only accept government-issued birth certificates, if clients choose to use this form of ID to verify their identity. We can't accept sovereign citizen birth certificates as they don't comply with the legislative requirements we need to meet when verifying identity. This is part of our responsibility to keep our clients' identity safe and give support to the right person.

This [handy guide](#) Out of scope shows what the various NZ birth certificates issued at different times look like, along with the information they should contain. One of the details to check for is that the certificate has a registrar stamp from the Department of Internal Affairs.

When evidence is required

Identification evidence is required when we don't already hold previous confirmation of a client's identity in our system, and they are a new client applying for:

- on-going financial assistance (including social housing applications)
- one-off financial assistance (note we will not be asking clients to come into a service centre to verify ID when applying for one-off assistance)

Note: if we already have identification on file that meets the identification standards, this will still need to be changed to "sighted"

See Map for qualification information and authentication standards:

Out of scope

[Redacted content]

Scanning and uploading documents

All sighted documentation not already in CMS must be scanned and saved onto the client's file under the correct document type. If you have sighted the document in-person, then you will need to save it as 'sighted' on CMS. Secondary documents that have been uploaded via MyMSD can still be published to scanned documents. Check the below information for more information on scanning and uploading documents correctly.

For more information:

Out of scope

[Redacted content]

Client cannot meet identity standards

Client does not own primary ID

If the client is unable to meet the identification standards, we can accept two forms of supporting ID. Financial assistance can be granted, but the client must provide a form of primary ID within 28 days of benefit grant. We can assist clients who need help getting ID.

More information:

Out of scope

Client unable to provide identification in-person or use Identity Check

A client may not be able to come into their local service centre to verify their identity at the time of their application. In these situations, you may be able to grant financial assistance and advise they need to verify their ID at a service centre within 28 days.

Every client's situation is different. You should provide financial assistance or extensions if the client has a reasonable explanation.

For more information about identity exceptions, including due to service centre closures and other exceptional circumstances, you can see: [Client identity verification exceptions - Doogle \(ssi.govt.nz\)](#)

Heartlands

Heartland sites are not able to sight ID on behalf of MSD. This means any documents that are received through Heartlands are to be treated as not sighted documents.

Staff assistance

As part of the new client identity verification process, there are also changes to the way MSD staff provide their government-issued ID when applying for financial assistance. MSD staff can use the online Identity Check, or can have a manager or people leader sight their ID and email a copy to the Staff Assistance Unit to be added to their CMS file.

The full process can be found here:

Out of scope

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 09 January 2024

Home » Resource & Tool » Helping Client » Processing standard » **Extra help (supplementaries) evidence**

Extra help (supplementaries) evidence

Evidence of costs relates to clients applying for or receiving supplementary assistance (e.g. Accommodation Supplement). Evidence ensures we are paying our clients their full and correct entitlement. Evidence is not always required for some costs.

On this Page

Evidence of costs for all supplementary assistance must show

the name of the person who has the cost (if required) and

what the cost is and

the frequency of the cost (if required)

Low Trust

Low Trust clients must provide evidence of all costs or any new or increases to costs at their local office.

Accommodation Supplement (AS)

When evidence for AS is required

Evidence of home owner costs is required when a client is applying for Accommodation Supplement or has a new or increase in the cost.

Acceptable evidence of AS costs

Examples of acceptable evidence of home ownerships costs are

A mortgage contract and confirmation of the current minimum repayment required

The latest house insurance bill or papers (excluding contents)

The latest rates notice and Regional Council rates, if applicable

Receipts of essential repairs and maintenance carried out on their home in the past 12 months

Body corporate fees account

Evidence of rent and board costs is not always required. Evidence is required when

the costs seem unreasonable, or

the costs could not reasonably be paid on their current income, or

if the rent includes service costs.

If you are unsure or have doubts about rent and board costs, you can use online websites (such as rental property websites) as a resource, to verify the cost yourself. If the client gives permission, you can also confirm their accommodation costs with their landlord, property manager or person the client boards with.

If you are unable to verify the cost yourself then you can request evidence from the client.

Examples of acceptable evidence of rent and board costs are a

tenancy agreement

letter from the landlord

letter from the person charging the client board

water rates statement (water rates only)

For more information please see: Out of scope

Temporary Additional Support (TAS)

When evidence for TAS is required

Evidence of allowable costs other than those already verified for Accommodation Supplement or Disability Allowance, is required when a client is applying for Temporary Additional Support or has a new or increase in the cost.

If accommodation costs have not already been verified for Accommodation Supplement, evidence is required to support the TAS application.

