



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

WORK AND INCOME
TE HIRANGA TANGATA



Review of a decision

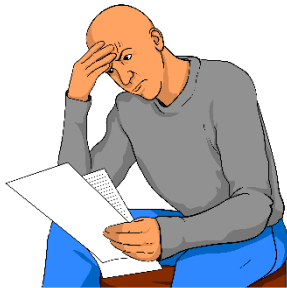


Published: April 2026

Before you start



This is a long document.



It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.



Some things you can do to make it easier are:

- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



What you will find in here

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About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is from the
Ministry of Social Development.



The Ministry of Social Development
is sometimes called **MSD** for short.

WORK AND INCOME
TE HIRANGA TANGATA

Work and Income is part of MSD.



In this document the words **we / us**
mean MSD.



This Easy Read is about what to do if
you do not agree with a decision we
have made.



If you do not agree with a decision we have made you can **challenge** it.



Here **challenge** means to say you do not think something is right.



We will **review** the decision you have challenged.



Here **review** means we will have another look at:

- what we decided
- how we made our decision.

This is called a **Review of Decision**.



When we have reviewed our decision we will either:

- change our decision

or

- ask the **Benefits Review Committee** to look into it.



The **Benefits Review Committee** is a group who meet to review decisions made by MSD.

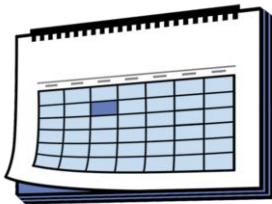


In this Easy Read the Benefits Review Committee will be called **the committee**.

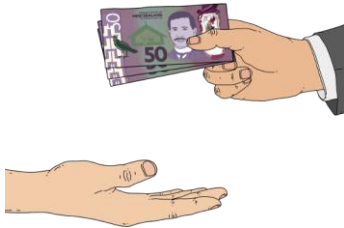
Challenging a decision



Some of the decisions you can challenge are:



- if we say you cannot get a **payment**
- when your payment should start
- if we stop a payment you usually get
- if we change how much money your payment is
- how much money you owe us for:
 - an **overpayment**
 - a **debt**.



Here **payment** means money from the Government to support you if you do not have enough money to live on.

Payments can be money you get:

- every week like a benefit
- 1 time to pay for something you need.

Here **overpayment** means we gave you too much money by mistake.

You usually have to pay an overpayment back to us.

Here **debt** means money from something like a loan that you have to pay back to us.



There is a different way to challenge a decision made on **medical grounds**.



Here **medical grounds** means a decision was made because of something to do with:

- your health
- your medical treatment
- information from your doctor.



You can find information about challenging a decision made on medical grounds on our **website** at:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/medical-appeals

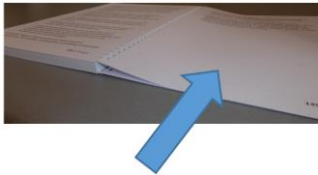


Our website is **not** in Easy Read.

How to apply for a Review of Decision



Before you apply for a Review of Decision it is a good idea to get in touch with us.



There is information about how to get in touch with us on **page 31** of this Easy Read.



We may be able to fix things without needing to go to a review.



If we cannot fix things you can apply for a Review of Decision.



You can:

- apply for a Review of Decision yourself
- ask someone to apply for you who is your:
 - **advocate**
 - **agent.**



Here an **advocate** is someone who can deal with us for you.

An advocate can only do the things you have said they can do.

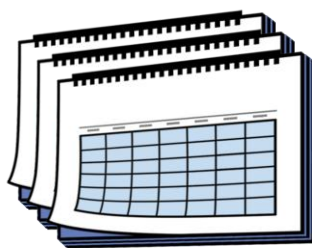


Here an **agent** is someone who deals with us when you cannot.



An agent can:

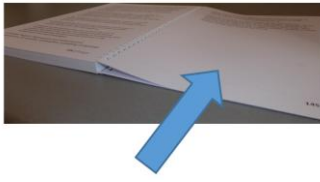
- see any information we have about you
- sign / agree to things for you
- get your benefit paid to them if you cannot manage your money for yourself.



