

Support for Wellington following 14 November earthquakes

Support available to individuals and businesses while you manage the impact of the earthquakes

19 December 2016 V1.0

[New Zealand Government](#)

0800 Government Helpline

You can call the Government Helpline on **0800 779 997**, from **8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday** business hours if you:

- would like assistance
- are struggling to support yourself, or your family
- would like more information about how we can help.

Even if you don't think you'd qualify, please call us because there are lots of ways we may be able to help, and we can point you in the right direction based on your situation. You don't have to be on a benefit. We may be able to organise payments for you over the phone.

Financial support for businesses, self-employed or sole traders

Earthquake Support Subsidy

- The Earthquake Support Subsidy is a subsidy to help businesses and self-employed or sole traders impacted by the 14 November earthquakes. It aims to help you retain your staff and continue to pay them while you transition back to business-as-usual.
- It is paid for a maximum period of eight weeks and is backdated from 14 November 2016.
- It's paid at a rate of \$500 gross a week for full-time employees and \$300 gross a week for part-time employees (part-time is fewer than 20 hours a week and full-time is 20 hours or more a week.)
- The employer is responsible for paying ACC levies, PAYE and holiday pay, and any other employment-related expenses in respect of the employee(s).
- Payment will be made by lump sum for up to eight weeks.
- As an employer, you're expected to use up your business continuity insurance in the first instance. If there will be a delay in receiving these payments from their insurer, you may be able to receive Earthquake Support Subsidy until you receive your insurance payments. The subsidy will need to be repaid if an insurance payment is received for the same period.
- Employees in businesses not eligible for the Earthquake Support Subsidy should contact Work and Income to see if you're eligible for other forms of financial assistance.

Who can get the Earthquake Support Subsidy?

Employers and sole-traders who don't have business continuity insurance can get the Earthquake Support Subsidy if they meet the following criteria.

Wellington area:

- unable to access the workplace in Wellington due to cordons in place in Molesworth Street, Reading Complex and Queensgate Mall (available for the period the cordons are in place up to a maximum of eight weeks) **and**
- unable to relocate the business elsewhere.

Outside these areas

If you're an employer outside the areas above, you may be able to get the Earthquake Support Subsidy if you can provide evidence of a sudden, large and sustained drop in revenue due to earthquake-related impacts.

Who can't get it

An employer is not eligible for the Earthquake Support Subsidy if they are:

- an employer who can continue to operate and/or meet their obligations to pay their employees
- an employer who has business interruption/continuity insurance that will pay for continuation of wages for staff
- an overseas-based employer
- a branch of a larger organisation that also operates outside the area
- a government agency or government-related organisation.

You can apply online or call us.

Apply online

You'll need the following information to complete the online form:

- your business IR number
- your business bank account number
- details of the staff you want the subsidy for (employees' names, dates of birth, IR numbers and their normal hours of work).

It's OK if you don't have the IR numbers for your employees when you apply, but it may be quicker for us to complete your application if you do.

Employer application

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/online-services/eesp/index.html>

Sole trader application

https://services.workandincome.govt.nz/ess/trader_applications/new

What happens next

We'll email or ring you within three working days and let you know the outcome of your application.

- If you're eligible to get the subsidy, we'll pay you within four working days.
- Payments are made directly to your business bank account.
- You'll get a lump sum payment for a period of up to eight weeks.
- If you're an employer, you're responsible for continuing to pay your employees

Wellington Earthquake Recovery Information Centre

The one-stop shop called Eric (Earthquake Recovery Information Centre) helps people and businesses to recover after the 14 November 2016 earthquake. Key agencies and experts in one place to help business and individuals deal with post-quake issues quickly and more easily.

Location

Public Trust Building, 131 - 135 Lambton Quay (on the corner with Stout Street)

Opening hours

10am - 6pm, Monday 19 December - Friday 23 December

10am - 4pm, Wednesday 28 December - Friday 30 December

Advice and support

The centre can offer help and advice with:

- support packages
- insurance
- earthquake preparedness,
- business and employment support
- health and welfare.

Contact details

<http://wellington.govt.nz/about-wellington/emergency-management/earthquake-recovery-information-centre>

Stress counselling and support

It's completely normal for you and your family to be emotionally and physically drained by the earthquakes. You're not alone in feeling this way, and you don't have to cope on your own. Friends and family members not affected by the event can help you cope with the added stress.

The Earthquake Support Line can:

- support people with distress, anxiety, who can't sleep, who are worried about aftershocks, parents worried about their children
- help people stay calm, with sleep and relaxation techniques

Call the Earthquake Support Line on **0800 777 846**.