Acceptable evidence of TAS costs

Examples of acceptable evidence of allowable costs are:

A copy of any essential credit sales agreements (Hire Purchases)

Confirmation of minimum payments for any essential credit sales

Purchase agreement of a vehicle.

For the purposes of specific employment-related costs, you can use online websites to source the evidence yourself.

Vehicle running costs – for employment

Calculate the client's travel using the client's home address and work address to be able to determine the kilometres using online resources such as google maps.

To check the cc rating of a vehicle you can ask the client for their licence plate or check the clients file to see if we already hold this information and enter this into websites such as www.carjam.co.nz (<http://www.carjam.co.nz>).

Formula assessed child support

For formula assessed child support liability to be included as an allowable cost, evidence must be provided. This can be either:

the client's **child support to pay** letter from IR (physical copy or a screenshot from MyIR), or

directly from IR through the new Application Programming Interface (API) with the **client's consent**.

Note: a client's child support deduction from their benefit payment is not acceptable evidence.

A client has consented when they've asked for us to include their child support in TAS and provided their agreement for IR to share their child support costs with us using:

a hardcopy application or review form (all questions must be completed, and the back of the form must be signed)

MyMSD and have submitted their reapplication

the [staff scripting to obtain consent](#) Out of scope

the Work and Income website to apply for their formula assessed liability under the Transitional Arrangements.

Consent must be provided by the client every time the API is used to evidence the client's child support costs, including changes and reviews.

Consent must also be documented in the client event note 'Consent for use of Child Support Liability Info-share'.

For more information see: [Allowable cost for TAS & SpB](#) Out of scope

Public transport to work

Check what kind of transport they take and the route (including where they start and finish the journey). For example, the train station name. You can use websites such as www.metlink.org.nz (<http://www.metlink.org.nz>) or www.at.govt.nz (<http://www.at.govt.nz>) to check the cost of the journey. These include cash prices versus card prices.

For more information see: [Allowable costs](#) Out of scope

From 1 July

CSC holders nationwide can now apply for half priced fares on public transport through Community Connect.

Some clients may have had a change in public transport costs, which may affect what they are entitled to.

For more information see: [Community Connect Concession](#) Out of scope

Special Benefit (SPB)

Special Benefit is a grandparented payment, and no new applications can be made for this assistance.

Special Benefit continues to be payable to clients who were receiving it, or had applied for it, before 1 April 2006. This continues until they:

no longer qualify to receive Special Benefit or
choose to cancel Special Benefit.

At both the 3 month and 6 monthly reviews, the client must be:

interviewed and
have a review form completed.

The following must be completed:

Special Benefit review form
A DREW assessment
details of evidence must be included in the client event note.

For more information see: [Special Benefit - 3 and 6 monthly reviews procedures](#) Out of scope

When evidence for SPB is required

Evidence of allowable costs other than those already verified for Accommodation Supplement or Disability Allowance, is required when a client has a new or increase in cost.

Acceptable evidence of SPB costs

Please see acceptable evidence for Temporary Additional Support above.

Disability Allowance (DA)

When evidence for DA is required

Evidence of disability costs is always required when a client is applying for Disability Allowance or has a new or increase in cost.

Acceptable evidence of DA costs

Example of acceptable evidence of allowable costs are:

Receipts for expenses
Invoices
Quotes

As well as evidence of costs you must ensure that the following information is provided:

all costs that are included in the assessment must be listed on the application, and
a certificate from a health practitioner to verify the client's need to incur additional costs because of a disability
a Disability Allowance – Counselling form (if appropriate)
a Disability Allowance - Medical Alarm Assessment form (if appropriate).

You must leave a note on the client's file, linking to the appropriate Disability Allowance action, itemising the costs and frequency of these costs.

Receipts or evidence of doctor/specialist visits are not required when the doctor has signed the medical certificate verifying the type of consultation, cost and frequency.

For more information see: [Types of costs](#) Out of scope

Training Incentive Allowance

Training Incentive Allowance (TIA) provides extra help to sole parents, carers and disabled people receiving certain types of benefits to undertake training that will increase their skills and opportunities for employment.

It helps with the upfront and ongoing costs associated with study (such as tuition fees, laptops, wifi, transport and care costs). For more information see: [Processing Standards - TIA](#) Out of scope

Subsequent applications for Extra Help

When a client submits a subsequent application for Extra Help and has the same costs, you can accept costs that are already held on the client's file (CMS or SCOSH in SWIFTT).