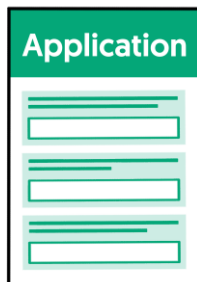
You usually need to challenge a decision within 3 months of it being made.



You can challenge a decision after more than 3 months if you have a very good reason.



There is information about challenging a decision after more than 3 months on **pages 27 to 29** of this Easy Read.



You can apply for a Review of Decision by:

- filling in a Review of Decision application form

or

- writing us a letter.



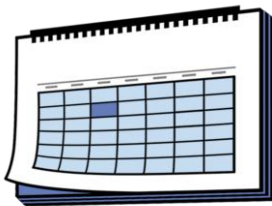
You can print a Review of Decision application form from our **website**:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/rod-form



In your form / letter you need to tell us your:

- full name
- date of birth
- contact information like your phone number
- **client number**
- the date you heard about the decision
- what the decision was about
- why you do not agree with the decision.





Anyone who has had support from us has a **client number**.

You can find your client number on:

- any letters we have sent you
- the front of your Community Services card if you have 1
- the back of your SuperGold card if you have 1.



You can write your form / letter using the sort of words you usually use.



You can:

- hand your form in at a service centre
- post your form to a service centre.



What happens next



When we get your form / letter we will do an **internal review**.



An **internal review** is when the review is done by the people who made the decision you are challenging.



We will try to find out if we:

- missed anything
- made a mistake.

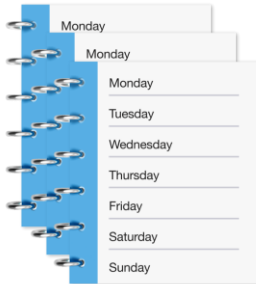


We will phone you if we:

- have questions
- need more information.



We may get in touch with other people who were involved in the decision.



We will send you a letter within 3 weeks to tell you if we have decided to change our decision.



If we have changed our decision we will tell you what will happen next.



If we have not changed our decision we will send a report to the Benefits Review Committee.

The Benefits Review Committee



The committee is made up of:

- 2 Work and Income staff members who were not part of the internal review
- 1 **community representative** agreed to by the **Minister for Social Development**.



Here a **community representative** means someone who does not work for MSD.



The **Minister for Social Development** is:

- part of the Government
- in charge of MSD.



The committee will:

- read our report
- get in touch with you to set a date for a **hearing**.



You can choose if the hearing is held:

- at a service centre you go to
- on a video call using Zoom
- by **teleconference**.



Here a **hearing** is a formal meeting with the committee where everyone gives their side of the story.



A **teleconference** is like a phone call with more than 2 people calling from different places.



You can have someone with you at the hearing like:

- a support person
- an advocate
- a lawyer.



You can also ask your lawyer to go to the hearing instead of you.



You can ask for a New Zealand Sign Language **interpreter** to interpret for you in the hearing.



Interpreters support people who do not use the same language to understand each other.



At the hearing someone from Work and Income will say why they made their decision.



Then you / your lawyer will say why you do not agree with the decision.



The committee members may ask some questions.



At the end of the hearing everyone except the committee members will leave.

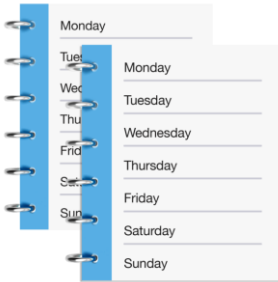


The committee will stay behind to make a decision.



The committee will let you know the decision they make by sending you:

- a letter
- a copy of their report.



This will happen around 10 **working days** after the hearing.

Working days means days that are:

- weekdays / from Monday to Friday
- not public holidays.



If the committee agrees that the decision should be changed your service centre will put things right.

If you are not happy with what the committee has decided



If you are not happy with what the committee has decided you can appeal to the **Social Security Appeal Authority**.



