



LOWER SOUTH ISLAND FLOODING

February 2020

What support is available and where can you get help

Emergency Management Otago

Emergency Management Otago and the Clutha District Council are coordinating assistance to their communities affected by the Lower South Island Flooding.

Register for assistance at the Clutha District Council, 1 Rosebank Terrace, Balclutha ph 0800 801 350 / 03 419 0200 weekdays 8.30am – 5pm or online at www.cluthadc.govt.nz For other requests for welfare services phone the **0800 Government Helpline on 0800 779 997** (8am–6pm, 7 days a week).

For queries related to roading, water and wastewater, Civil Defence Centres or Recovery Assistance Centres, contact your local civil defence team at your council.

For any more information or any questions you might have please contact:

- Emergency Management Otago @otagocdem on Facebook and Twitter, www.otagocdem.govt.nz and 0800 474 082 for general advice on emergency preparedness
- Otago Regional Council regarding flood protection 0800 474 082 and www.orc.govt.nz

Where to turn for help and support

After a traumatic event it is normal to feel distressed and to experience symptoms of stress

It's normal to feel distressed if you, or your friends and family, have been involved in a traumatic event. People working in response services and the wider community may also experience stress-related symptoms.

You may have trouble sleeping, feel tense or irritable, or find yourself having repeated thoughts of the event, or images of what you saw. You may also have physical stress symptoms such as being jumpy and easily startled, having headaches or pain from tense muscles, and feeling your heart pounding.

These kinds of feelings and symptoms are part of our normal reaction to a traumatic event, and for most people they pass over several days or weeks.

However, if over the following days and weeks, distress or stress symptoms are escalating, or you feel you are not coping, it's important to seek help and professional support. Your GP is a good starting point, or for support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can call or text **1737 Need to talk?** This service is free, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and gives you the chance to talk it through with a trained counsellor.

If you have questions about your child or baby's health or wellbeing, call **Plunketline** on **0800 933 922** to speak to a Plunket nurse. Plunketline also runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Contact your midwife for support and advice during pregnancy and postnatal.

Other options

- Emergencies: **111**
- Police non-emergencies: **105**

Remember, in an emergency, always call 111.

0800 Government Helpline

If you're struggling to support yourself or your family, or you would like more information about what help is available, phone the **0800 Government Helpline** on **0800 779 997** (9am–5pm, 7 days a week).

Some examples of what the **0800 Government Helpline** can help with are:

- urgent or unexpected costs such as:
 - petrol
 - food
 - furniture
- urgent living expenses such as:
 - medical costs
 - house repairs or maintenance
 - replacing appliances
 - bedding
 - rent
 - power bills
- lost wages if:
 - you have to stay home and look after family members
 - your workplace is closed
- costs from accommodation provided by friends or family in their home.

Financial support

Extra financial support is available to people affected by the Lower South Island Flooding.

In emergencies, **Work and Income** can help you with costs you don't have any other way of paying. You do not need to be on a benefit to be eligible and even if you don't think you qualify, call **Work and Income** on **0800 559 009** to check your eligibility. There may be other options available and Work and Income can point you in the right direction.

You can find more information (including eligibility criteria) on the **Work and Income** website at www.workandincome.govt.nz under '**benefits and payments**'. In emergencies, **Work and Income** can help with:

- payments if you're hosting evacuees (private homes, marae or community centres);
- accommodation costs if you're evacuated and are staying in tourist accommodation (motels, hotels or temporary rental accommodation)
- loss of livelihood (where you can't work and have lost your income because of the Lower South Island Flooding; and
- food, clothing and bedding (immediate needs up to a maximum amount).

Call the **0800 Government Helpline** on **0800 779 997** OR **Work and Income** on **0800 559 009** to find out more.

Help with living expenses

If you need something urgently or get an unexpected bill and cannot afford to pay right now then Work and Income may be able to help you even if you are not on a benefit. Work and Income can help with things like medical costs, bedding, food, rent, power bills, repairs or replacing appliances.

You may have to pay the money back depending on your situation.

Loss of income

Work and Income may be able to help if you have lost wages because of the Lower South Island Flooding. For example, if:

- you can't work because you're sick or your workplace is closed, or
- you have to stay home and look after family members.

Other help from Work and Income

Work and Income also provides other help such as benefits and housing assistance. Everyone's situation is different, so what you qualify for will depend on your situation.

Contacting Work and Income

Contact **Work and Income** if you:

- would like assistance
- aren't sure if you can get assistance
- are struggling to support yourself, or your family
- would like more information.

Visit the **Work and Income** website www.workandincome.govt.nz or phone **0800 559 009**.

