



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

G.60

Strategic Intentions Ngā Takunetanga ā-Rautaki

July 2025 – June 2029



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Published June 2025

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ISSN: 1178-5160 (online)

Presented to the House of Representatives pursuant to section 39 of the Public Finance Act 1989.

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Minister's foreword

Te kupu whakataki a te Minita

The Government is focused on breaking the cycle of welfare dependency and reducing the number of children in benefit-dependent households.

Employment can be a route out of hardship. It provides individuals and families with greater independence, choice and opportunity.

That is why one of the Government's nine targets for public service agencies is to have 50,000 fewer people on Jobseeker Support by 2030. The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is responsible for the Jobseeker Support target, as well as a second target, working with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to reduce the number of households in emergency housing.

Jobseekers involves an ambitious target and early intervention will be key in meeting it.

People who come onto Jobseeker Support will have their employment needs assessed – if they are ready to work, MSD will help them apply for a job. If they need re-training or upskilling, MSD will refer them to a programme that can help. More jobseekers will be in case management and there will be more regular work seminars to help people with their job searches. Employers and industry partners will also play a key role in meeting this target by helping people into work.

Further changes to the welfare system over the coming years will help MSD meet the Jobseeker Support target and reduce forecasted years that people spend on welfare, particularly our young people.

In August 2024, the Government took urgent action to bolster the disability support system. Disability Support Services was established as a business unit within MSD. Eight months on, it is making good progress towards stabilising the disability support system, with an aim to ensure disabled people receive fair, consistent services and supports.

The Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group also joined MSD in 2024. I'm excited about the opportunities this creates for improving outcomes for children and reducing child poverty.

To support the emergency housing target, MSD will strengthen verification processes, review eligibility settings, limit discretion and clarify an applicant's responsibilities while in emergency housing.

The work that MSD's people do is critical in supporting New Zealanders into employment and achieving the Government's targets. This work is underpinned by the Government's commitment to fiscal sustainability.

MSD's Strategic Intentions 2025-2029 sets out MSD's priorities for the next four years to deliver these targets and, most importantly, make a difference in the lives of New Zealanders.

Minister's statement

I am satisfied that the information on strategic intentions prepared by the Ministry of Social Development is consistent with the policies and performance expectations of the Government.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Louise Upston', with a stylized, cursive script.

Hon Louise Upston

Minister for Social Development and Employment

28 May 2025

Chief Executive's introduction

Te kupu whakataki a te Tumuaki

At the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), we help New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent – manaaki tangata, manaaki whānau. That's our purpose and the reason our people come to work each day.

We take our responsibility to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities seriously, whether that's helping young people gain skills and education, or ensuring more than 900,000 seniors receive New Zealand Superannuation.

MSD's Strategic Intentions 2025-2029 details what we will do to meet the Government's priorities and create a sustainable welfare system.

We have been set clear targets by the Government through to 2030:

- to reduce the number of people on Jobseeker Support by 50,000
- to reduce the number of households in emergency housing by 75 percent (joint target with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development).

In employment, we will work with the Government and our partners and communities around the country to break the cycle of inter-generational welfare dependence and intensify our efforts to get people off benefits and into jobs.

In housing, we will work with people who need financial and other support to get into and stay in housing, as well as ensuring families with children living in emergency housing are prioritised into available social housing.

We face challenges such as an increasing demand for our services in a constrained fiscal environment. We must future-proof our services and make our systems more responsive to the complex needs of our clients. Our multi-year transformation programme aims to help us do just that.

We do not face these challenges alone. Our close relationships with employers and industry, community groups, non-governmental organisations, hapū and iwi, Pacific peoples, disability groups and other government agencies are essential.

Since the transfer of Disability Support Services (DSS) from Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People to MSD last year, DSS has made good progress on implementing the recommendations of the Independent Review of Disability Support Services, consulting with the disability community on key changes that will ensure we can deliver fair, transparent and sustainable services for disabled people.

MSD's Strategic Intentions 2025-2029 shows how our people and the partners we work with will contribute to creating an effective social sector that will help build resilient communities and safe, strong and independent individuals.

Chief Executive's Statement of Responsibility

In signing this statement, I acknowledge that I am responsible for the information on the strategic intentions of the Ministry of Social Development. This information has been prepared in accordance with sections 38 and 40 of the Public Finance Act 1989.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Power', with a stylized, cursive script.

