

Supporting Offenders into Employment

We are committed to help reduce the overall impact of COVID-19 by improving future opportunities and wellbeing for offenders.

COVID-19 Budget Package 2020

We will improve opportunities for offenders through long-term employment support.

The Government is providing over \$12 million for the continuation of a cross-agency initiative focusing on early intervention, with intensive client management to provide offenders with long-term support, from release to achieving 12 months sustainable employment.

- This initiative will also extend existing services to people on remand awaiting their court appearance and who were previously in employment.
- It will also improve prison release processes between Corrections and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).
- We expect unemployment levels to increase due to COVID-19 and that there will be an inequitable increase in Māori unemployment (60% of released prisoners identify as Māori). This initiative will provide much needed extra wrap-around support to released offenders and their whānau.
- This initiative will also improve internal reporting across MSD systems and monitoring, as well as internal reporting across MSD and Corrections.
- Employment is considered one of the biggest factors to reduce re-offending. Studies show that released prisoners who maintain stable employment are significantly less likely to re-offend. This initiative offers long-term employment support starting from in prison, through to when sustainable 12-month employment has been achieved.
- Evidence shows that 91% of prisoners have a mental health issue and 60% have children. Providing offenders with an intensive case management service to guide them back into the community and a positive employment pathway, will make a difference to not only themselves but their whānau.

Costs (operating) \$m		
2020/21	2021/22	TOTAL
6.424	5.484	11.908
Costs (capital) \$m		
0.244		0.244