Some accommodation costs generally have annual increases. You must ensure you have a conversation with the client to confirm if these costs have changed or not and record this on the clients file.

Ways we can accept cost evidence

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload
Email - you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the clients file.

Face to face

Provide evidence at local office (provided at reception or at an appointment)

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 01 August 2023

Hardship (one-off assistance) approval and evidence

In some situations, we need to get a manager's approval for a Hardship payment, or Centralised Services to authenticate a payment. We may require evidence of a cost (e.g. a quote) from a client or supplier. This is because we require it by law or when we need to be satisfied that a cost is reasonable.

On this Page:

What is Manager approval (sign-off) and when is it required?

The Ministry has different expectations for different payment types – no matter what required steps exist below, you can always speak to your manager if you are concerned with a decision. From 11 December 2023, more hardship payments will require a conversation and agreement by your manager that the payment can be made.

The difference between sign-off and approval is that for three payments (car repairs; impound fees and limited licences) your manager is the person who will take the final processing step (grant or decline the payment in CMS Hardship):

Manager sign off	Manager approval via CMS	Authentication via S2P
<p>You must speak with your manager (not delegated authority) about your decision, explaining why you want to make the payment.</p> <p>Managers must check the clients circumstances (previous grants; client ID; that the payment category is correct) and confirm the decision and approve the payment in writing by leaving a note in CMS Hardship screen.</p>	<p>In addition to the requirements for manager sign-off - your manager must complete the approval or decline in CMS - Hardship.</p>	<p>After your managers approval is received - the payment must be sent to Centralised Services for Authentication via S2P.</p>

When checking to see if manager sign off, approval or authentication is required, please use the table below:

Payment type/client circumstances	Needs manager sign off?	Needs manager approval?	Needs Authentication?
All payments under hardship categories: Health travel and reimbursement Other Emergency Payment Other Emergency Grant	Y	N	N
Food grant of \$400 or more	Y	N	N
Whiteware Check - Authentication Guidelines (Doogle) <small>Out of scope</small>	N	N	Y
Car repairs	Y	Y	N

Car impound fees	Y	Y	N
Limited licences fees	Y	Y	N
Transition to Work Job Placement <small>Out of scope</small> [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] costs of \$501, or more	Y	N	Y
Housing Support Products (HSP) Check - Authentication Guidelines (Doogle) <small>Out of scope</small> [Redacted] [Redacted]	N	N	Y
Course Participation Allowance (CPA)	Y	N	Y
Training Incentive Allowance (TIA)	N	N	Y
Any payment made via direct credit: To a bank account of \$400 or more. To a supplier where the value is \$1,500 or more (excluding EH SNG)	Y	N	N
Any Hardship payment where primary identification is not held for the client	Y	N	N

Unsure about your decision?

In addition to the above, if you are unsure about your decision, you can seek advice from your manager.

When manager sign off is required

Where manager sign off is required, you will need to:

contact your manager / delegated person for a decision based on your rationale (this could be a face-to-face conversation or via email/telephone)

explain your rationale behind your decision in a note inside the hardship application.

The manager or delegated person will then:

check your hardship notes,

advise you of their decision and discuss any follow up actions that might be required, and

add a note to the CMS Hardship screen advising of their approval (or decline).

Remember:

Conversations and approval with your manager needs to happen before the hardship application is approved in CMS, or sent to CPU for authentication

If CMS is unavailable, manager approval should be captured in documentation (Hardship paper applications) – not e-mail.

What you may need to discuss with your manager

When you present a client's hardship payment to your manager, you may want to discuss:

The client's circumstances:

Why do they require the assistance?

Are they receiving full and correct entitlement?

Have other options been considered – can this be met another way?

What other hardship assistance has the client had?

Have we paid this in the last 12 months?

Are they a high-hardship user?

Has the client been referred to other support (i.e. budgeting services) in the past?

If yes, what was the outcome of this referral?

If no, will a referral be made to support your client?

Is the cost required to meet the client's need reasonable?

Is there a more reasonable alternative?

Requesting evidence from clients

If evidence is not required by law and the cost is reasonable you can determine the cost based on your conversation with the client.

Some things to consider when determining if a cost is reasonable:

Is the cost within guidelines limits?

Is the cost realistic based on the client's need?

Is the cost reasonably consistent with previous payments made to the same client for the same or similar hardship (e.g. previous water tank refills)?

Note: Clients who are under Low Trust Case Management must always provide evidence of costs.

Ways to obtain evidence of costs:

Checking retailers websites

Verbal confirmation of costs from a supplier

Emailed evidence from a supplier.