Debbie Power

Secretary for Social Development
Chief Executive, Ministry of Social Development

28 May 2025

I Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora (MSD), ka āwhina mātou i te hunga o Aotearoa kia haumarū, kia pakari, ā, kia tū motuhake – manaaki tangata, manaaki whānau. Koinei tō mātou kaupapa, me te take i taetae mai a mātou kaimahi ki te mahi i ia rā.

Ka ū mātou ki te haepapa o te whakapai ake i ngā putanga mā te tangata, ngā whānau me ngā hapori, tērā pea ko te āwhina i te taiohi ki te whai pūkenga, mātauranga hoki, ko te whakarite rānei kia whiwhi ngā kaumātua neke atu i te 900,000 i te Penihana Kāwanatanga.

Kei roto i te Takunetanga ā-Rautaki a MSD 2025-2029 ngā whakamārama o ā mātou mahi hei whakatutuki i ngā whakaarotau a te Kāwanatanga me te waihanga i tētahi pūnaha tokoora toitū.

Kua tau ētahi whāinga pūahoaho e te Kāwanatanga tae noa ki te 2030:

- te whakaiti i te maha o te hunga kei te whiwhi Jobseeker Support mā te 50,000
- te whakaiti i te nui o ngā whānau kei ngā whare ohotata mā te 75 ōrau (whāinga ngātahi me Te Manatū Whare me te Whanaketanga Tāone).

I roto i te mahi, ka mahi tahi mātou me te Kāwanatanga me ō mātou hoa me te hapori puta noa i te motu ki te pākati i te hurihanga o te whirinaki ā-whakareanga ki te tokooro, me te whakakaha i ā mātou mahi ki te neke i te tangata mai i ngā penihana ki ngā tūranga mahi.

I te mahi rapu whare, ka mahi tahi mātou me te iwi e hiahia ana i te tautoko ā-pūtea, ētahi atu tautoko rānei ki te kuhu me te noho ki tētahi whare, me te whakarite hoki kia whakaarotautia ngā whānau whai tamariki e noho ana i ngā whare ohotata, kia uru ki ngā whare kāwanatanga e wātea ana.

He wero kei mua i a mātou pēnei i te pikinga o te popono ki ā mātou ratonga i roto i te taiao e kōpiri ana te pūtea. Me whakapakari mātou i ā mātou ratonga kia urupare ake ā mātou ratonga ki ngā matea tuatini o ā mātou kiritaki. Ko te whāinga o tā mātou hōtaka whakaumu tautini he āwhina i a mātou ki te whakatutuki i tērā mahi.

Ehara i te mea ko mātou anake kei te rutu i ēnei wero. He tūranga waiwai hoki tō ā mātou hononga tata ki ngā kaituku mahi me te ahumahi, ngā rōpū hapori, ngā whakahaere i waho o te kāwanatanga, ngā hapū me ngā iwi, ngā iwi o Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, ngā rōpū hauā me ētahi atu tari kāwanatanga.

Mai anō i te whakawhitinga o te nga Ratonga Tautoko Whaikaha (DSS) i Te Manatū Whaikaha ki a MSD i tērā tau, he pakari ngā kokenga o DSS ki te whakatinana i ngā tūtōhu a te Arotake Motuhake i ngā Ratonga Tautoko Whaikaha, me te kōrero whiriwhiri ki te hapori whaikaha mō ngā panoni matua ka whakarite i te kawenga o ngā ratonga tōkeke, pūahoaho, toitū hoki mā ngā tāngata whaikaha.

E whakaatu ana ngā Takunetanga ā-Rautaki 2025-2029 a MSD i te āhua o ngā mahi ā ō mātou tāngata me ō mātou hoa kia whai wāhi ki te hanga i tētahi rāngai pāpori whitake, ka āwhina ki te hanga i ngā hapori manawaroa me ngā tāngata haumarū, pakari, motuhake hoki.

Te Tauākī Kawenga a te Tumuaki

Nā taku waitohu i tēnei tauākī, e tūtohu ana ahau i taku noho haepapa ki ngā mōhiohio o ngā takunetanga ā-rautaki o Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora. Kua whakaritea ēnei kōrero i runga anō i ngā wāhanga 38 me te 40 o te Public Finance Act 1989.



