

Rebuilding work-focussed case management

As part of the Wellbeing Budget we are strengthening support for people to achieve meaningful and sustainable employment.

Budget 2019

Respond to an immediate need to increase capacity at the frontline of Work and Income.

- We are investing \$76.3 million over four years to ensure enough staff at Work and Income to guarantee a renewed focus on helping more people into work.
- Increased demand for income and housing support services means that MSD employment-focused case managers are spending much less time on proactively helping people into employment than they used, or should do.
- The level of proactive engagements in March 2019 is around a third of the rate it was five years before.
- Over 1.2 million hardship grants and payments were made to clients in the 2018 fiscal year, an increase of 49 percent (almost 400,000) from 2015 - this volume is higher than levels recorded during the global financial crisis.
- Administration of Hardship Grants and supporting people with Supplementary Assistance now comprises over 40 percent of total case management time, making it the single greatest demand on case manager's time.

- Demand for income and housing support is forecast to increase and will continue to crowd out employment-focused activity; current pressures are being absorbed by staff who provide an employment-focused service, making them less able to support clients.

How are we fixing it?

- Proactive employment case management is integral to ensuring people are upskilled and trained so they are matched to sustainable and meaningful employment.
- The following number of additional frontline staff have been funded through Budget 2019

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
170	263	243	237

- This funding will allow MSD to increase employment engagements to around 25,000 (an increase of approximately 9,000).