The **Social Security Appeal Authority**:

- listens to **appeals** about decisions by MSD
- is not part of MSD.



In this Easy Read the Social Security Appeal Authority will be called **the authority**.

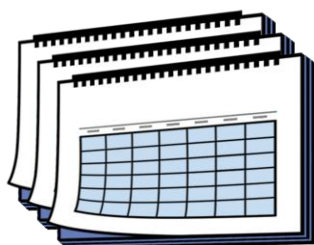


Here **appeal** means:

- saying you do not agree with a decision the committee made
- asking the authority to work out if the decision is right.



To make an appeal you must get in touch with the authority within 60 working days of getting your letter from the committee.



60 working days is around
12 weeks / 3 months.



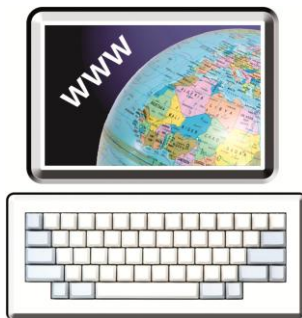
You can make an appeal by **emailing** the authority at:

SSAA@justice.govt.nz



You can also make an appeal by:

- filling in an online Notice of Appeal form
- downloading a form to print.



These forms are on the Ministry of Justice **website** at:

<https://tinylink.net/nkplK>



This website is not in Easy Read.

You can post your form to:



**Social Security Appeal Authority
Tribunals Unit
DX SX 11159
Wellington**



You will need to buy a stamp to post your form.



You will find more information about making an appeal in your letter from the committee.

Applying late for a review



You need to have a very good reason to challenge a decision more than 3 months after it was made.



Some reasons you might need more time are:

- you were sick / unwell
- you were having trouble because of:
 - a disability
 - a health condition
 - being very stressed.





Some more reasons you might need more time are:

- you did not have information you:
 - needed
 - could understand
- you needed to get advice from:
 - an advocate
 - a lawyer
- you needed to wait until something was sorted out in **court**.



Court is where things to do with the law are sorted out.

You may have a different reason for needing more time.



It is important that you tell us all the reasons for needing more time.



The committee will meet to think about your reasons for needing more time.

The committee will decide if:



- you should have a hearing
- or**
- we should keep our first decision.

If you want to stop



You can stop your application for a Review of Decision at any stage.



To stop your application you can **phone** us on:

0800 559 009



We will put you in touch with whoever is working on your application.



You can also stop your application by talking to the **Benefits Review Committee Coordinator**.



The **Benefits Review Committee Coordinator** is the person at Work and Income who will be setting up the hearing.



You can find their phone number on the letter we sent you about your hearing.

How to contact us



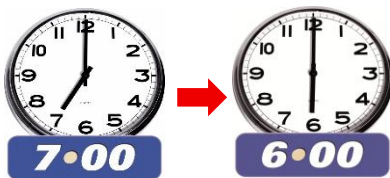
You can contact us by calling:

0800 559 009

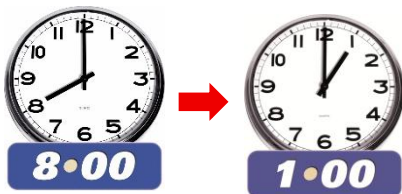


This number does not cost money to call.

You can call this number on:



- Monday to Friday:
 - from 7 am to 6 pm



- Saturday:
 - from 8 am to 1 pm.



If you find it hard to use the phone
you can:

- **text** us on:

4206



- **email** us:

MSD_Deaf_Services@msd.govt.nz



You can also contact us using the
New Zealand Relay service.

The **New Zealand Relay** service is
for people who are:

- Deaf / hard of hearing
- deafblind
- speech impaired / find it hard to talk.





You can find out more about the New Zealand Relay service at:

www.nzrelay.co.nz



You can find more information about contacting us if you find it hard to use the phone on our **website** at:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/deaf-services



You can find information about your nearest service centre on our **website** at:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/service-centres



Our website is **not** in Easy Read.



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This information has been written by the Ministry of Social Development.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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