Debbie Power

Hēkeretari mō Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora
Tumuaki, Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

28 o Haratua 2025



Part 1

Who we are and what we do

Wāhanga 1

Ko wai
mātou, ā,
he aha ngā
mahi

Our role

Tā mātou mahi

We are the lead agency for managing and delivering New Zealand's welfare system

Our work

Ā mātou mahi

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has a broad range of responsibilities, and our work touches the lives of almost every New Zealander. We work to deliver effective welfare services as well as a range of other supports. We recognise the diverse needs of our clients and people we work with, and prioritise those with the greatest need, including Māori, Pacific peoples, youth, seniors and disabled people.

The majority of our work directly supports clients by:

- providing employment services and support
- providing income support and superannuation
- providing student allowances and student loans
- assessing eligibility for social housing¹
- designing, allocating funding to and delivering community services with partners
- providing disability support services
- advising on child poverty reduction
- being the primary provider of social policy advice to the Government
- ensuring legislation we administer is effective and fit for purpose
- working with other agencies and the wider social sector to deliver to the Government's priorities and targets and improve the lives of all New Zealanders
- working with iwi and Māori to support the Crown's obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Our other responsibilities include:

- monitoring a small number of Crown entities and providing advice to the responsible Minister
- other functions performed by specialised business units, including Te Kāhui Kāhu (Social Services Accreditation), the Office for Seniors, the Ministry of Youth Development, Historic Claims and the Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group.

A list of our responsibilities and functions is set out in the appendix.

We are responsible for administering Vote Social Development and Vote Disability Support Services. The vast majority of what we spend goes directly to clients and those providing services to them.

¹ Also known as public housing.

Our Ministers

We support a number of Ministers, including the:

- Minister and Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment
- Minister for Disability Issues
- Minister for Child Poverty Reduction
- Minister and Associate Minister of Housing
- Minister for Seniors
- Minister for Youth
- Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence.

Legislation

We administer the legislation that governs New Zealand's welfare system. The most significant of these are the Social Security Act 2018, the New Zealand Superannuation and Retirement Income Act 2001 and the Public and Community Housing Management Act 1992 (which we administer jointly with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development).

We operate under a wide range of legislation, including the Public Finance Act 1989, the Public Service Act 2020, the Official Information Act 1982, the Privacy Act 2020, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Crown Entities Act 2004. We also deliver services and support in accordance with a range of secondary legislation, including the Social Security Regulations 2018.

Shared services

We provide an agreed range of services to other agencies, including Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People, the Social Investment Agency, the Children and Young People's Commission and Oranga Tamariki.

Our operating environment

Tō mātou taiao mahi

MSD interacts with more than a million New Zealanders each year.

Vote Social Development is the largest single Vote by expenditure within the Government's budget and accounts for just under a third of core Crown expenditure. The total Vote is \$45.3 billion in 2025/26 and includes provision for New Zealand Superannuation of over \$24.6 billion and other benefits or related expenses of over \$15.7 billion.

Vote Disability Support Services also represents a significant investment at \$2.8 billion in 2025/26.

We regularly assess how our operating environment is changing to identify trends, risks and opportunities. In the next four years, the external factors outlined below are those we expect will have the biggest influence on our operating environment.

Government priorities shape our context

The Government's vision is for a sustainable welfare system that provides a safety net for those in need, while supporting individuals and families into work and lives of greater independence, choice and opportunity.

Employment provides a sense of purpose, independence and connectedness – leading to a better future and helping families break out of the cycle of inter-generational welfare dependence. Children living in households with adults in paid employment are less likely to experience material hardship.

The Government's view is that given the impact on wellbeing for individuals and their families, everyone who can work, should work.

The Government has set nine targets for public service agencies to achieve by 2030. MSD is responsible for one target and shares a second target with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. These two targets are:

- 50,000 fewer people on the Jobseeker Support benefit
- 75 percent fewer households in emergency housing.

Our focus continues to be on supporting people into work and making sure New Zealanders can access the right support at the right time. By intervening early, we can provide New Zealanders with the support they need to move towards independence.

We make decisions based on evidence and what we know works, to ensure we are spending public money responsibly and achieving results for clients. We aim to get better results through improved use of data, evidence and analytics. This approach enables tailored investment decisions based on people's needs and barriers to work.

Partnering with iwi, community groups, employers and agencies is essential to delivering on social sector priorities

Supporting people through challenging and complex situations often requires more than one agency or organisation, including non-government organisations, hapū, iwi, employers, industry partners and community groups. Taking a more active, flexible and equity-focused approach to partnering recognises that we are stronger and more effective when we work together.