Hardship categories where evidence is required

There are some specific instances where, under legislation or policy, clients need to provide evidence to support their application.

Cost	Description	Evidence
Dental Treatment	A client requires immediate and essential dental treatment.	<p>A dentist or health agency must complete the 'Dental Treatment Information' form for the client confirming the treatment is immediate and essential, the breakdown of the costs and the dentist's/health Agency details.</p> <p>You can approve the assistance without seeing this form but only if the client has a good and sufficient reason for</p>

		not providing it to us (e.g. they cannot upload it into MyMSD, they are already at the Dentist getting the treatment, or they are not in the Service Centre for an appointment). You must verbally confirm the information from the 'Dental Treatment Information' form and record it into the hardship note using the note template.
Laser Therapy (birth mark removal)	A client requires assistance to remove a birthmark by laser therapy.	Evidence from a registered health practitioner that the client has a birth mark that is disfiguring and visible in normal clothing.
Wigs/Hairpieces	Assistance towards the cost of a wig or hairpiece can be provided to clients that suffer from a medical condition or are undergoing medical treatment which makes it desirable for the client to wear a wig or hairpiece on cosmetic grounds.	Evidence of how much the DHB has provided towards purchasing a wig or hairpiece.
Health travel costs/Accompanying medical treatment overseas	Travel costs can be paid to clients that have been referred for medical treatment by a medical practitioner and the cost is not already being paid for by another agency or programme.	Evidence that the travel has been approved/subsidised by the DHB including the amount they will cover.
Glasses for high clinical needs	Some clients have high clinical needs which means the glasses they require cannot be provided at the standard contract price under the preferred supplier arrangement.	Evidence showing the total cost so that the shortfall can be calculated.
Essential home repairs	Available for home owners that need assistance to carry out essential repairs and maintenance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership and occupation of the property (if we don't already have this on file), • Confirmation that the work is essential, • Proof they have unsuccessfully applied for financial assistance from any other agency.
Fire, loss and burglary	Assistance with the cost of replacing essential items lost through fire or burglary, particularly where the person is not insured.	A police report or fire report is required.
Car repairs	Assistance with repairs to a vehicle where the use of a car is essential for the client or their dependent partner and children. The car should be considered essential due to illness, disability, employment, or lack of access to public transport.	<p>Proof of vehicle ownership.</p> <p>If the client gives you permission, you can check if they own the vehicle on the NZTA website. You will need the clients licence plate and/or driver's licence number</p>
HSP Rent arrears	All applications for HSP Rent Arrears should be considered as a last option after considering other hardship programmes.	<p>Unless already held on file the client will need to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income and assets • Rent arrears and, • A tenancy agreement or tenancy order showing they are a signatory.

Ways we can accept evidence

Phone

Clients can confirm their cost/s verbally
Direct contact with the specialist/supplier (with the client's permission).

Digital

MyMSD document upload

Email - you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the client's file.

Previous confirmation of a cost already held on the client's file

Checking a website to confirm a cost.

Face to face

Provide evidence where required at an appointment.

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 19 December 2023

Income and asset evidence

Income and asset evidence ensures we are paying our clients their full and correct entitlement and starting their main benefit from the correct date.

On this Page:

When evidence is required

<p>Clients in receipt of income tested <u>on-going financial assistance</u> <small>Out of scope</small></p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	<p>Clients not in receipt of income tested <u>on-going financial assistance</u> <small>Out of scope</small></p> <p>[Redacted]</p>
<p>Evidence is required when a client:</p> <p>declares changes/new income and assets (excluding employment related income e.g. <u>wages/salary</u>) <small>Out of scope</small></p> <p>has a <u>review of annual income</u> <small>Out of scope</small></p> <p>has an annual review of Childcare Assistance has an annual review of Income Related Rent (only required in some cases) see: <u>Verification of income</u> <small>Out of scope</small></p> <p>only receives non-income tested assistance (e.g. CDA or UCB) and applies for financial assistance (one-off and/or on-going)</p>	<p>Evidence is required when a client:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> applies for on-going financial assistance (including public housing applications) applies for <u>one-off financial assistance</u> <small>Out of scope</small> has an annual review of Income Related Rent (only required in some cases) see: <u>Verification of income</u> <small>Out of scope</small>

Low Trust

Low Trust clients must provide evidence of any new or changed income and assets to their local office.

