

Ministry of Social Development: temporary changes

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has made some temporary changes to document COVID-19 response. The changes are helping to make things easier for people and ensure that during this time. Here is an overview of some key changes they've made:

NO MEDICAL CERTIFICATE RENEWALS FOR EXISTING CLIENTS

People already getting Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support or Supported Living Payment don't need to provide another medical certificate. They'll continue to be paid as normal. This includes the Work Capacity Medical Certificate.

NO MEDICAL CERTIFICATES FOR NEW CLIENTS

For now, MSD won't ask people to go get a medical certificate if they have no other reason to consult a health practitioner. However, if someone already has a medical certificate, MSD will use this in their application.

When a person doesn't have any of the usual medical verification (for example a Medical Certificate or Specialist reports), MSD will look at other options like granting an Emergency Benefit so they can still get support.

TEMPORARY CHANGES FOR DISABILITY ALLOWANCE

People applying for the Disability Allowance for the first time, or an existing client with new or increased costs, won't need to provide receipts or invoices to verify these costs. They also won't need to provide a medical certificate to verify their eligibility and costs.

However the eligibility criteria for Disability Allowance haven't changed so applications for items such as unfunded medications or services will need evidence of essential need to qualify for assistance.

DEFERRING REVIEWS

For now, there will be no annual reviews (for example for Disability Allowance or Child Disability Allowance) or social housing reviews. This means if someone would normally have a review, they won't need to do anything – they'll continue getting paid.

MORE INFORMATION

The best place to go for the latest information on ways MSD can help is their website. Go to www.workandincome.govt.nz.