We are continuing to adapt the way we partner with those closest to the communities they serve. We will continue to expand a locally led, regionally enabled and nationally supported approach to providing services. Working closely with our partners supports our efforts to deliver more efficient and effective services, and to help people into work.

New Zealand's economic conditions, changing population and the broader environment are increasing demand on the welfare system

New Zealand's context is changing and we are experiencing increasing and more complex demand for our services. Drivers for this demand include the economic environment, the ageing population, and that our clients often have multiple needs and expect to interact with us in a range of ways. While some people may only need our help for a short time, others might not have straightforward needs and require more support.

The nature of work continues to change. A range of factors are fundamentally shifting the way people and businesses operate. As the economy changes, there is a need to prepare young people and workers for a changing labour market.

We are often called to lead the welfare and social elements of the recovery from crisis events such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks and pandemic events. We expect to be increasingly called to respond to climate change-related events.

We must respond to these challenges while continuing to fulfil our existing responsibilities. We are transforming our organisation so we can better respond to these challenges.

Demand for affordable housing across New Zealand is growing

Demand for housing across New Zealand continues to grow and more people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is amplified by a shortage of affordable housing which in turn is driving up house prices and rents.

We will continue to work with people who need financial and other support to access and sustain housing. We will also continue to manage the Social Housing Register² of applicants for social housing, including by ensuring that families with children living in emergency housing are prioritised into available social housing.

² Also known as the Public Housing Register.



Part 2

What we want to achieve

Wāhanga 2

He aha tā matou e whai nei

Our purpose

Tō mātou kaupapa

We help New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent

Our outcomes

Ā mātou huanga

What we want to achieve

Our three outcomes are what we aim to achieve in order to deliver to our purpose. They are long-term statements of our intention.

Outcome 1: New Zealanders participate positively in society and reach their potential

We want to improve people's readiness for, and access to, employment. This recognises that employment is often the best pathway out of hardship. People also participate in society through volunteering or caring for whānau and families. We engage with people, families, whānau and communities to understand their aspirations and what is important to them, including their situation, culture and values. We help to connect people with opportunities to realise their goals, reach their potential and grow, and participate positively in society.

Outcome 2: New Zealanders get the support they require

We want to ensure New Zealanders can understand and access the support and services that they need, including employment, financial, disability and housing assistance.

Outcome 3: New Zealanders are resilient and live in inclusive and supportive communities

We recognise the diversity of the people, families, whānau and communities we serve, and are committed to improving their wellbeing. We are improving New Zealanders' access to tools, skills and resources to help them to respond better to the challenges in their lives. We support communities to be inclusive, supportive and free from violence. We want people who have experienced harm, or do not feel safe, to know that help is available and to understand where they can get it. We provide disability support services that disabled people need.

Our strategic shifts

Ā mātou nekehanga ā-rautaki

The changes we are making across our organisation to help us deliver our outcomes

Te Pae Tawhiti – Our Future is MSD’s foundational strategy. It presents our long-term strategic direction as three strategic shifts we need to make across MSD to achieve our outcomes. It is supported by our Māori strategy and action plan, Te Pae Tata – Te Rautaki Māori me te Mahere Mahi, and our Pacific strategy and action plan, Pacific Prosperity – Our People, Our Solutions, Our Future. These embrace the three shifts outlined below and describe how they will be realised for Māori and Pacific peoples.

A positive experience every time – Mana manaaki

Helping people, whānau, families and communities is at the centre of what we do. We will look after the dignity of people with warmth, listening, respect, compassion, openness and fairness.

Partnering for greater impact – Kotahitanga

We are stronger when we work together with whānau, families, hapū, iwi, providers, employers, communities and other government agencies.

Supporting long-term social and economic development – Kia takatū tātou

We will prepare ourselves for the future and take a long-term approach to community, regional and economic development. To improve employment outcomes, we will support people to acquire skills for current and future job markets.

Our focus areas

Ā mātou aronga

Focus areas identify our medium-term priorities

Our six focus areas cover most of what we do. They identify our medium-term priorities and reflect our role in contributing to the Government's priorities, including employment and emergency housing targets. Building on the work done to date with our people and partners, focus areas drive our work planning as we put our three strategies into action and bring our purpose to life.

Getting New Zealanders working

We support people to prepare for, find and stay in work. We intervene early to get people into work or training and support clients to understand their obligations to prepare for and find work. By helping families into work, we help lift children out of material hardship.