When evidence is not required

Evidence of income and assets is **not** required when a client is in receipt of income tested on-going financial assistance Out of scope and:

- applies for one-off financial assistance Out of scope
- they declare changes to/new employment related income e.g. wages or salary Out of scope (this can be confirmed verbally and updated via SWIFTT)
- matching evidence is already held on the record

Acceptable income evidence

Income evidence must show the:

- name of the person who has earned the income
- employer's name
- hours worked, and
- gross and net amounts paid to the person.

When a client ceases work, income evidence must also show the:

- last day of work
- gross holiday pay (and/or any redundancy or other severance type pay), and

previous 26 and 52 weeks gross income.

Examples of acceptable evidence for income are:

Salary/wages

a letter from the employer
an employment contract
payslip(s)
an IRD online printout
full financial statements or letter from accountant for self-employment.

If the income evidence does not show the clients gross holiday pay this will need to be provided separately.

Child Support

notice of entitlement from Inland Revenue or online statement from myIR
letter from paying parent if they have a private arrangement.
information in SWIFTT and CMS for info share CS

Rental Property

Inland Revenue statement
accountant's statement or letter
documents to support rental income and outgoings
full financial statements.

Ex gratia and compensation payments

a letter from the organisation which made the payment including:

the payment amount
date received
organisation that made the payment, or

a bank statement, or
screenshot from their online banking.

ACC – Accident compensation

a letter from ACC.

There are many types of income, but these are not always charged the same way. Some income/payments a client receives are excluded as income. For more information see: [Types of income.](#) Out of scope

Acceptable asset evidence

Asset evidence must show:

the name of the person who owns the asset
a description of the asset
the value of the asset
any money owed against the asset.

Examples of acceptable evidence for assets are:

term deposit statement
bank account statement showing the current balance of all bank accounts
share certificate
latest valuation and mortgage balance on a rental property's net equity - see more information below.

Net equity

To determine net equity of a house, boat, vehicle or caravan, we will need the:

latest rates or GV (Government Valuation) notice for the property to determine its value or the amount insured whichever is greater

current balance on all mortgages owed against the property
the insured value of the leisure boat or caravan, or
a written valuation from a boat or caravan dealer
the estimated value of the vehicle.

For more information see: [Net equity](#) Out of scope

Applying for on-going financial assistance

If the client ceases employment and does not have or is unable to provide their income evidence; you can contact the employer and ask them to complete the [Employment and earnings information for applications form \(V06\)](#) [<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/documents/forms/employment-earnings-verification.pdf>]. You can only do this when the client has given their consent.

If a client re-applies for a main benefit within 26 weeks of the date their benefit was cancelled due to entering temporary employment, we do not require their previous 26 and/or 52 weeks gross income. However, the client's final pay details are required in order to determine the date of event and entitlement date.

If written evidence of income is not immediately available, you should accept what the client has indicated on their application, advise them of the possible overpayment if the information is incorrect and give the person four weeks to provide the evidence.

Ensure that the conversation you had with the client is recorded on the client's file, including the date by which the client must return the evidence.

Ways we can accept income and asset evidence

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload

Email - you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the clients file.

Face to face

Legislation

Income (definition) [schedule 2](#) [<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6784375.html>] Social Security Act 2018

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 22 September 2023

Inland Revenue number

An Inland Revenue (IR) number is required to ensure that we hold the correct information for tax purposes.

On this Page:

Acceptable IR number evidence

When a client applies for financial assistance or has a change in their IR number, you can accept and record verbal evidence of their IR number.

Clients are asked for their IR number in their application, so if they provide paper or digital evidence of this, you can still sight and record the information provided on the client's file.

These forms will be updated over time to align with this standard.

Ways we can accept verification of IR number

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload

Email – you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the client's file.

Face to face

Provide evidence at local office

Legislation

Duty to supply tax file number [section 112 \[http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783336.html\]](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783336.html), Social Security Act 2018

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 02 May 2022

Obligation failures, disputes and recompliance

We must consider a client's reasons for not meeting their obligations before initiating an obligation failure to ensure we are complying with the law.

On this Page:

Applying an obligation failure

An obligation failure must only be initiated when a client or their partner fails to comply, without a good and sufficient reason.

For more information see: [Good and sufficient reason before initiating an obligations failure](#) Out of scope

You must check the client's file, OBMAN and Jobseeker profile to be confident that the client was advised of what they were required to do and confirm if they had any reasons for not meeting a specific obligation.

If you are unable to determine if the client had a good and sufficient reason from the information recorded in their file, you must attempt to contact the client to discuss their circumstances before initiating an obligation failure.

For more information see: [Obligation failures](#) Out of scope

Advising the client of an obligation failure

You are required to give the client written notice of the decision to apply an obligation failure.

