

# Housing-related hardship assistance – improving support for housing insecure and low-income New Zealanders

**We're making changes to assistance for one-off housing-related costs to better support people in the current private rental market**

**Wellbeing Budget 2022**

**The Government is introducing a new housing-related financial assistance programme for low and middle-income New Zealanders to better support people to get into and maintain a private rental property**

**We're creating a new programme for one-off housing-related financial assistance. The new programme will better respond to the housing needs of people by increasing the amount of assistance available as well as increasing the number of times people can receive a payment per year.**

- Current one-off housing-related financial assistance does not always meet the needs of clients in the private rental market, particularly clients who face high costs to access or retain a tenancy.
- Currently there are three different programmes for housing-related financial assistance, each targeting a different group: Advance Payment of Benefit (for beneficiaries), and Housing Support Products and Recoverable Assistance Payments (for lower-income people). The funding will establish a new and improved housing-related financial assistance programme for all eligible lower-income people.
- The new programme will create a single set of eligibility criteria and payment settings for all people and make the system easier to understand.

**These changes will help lower-income people to access and retain a private rental property. With better support, we hope to reduce housing-insecurity and homelessness. Payments under the programme will be available from mid-March 2023.**

- The bond, rent in advance, and rent arrears payments will have higher maximum limits than previously so that eligible people will be able to receive adequate support for their housing needs. These payments and the moving costs payment will also be able to be paid up to twice in a year.
- The payments available under the new programme will be:
  - bond
  - rent in advance
  - rent arrears
  - moving costs
  - tenancy costs cover (extra assistance available to people who may face discrimination when getting a rental)
  - the transition to alternative housing grant (available to eligible public housing tenants moving into the private housing market)

Costs (operating) \$/m	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 and outyears	TOTAL
	-	14,295	13,171	7,023	7,514	<b>42,003</b>