Providing the income support people need

We provide a financial safety net for those in need.

Supporting people with their housing needs

We help people with their housing costs, including paying grants for emergency housing, assess their housing needs for the Social Housing Register and refer them to providers, and support people out of emergency housing.

Partnering with others

We work with providers, community and iwi, and other government agencies to deliver efficient and effective services that improve life outcomes for our clients and communities. We work with employers and industry to find jobs for our clients. We recognise the valuable connections our partners have with their communities.

Providing services that disabled people need

We provide disability support services to eligible disabled people who need them. These services complement other services and support disabled people may already receive and help address the barriers disabled people face in accessing the same opportunities for a good life as other New Zealanders. We also support disabled people who need environmental support services to engage with daily life, and children who are referred for specialist support to reach developmental milestones.

Enabling MSD people to help New Zealanders

We provide staff with the skills and tools they need to help people. Our technology is resilient, continually evolving and supports digitally enabled services. We use data and evidence to support fiscally sustainable decision making.

Our impacts

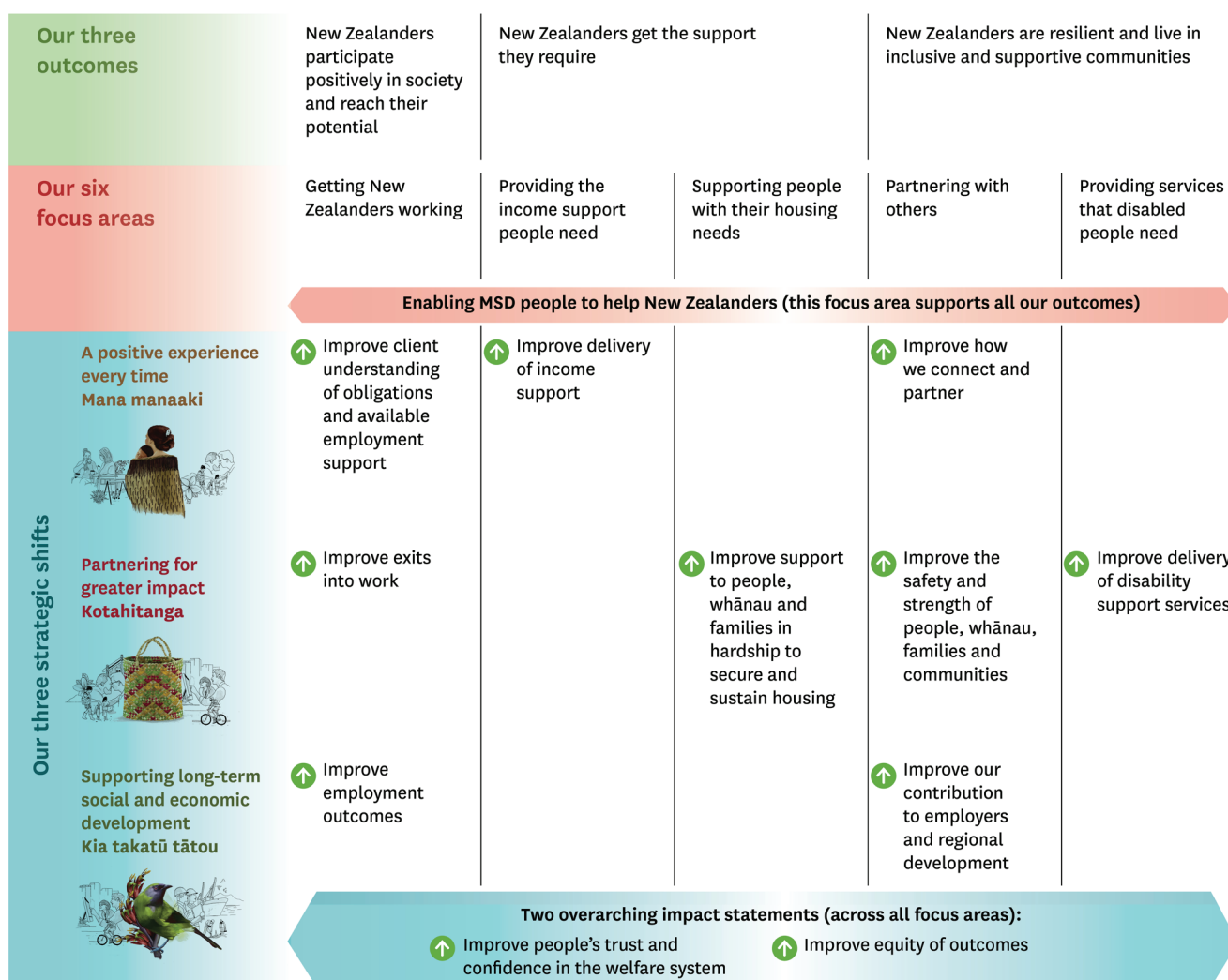
Ā mātou pāpātanga

How we will know we are making progress towards our outcomes

Our outcomes framework shows how we will deliver to our outcomes, focus areas and strategic shifts. The weave/raranga emphasises that changes to how we are delivering our services (through our three strategic shifts) will have an impact on what we want to achieve (our outcomes and focus areas).

Our 11 impact statements collectively represent how we will assess progress on delivering to our outcomes, focus areas and strategic shifts. They unpack our focus areas into more specific medium-term goals.

Figure 1: MSD's outcomes framework (weave/raranga)



Our performance framework

Tā mātou anga tutukinga mahi

How we monitor our progress

Our performance framework shows how we measure and report on our performance against our outcomes. We report on progress using Government targets, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Estimates performance measures.

Government targets

There are nine targets for public service agencies to achieve by 2030. MSD's targets are:

- **50,000 fewer people on the Jobseeker Support benefit**
- **75 percent fewer households in emergency housing (jointly with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development).**

These targets are most directly reflected in three of our impact statements and associated KPIs as shown below in **blue** and **purple**.

Key Performance Indicators

A suite of 18 KPIs map to our 11 impact statements and help us to monitor progress.

Figure 2: MSD's impact statements and associated KPIs