When you initiate an obligation failure the client will receive a system-generated letter advising them that they have failed their obligations.

In some cases, you must send a manual letter to clients advising them that their payments are affected differently. For example, when a client has a partner who has also failed their obligations and they have dependent children.

When a client disputes an obligation failure

Clients can lodge a dispute if an obligation failure has been actioned and they have a good and sufficient reason for failing their obligations.

You must consider any new information provided by the client or partner and let them know your decision straight away if the dispute has been:

Upheld – when you believe the decision to impose the obligation failure was correct

Withdrawn – if the client recompiled before the sanction was imposed or the client withdrew their dispute.

Overtured - when you believe that the client or partner had a good and sufficient reason or that they did not fail their obligations.

It is mandatory that you record the outcome of the client or partner's dispute in OBMAN. A letter is then sent automatically to the client or partner once a decision has been recorded.

Recomplying an obligation failure

When a client or partner indicates they want to recompile their obligation failure they must complete an activity that is the same as, or substantially similar to the activity that they failed.

For clients to recompile a grade 3 work obligation failure and be granted a provisional benefit, the client or partner must complete a six-week recompliance activity or programme of activities (13-week non-entitlement period) or wait until the end of the 13-week non-entitlement period.

For more information see: [Recompliance](#) Out of scope

What is the difference between overturning and recompileing an obligation failure?

Overturning an obligation failure occurs when a client either did not fail their obligations or had a good and sufficient reason for not meeting their obligations. For example a client that was unable to attend an employment interview due to self-isolating. When the action is completed in OBMAN it will:

remove the failure from the client's 12-month obligation count

resume or increase the benefit from the date it was suspended or reduced (in some cases a backdated review may be required).

Recomplying an obligation failure occurs when a client agrees with the obligation failure and completes a recompliance activity. When you recomply the obligation failure it will:

resume or increase the benefit from the date that the client started their recompliance activity

in the case of a one-off activity the benefit should be resumed from the date the client attended and participated in the activity.

Deactivating an obligation failure

In some cases, you can deactivate an obligation failure and remove a sanction if the client is unable to recomply with an obligation failure. This may happen if the client has a change in their situation which would mean that they are no longer subject to an obligation or because the recompliance activity is no longer suitable. In these situations, you must advise the client that the failure is still included in their obligation failure count.

Legislation

[Sanctions for failure to comply with certain obligations under this Act](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783617.html)
[<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783617.html>]

[How person recomplies after failure to comply with obligation](#) Out of scope

Related links

[Work and work preparation obligations](#) Out of scope

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Home » Resources & Tools » Helping Clients » Processing standards » **Partner changes**

Partner changes

Evidence of the start of a client and partner relationship ensures we pay their full and correct entitlement from the correct date into the correct bank account.

On this Page:

Partner inclusions

An 'Including a partner' [form](#) Out of scope must be completed when a client requests to include their partner in their financial assistance. This form includes a section for the primary client to consent to the partner inclusion.

Acceptable partner inclusion evidence

The following evidence must also be provided by the partner if it is not already held in the system:

[identification](#) Out of scope
[income and assets](#) Out of scope (if any)
[bank account number](#) Out of scope
signed partner obligations.

A copy of the partner's obligations must be given to the partner. You must ensure they understand their obligations and take additional time to explain them if necessary. If the partner is not present at the interview but has signed the partner inclusion form, you can accept that they have understood their obligations.

An interview is not required when a partner is included in social housing assistance or you are removing them from the social housing service.

For more information see: [Partner inclusion in SWIFTT](#) Out of scope

Ways we can accept evidence

Post/Fax

Online

MyMSD document upload

Email – you must copy the full email, including the sender, receiver, date and time details, onto the clients file.

Face to face

Provide evidence at local office

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Redirection of benefit payments

A redirection of benefit payment can be made if there is good cause to pay all or part of a client's benefit payment directly to another person or organisation instead of the client.

On this Page:

When a redirection of benefit can be put in place

A redirection can be put in place when:

other alternatives have been considered

the request meets the **good cause** Out of scope criteria and has been recorded.

In most cases the client must agree to the redirection of all or part of their benefit, however, in certain situations it may be required without the client's consent.

What is required for each redirection of benefit request?

If a client needs to have all or part of their benefit paid to another person or organisation, they need to provide:

the Redirection of Benefit Payment application form

all required evidence to support their request

bank account evidence for the person or organisation to receive the redirection

if the redirection is occurring without the client's consent, evidence supporting this (e.g. an Enduring Power of Attorney, written advice from a registered medical practitioner or a Court Order).