Work and Income may be able to help you over the phone, without you coming into an office. If you do need to come in, **Work and Income** will make an appointment and tell you what to bring.

Support available from Inland Revenue

If you've been impacted by the Lower South Island Flooding and are struggling to deal with your tax or payments, please contact your tax agent or accountant. If you have missed filing returns or are late on payments, you can ask Inland Revenue to grant relief from penalties.

The **Inland Revenue** website also has information on managing financial difficulty and debt — visit www.ird.govt.nz/how-to/debt or call **Inland Revenue** on **0800 473 566**.

Insurance loss, damage or business interruption

Get in touch with your insurer if you've suffered loss, sustained damage, have suffered a business interruption loss, or to check if you're able to make a claim.

If your home, contents or car has been damaged by the Lower South Island Flooding, **report it to your insurance company as soon as possible**. Your insurance company will let you know what you need to do next, how to claim and how EQC works. If you need to make your home safe, sanitary, secure and weather tight, please inform your insurer, record the work done, take photos and keep a copy of the bills paid.

If you're concerned or have questions about how to make a claim, get in touch with your insurer.

Lodging an EQC claim

EQC covers landslip damage to land, home and contents, within certain limits; and covers storm and flood damage to residential land only.

If you need to make temporary repairs to keep your home safe, sanitary, secure and weathertight, please record the work done, take before and after photos, and keep copies of the bills you paid. Find out more at www.eqc.govt.nz/urgent-repairs.

You can learn more about EQCover for storm and landslip damage at www.eqc.govt.nz/storm-damage and you can make an EQC claim online at www.eqc.govt.nz/claims or call **0800 DAMAGE (0800 326 243)**.

To make a claim with **EQC** for natural disaster damage, you must have a home or contents insurance policy with a private insurance company when the natural disaster damage occurred.

Tenancy information

If you are the tenant or landlord of a rental property, you can find information on your rights and obligations at www.tenancy.govt.nz or by phoning **0800 TENANCY (0800 836 262)**.

Accommodation support

AirBnB

The **National Emergency Management Agency** has activated the Memorandum of Understanding with **Airbnb** for the Lower South Island Flooding.

This means that you can access free accommodation, or register your interest in hosting people displaced by this event, through the **Airbnb website** here: <https://www.airbnb.co.nz/openhomes/disaster-relief/floodingnz20>.

Schools and early childhood education centres

The **Ministry of Education** is working with local Civil Defence Centres and all schools and early learning services in the lower South Island to identify where assistance is needed, and to support them to remain open or reopen as soon as it is safe to do so.

We know that during a flood, maintaining routines is important and children look to parents, caregivers and whānau and to their school or early learning service, for this support.

It's natural for children to want to be at school to play and learn with their peers. Some children may be feeling worried about what has happened and being at school will give them further opportunities to understand what is happening, and who is helping.

Parents, caregivers and whānau should check with their school or early learning services for updated information.

Keeping children safe

If you're worried that a child or young person you know is not safe or being cared for, or you know a child who has been separated from their parents or caregivers you can phone **Oranga Tamariki** on **0508 326 459** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or email contact@ot.govt.nz.

Support for rural communities

Your point of contact for help during or after an adverse event is your local Rural Support Trust. Its nationwide network directly assists rural communities and individuals affected by adverse events. They can also put you in touch with other individuals and organisations.

Phone **0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP)** or visit www.rural-support.org.nz.

Follow Emergency Management Southland for the latest updates and advice: www.civildefencesouthland.govt.nz.

Animal welfare

Animal welfare

Your animals are your responsibility. There is information and checklists to help you protect your animals in emergencies on the **Ministry for Primary Industries** website (www.mpi.govt.nz).

To report animal welfare concerns involving livestock, phone the **Ministry for Primary Industries** on **0800 008 333**. For concerns about pets, contact your **local SPCA centre**.

Veterinary services

If your animals need veterinary treatment, contact your own veterinary clinic. If you do not have a regular veterinarian or yours is not open, you can find nearby clinics by going to Find-a-vet on the **New Zealand Veterinary Association** website www.nzva.org.nz.

Livestock

For support for yourself or someone you are worried about, please contact **Rural Support Trust** on **0800 787 254**.

For basic clean up assistance or to relocate cows in milk, please contact **Federated Farmers of New Zealand** on **0800 327 646 (option 2)**.

Information for international visitors

If you are a foreign national travelling in New Zealand requiring further consular assistance, contact your nearest Embassy or High Commission in the first instance. Contact details are available on the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade** website www.mfat.govt.nz.