Impact statement	Associated KPI(s)
Improve client understanding of obligations and available employment support	Client outcome: Awareness of obligations
Improve employment outcomes	Client outcome: Staying in work Future reliance: Estimated average future years on a main benefit Effectiveness: Employment programmes
Improve exits into work	Effectiveness: Benefit exits into work
Improve delivery of income support	Accuracy: Accurate benefit entitlement assessments Timeliness: End-to-end time to receive a financial benefit Debt: Average overpayment debt
Improve support to people, whānau and families in hardship to secure and sustain housing	Effectiveness: Housing support resolution Timeliness: Time taken to be placed on the Public Housing Register
Improve how we connect and partner	Partner experience: Experience of youth development partners

Impact statement	Associated KPI(s)
Improve the safety and strength of people, whānau, families and communities	Client experience: Effectiveness of services addressing family violence Client experience: Effectiveness of services addressing sexual violence
Improve our contribution to employers and regional development	Qualitative approach: Examples of MSD's work that show improved contribution
Improve delivery of disability support services	Qualitative approach: Examples of MSD's work that show improved delivery
Improve people's trust and confidence in the welfare system	Client trust: Net trust score Client experience: Overall service score
Improve equity of outcomes	Equity: Cohort data across our KPIs

A qualitative approach for the disability support services KPI has been proposed as the most appropriate form of measurement while we work on policy options and proposals for ministerial consideration on how disability support services can be strengthened. There will be further work done to develop future measurement options in this area.

The results of our KPIs will be provided in our annual reports and published on our website.

Estimates performance measures

We also report on our Estimates performance measures as set out in the Vote Social Development and Vote Disability Support Services Estimates of Appropriations. These track our delivery of the initiatives and services we are funded to provide. Some Estimates performance measures are also KPIs.



Part 3

Helping us get there

Wāhanga 3

Te āwhina i a matou kia whakatutuki ai i ngā mahi

Our organisational foundations

Ō mātou tūāpapa whakahaere

Improving how we operate so we can better deliver our services for New Zealanders

We are transforming the way MSD delivers services

MSD – services for the future programme is a service-led, technology enabled transformation that will deliver better outcomes for New Zealanders across work, partnering and payments.

Modernising core technology systems and processes tackles system risks, ensures more secure, reliable services for New Zealanders, and enables MSD to respond faster, including to implement the Government's policies. We want to improve New Zealanders' experiences of engaging with us and ensure MSD can meet future challenges.