In most cases the agreement a person or organisation has to complete in the 'Redirection of benefit payment' form must be signed. However this may not be required when:

the client is unable to access the person or organisation easily e.g. they cannot access the building to have a representative from the organisation sign the form (typically these are larger organisations that offer *utilities).

* Utilities are goods or services that are considered essential, such as power, gas or water.

Note: a 'Redirection of benefit payment' form is not required when the following amounts are being redirected from a client's main benefit, NZS or VP:

Income Related Rent to their social housing provider or

an emergency housing contribution to the Ministry's designated account

All evidence relating to the redirection should be scanned and recorded into the client's record. We can receive the form and supporting documents electronically.

A letter must be sent to clients regarding any decision relating to a request for redirection, whether it is approved, declined or cancelled.

Specific circumstance

Some clients may need to have a redirection from their benefit as part of their specific circumstances including:

Social housing tenants to pay their Income Related Rent (IRR) Out of scope

Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment clients Out of scope

Residential Care Subsidy (RCS) Out of scope

Residential Support Subsidy (RSS) Out of scope

Emergency housing contribution Out of scope

Legislation

Payments generally to, or on account of, beneficiary personally [section 339](#)

[\[http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783824.htm\]](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6783824.htm) Social Security Act 2018

Good cause and exercise of discretion [clause 5](#) Out of scope

Ministerial Direction of Redirection of Benefit

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Scanning and recording

Scanning documentation and recording information onto clients' files is an important way to understand clients' circumstances and previous decisions made by the Ministry. We are responsible for creating and maintaining full and accurate information captured.

On this Page:

Scanning documentation

Documentation should be scanned and saved as soon as possible (within 24 hours of receipt) onto a client's and/or partner's file. If you can't do this, the form should be date stamped on the day it is received.

What to scan and save

Documentation relating directly to the client

Documents you are satisfied are complete and authentic

Documents not already saved to the client's file

Identification

Any Ministry forms, including medical certificates

Supporting documentation (e.g. evidence of home ownership or disability-related costs)

Documentation in CMS should be linked to the relevant client event note.

For more information on when and how to digitise MSD records, please see the [MSD Digitisation Standard](#)

Out of scope

Deciding if a document is complete and authentic

When deciding if a document is complete and authentic, consider the following:

the document is unaltered

there's no missing information or pages

there's no unusual wear and tear

the text is readable

any registration number or unique identifier is present, where applicable

For more information on identity documentation for NZ citizens, please see the [DIA – document verification guide](https://www.digital.govt.nz/standards-and-guidance/identification-management/guidance/using-documents-as-evidence/) [<https://www.digital.govt.nz/standards-and-guidance/identification-management/guidance/using-documents-as-evidence/>].

What not to scan

Direct Credit forms

Quotes and receipts

Community Services Cards

Bank cards

Incomplete documents (e.g. missing pages)

This isn't an exhaustive list.

Sight and record all evidence used to determine eligibility.

Recording information

You should record:

Information about an engagement with a client, including:

All evidence sighted (e.g. include details of the document such as date of issue, supplier details listed and amount, date costs started or changed)

Information confirmed verbally (e.g. include date cost started or changed)

Any transactions processed

All details relating to one event in the same note (e.g. add to an existing note if applicable).

Good quality notes should be easy for someone else to understand and detailed enough so that they can see how you reached your decision. Notes form part of a clients' personal file so must be factual and should not include text or inappropriate

language. Use note templates where applicable for your business unit.

Legislation

All information created or received by staff in the course of their work for the Ministry is a public record under the Public Records Act 2005.

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Transfers

When transferring clients between benefits, you must ensure the right information is received to ensure they receive their full and correct entitlement

On this Page

Transfer of benefit

When a client is transferring between main benefits, an application form for the new benefit is not always required (see the table below) but reading and signing the obligations for the new benefit is required

Each benefit has different obligations, so you must ensure the client

is informed about which obligations apply to them

understands them, and

signs the obligations of their new benefit

You must also confirm the client's current situation to ensure they are receiving full and correct entitlement and add detailed notes to their file

Transfer between benefit

As well as ensuring the client understands and signs their obligations, they must also provide other evidence/forms depending on what benefit they are transferring from and to

Youth Services

The table below outlines what a client needs to provide (as well as new obligations) when transferring between Youth Services and main benefit

Transfer from	Transfer to	What is required
Youth Payment	Young Parent Payment	Child inclusion Out of scope . evidence
Young Parent Payment	Youth Payment	Child exclusion Out of scope . evidence
Youth Payment & Young Parent Payment	Main benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proof of identity, or record 'Known to Youth Service provider' in ART Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment 'Continue or stop payments form' Where applicable, the partner also needs to provide this information If the young person has had a significant change in their circumstances, they need to complete an application form for the appropriate benefit and provide supporting documentation relevant to their change in circumstances, such as a child's identification
Main benefit	Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment	A new application form must be completed due to the additional amount of information required. The client must also provide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One form of identification Child identification and Any other supporting documentation relevant to their change in circumstances.

Main benefits

The table below outlines what a client needs to provide (as well as new obligations) when transferring between main benefits.

Transferring	What is required
To Jobseeker Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the client is applying on the grounds of a health condition, injury or disability, a medical certificate Any other supporting documentation required to determine whether the client qualifies for a temporary deferral from their work obligations.
To Supported Living Payment caring for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new application form [https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#s] must be completed due to the additional amount of information required A completed Supported Living Payment medical certificate [https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#s] for the person being cared for, completed by a registered medical practitioner.
To Supported Living Payment health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other supporting documentation to determine eligibility, for example a medical certificate or existing reports from a health practitioner.
To Sole Parent Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new application form [https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#s] must be completed due to the additional amount of information required.
To New Zealand Superannuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 'New Zealand Superannuation application [https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#n] - current clients' form must be completed due to the extra information required, for example the number of years the applicant has lived in New Zealand.

Transfer between benefit with Extra Help

When a client transfers from one main benefit to another main benefit and is receiving Extra Help, a new Extra Help application form is not required. You must however confirm if there are any changes to their costs. If there is a change to the client's Extra Help costs, ensure they provide evidence where applicable. See: [Extra Help evidence](#) Out of scope

Note: If the client qualifies for other Extra Help that they were not receiving with their previous main benefit, you must ensure the client completes the appropriate [application form \[https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#e\]](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#e) and provides any supporting evidence.

Change of eligibility while receiving Jobseeker Support

A new application form is not required when a client has a change of circumstances on Jobseeker Support, which potentially means they have a change to their eligibility, but they are going to remain on Jobseeker Support.

An obligation form is not required to be signed by the client because when Jobseeker Support was initially granted to them, all of the obligations would have been agreed to and signed by the client. However, you must advise the client which obligation they currently have based on their change in eligibility ensuring they understand what this means for them. The following must also be provided:

a medical certificate where the client can no longer meet their full-time or part-time work obligations due to a health condition, injury or disability.

If the client makes contact to advise they're available for full-time employment from the date of expiry on their medical certificate, you can change their work obligations to full-time in SWIFTT. You must also check their Jobseeker profile is up to date and update it if required.

You will also need to ensure the client understands which obligations apply to them.

When a partner of a main benefit recipient wants to become the primary

For main benefits, when a primary client and their partner want to change their status so that the partner becomes the primary client, the partner must complete an [application form \[https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html\]](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html). This is due to the additional amount of information required of a primary client that would not have been gathered when they received a benefit as a partner.

The partner who wants to become the primary client must meet the obligations and qualifications to receive the benefit. Treat the request as a new application for benefit when assessing whether they qualify.

Transferring from a main benefit to Extra Help

When a client requests to transfer from a main benefit to Extra Help, they do not need to complete an application form if they were already receiving the Extra Help with their previous main benefit. However, you need to have a conversation with the client and full client event notes must be completed.

A client can request a transfer to Extra Help either by:

- attending an appointment with a Case Manager
- calling the Contact Centre to complete the transfer
- cancelling their benefit online via MyMSD

The notes must record the conversation held with the client and should include the following:

- they have requested the transfer
- they understand their obligations (face to face and over the phone only)
- whether the client's costs have changed or not
- their income, assets and employment details (including how many hours they work).

For more information on income and assets see: [Income and assets](#) Out of scope.

If the client qualifies for other Extra Help that they were not receiving with their previous main benefit, you must ensure the client completes the appropriate [application form](#) [\[https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#e\]](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html#e) and provides any supporting evidence.

Transferring from Extra Help to main benefit

If a client has been receiving Extra Help and applies for a main benefit, they must complete an [application](#) [\[https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html\]](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/forms/index.html) for assistance.

If the Extra Help they were receiving is to be transferred to the new main benefit, you do not need to verify their expenses if they are the same as previously claimed. If the client is applying for, or includes new costs, they must provide evidence of the new cost. If a client has home ownership costs confirm with them that these have not changed since they were last verified.

For more information see: [Extra Help evidence](#) Out of scope

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