Transformation will:

- enable us to deliver better employment outcomes and work with clients less likely to find work on their own
- deliver improved digital services that make transactional tasks easier, so clients can do more themselves and we can focus on people who need extra help
- allow seniors, students and working age clients to easily understand their entitlements and relevant obligations
- deliver a Future Service Model that enables us to integrate services for clients with greater consistency across the country (a key part of this is a tiered services approach supported by better tools)
- make it easier for our partners to work with us so they can focus on helping people
- deliver modern, stable technology so the Government can implement new policy more easily and enable data to be shared across the system as appropriate
- deliver reusable patterns for government, contributing to the Government's digital strategy.

The system and process changes will come together in stages, ultimately transforming the experience of dealing with MSD from start to finish.

Transformation is underway and will be delivered initially through a core set of changes:

- Employment Service – a new Digital Employment Service and strengthened service model for jobseekers and employers.
- Service Experience – a modern Service Experience Platform and business capabilities that will transform the service to clients. This will enable transformed channels and tools for staff, simplified processes and improved service outcomes.
- Effective commissioning and contracting (Kotahitanga) – improved partnering approaches and the systems needed to transform how MSD commissions and contracts with third-party providers, and support partnering for outcomes.

We have engaged transformation partners comprising international and New Zealand companies to help deliver the service and technology changes.

We regularly report on the progress of the programme and benefit realisation to Ministers and Cabinet.

We will support MSD people, partners and New Zealanders with effective digital technologies

We are intent on becoming a modern, digital and responsive organisation, delivering effective and accessible services that help people towards employment and support them to live better lives.

Our technology needs to deliver an improved digital experience for our people and clients, provide better access for our partners, and enable better insights to support improved outcomes for clients and their whānau. With the current constrained financial environment, we are focused on essential technology activities to maintain our core systems, so they remain operational, secure and efficient until we transition to more modern solutions.

We will maintain our core foundations until we can modernise by:

- decluttering our environment, decommissioning systems and utilising cloud platform services where possible
- maintaining system security
- ensuring digital access to services
- ensuring ongoing integration between systems
- continuing to enable access to, and use of, data and information
- simplifying our business processes and creating common patterns that can be reused across the government system.

We will continue to ensure the services we provide are resilient and sustainable, and that we can respond to the changing requirements placed on MSD. This aligns with the all-of-government Strategy for a Digital Public Service to develop modern, connected digital public services.

We will improve delivery of disability support services

Disability Support Services (DSS) was transferred to MSD in 2024 as part of the Government's response to the Independent Review of Disability Support Services. The independent review found that current policy settings and service design do not allow for the effective administration and delivery of disability support services. Our focus is to stabilise and strengthen DSS to ensure sustainable services.

We are improving delivery to better:

- improve consistency, fairness and transparency of disability support services
- provide certainty for the future for disabled people, and whānau, family and carers on these important services and supports.

We will strengthen our responsiveness to Māori

As an agency of the Crown, we are committed to supporting and enabling Māori, whānau, hapū, iwi and communities to realise their own potential and aspirations. Māori make up a significant proportion of the communities we serve, including 39 percent of those on a main benefit, 63 percent of those in emergency housing and 48 percent of those on the Social Housing Register.³

We will strengthen our accountability and responsiveness to Māori, and support the Crown's obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi, by placing emphasis on our guiding principles of:

- Partnership – we will act reasonably, honourably and in good faith towards Māori
- Protection – we will recognise and provide for Māori perspectives and values and take positive steps to ensure Māori interests are protected
- Participation – we will enable and support Māori to actively participate in all matters that increase their wellbeing.

We will support our people to help New Zealanders

Our People Strategy – He Korowai Manaaki sets out the people-related actions we will carry out to deliver our key organisational strategies. The strategy provides a whole-of-MSD view on what is needed to be successful in an ever-changing environment, how we might work in new and different ways, and what we want it to be like to lead people and work at MSD. Our People Strategy has four key components:

- Capability-building – we have the capability to perform to our potential now and in the future
- Leading for performance – our leaders develop and nurture people and teams to deliver high levels of performance
- Client and whānau-centred – we design our work, roles and organisation to deliver for our clients and whānau
- Positive experience – our people have an experience at work that enables them to reach their potential and be included, safe and well.

We will continue to enhance our workforce planning capability so we can meet our future workforce needs.

We will continue to provide a positive work experience which enables our staff to be safe, well and reach their potential at MSD. We will also continue to have constructive relationships with our employees and their unions.

We will enhance capability so that all New Zealand communities receive the best possible service no matter where or how they connect with us.

Our Māori Cultural Capability Work Programme supports MSD to deliver to Te Pae Tata and includes Karangahia te Haeata – the Māori Language Policy and High-Level Strategic Framework for MSD. This supports MSD staff to learn, use and promote te reo Māori, and was developed with input from staff across MSD.

³ As at 31 March 2025.

MSD is a diverse organisation with staff who reflect the populations we serve.

MSD is committed to promoting a workplace that is fair, equitable and diverse. Our policies are designed to ensure all our employees receive fair and equitable pay, employment conditions and opportunities. MSD has a Diversity and Inclusion work programme which helps to maintain a positive, safe and supportive work environment for our people.

Leaders have a key role in supporting capability by embedding our Capability and Development framework, Te ara piki.

We will look after the health, safety, security and wellbeing of our people, clients and others we work with

We are committed to providing the resources, training and physical working environments that support the health, safety, security and wellbeing of our people and those we work with.

We will continue to support both the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our people by:

- continuing to develop our understanding and management of psychosocial risks
- building the capability of managers
- better equipping our people with skills to look after themselves and their colleagues
- enhancing our training approach to ensure it remains relevant
- working with providers and suppliers to manage overlapping health, safety, security and wellbeing duties.

We have now completed deployment of the zoning model for our public-facing sites to enhance the safety and security of our service centres.⁴ Using the zoning model means there are tailored zones in our service centres to balance safety with ease of access and delivering a positive experience. We will embed improvements to our health, safety and security reporting system to ensure it remains fit for purpose and supports MSD to continue to meet its legislative responsibilities.

We will manage risk in a challenging environment

We operate in an environment of increased visibility and scrutiny, including of our business transformation. Our focus on integrity and risk will help support the business to build and maintain stakeholder confidence and achieve our objectives. We will work with our people to ensure:

- risks are identified early, and the right people know and are responsible for them
- our controls are robust and built-in
- integrity expectations and guidance are clear.

⁴ With the exception of a small number of sites where a new building is required (note these sites have interim security controls in place).

We will support strong decision making through governance

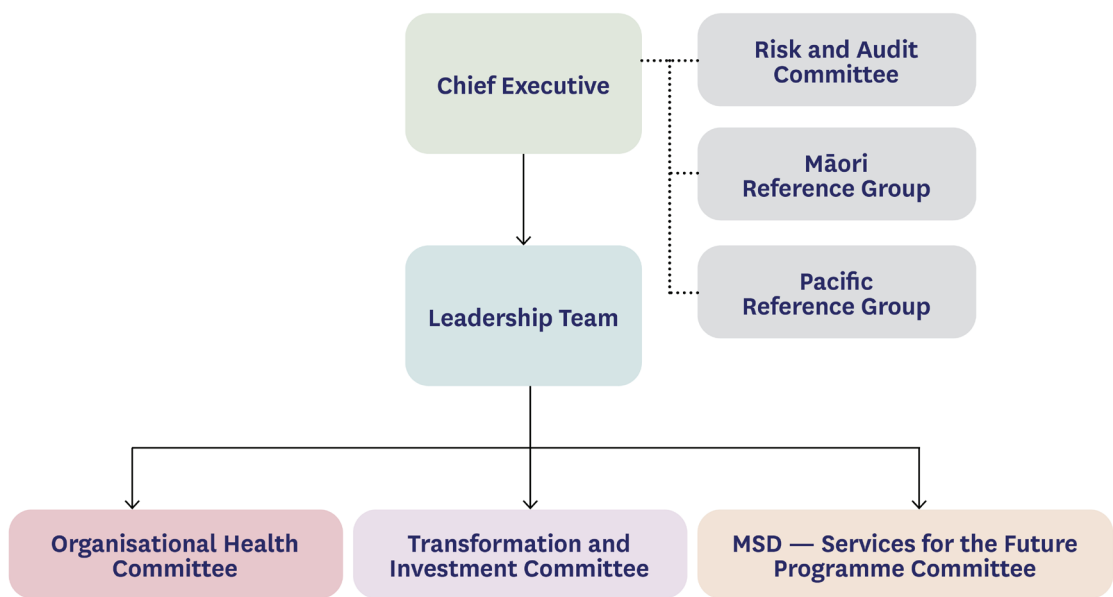
Our governance arrangements support strong stewardship, enabling delivery of our strategy and ensuring we are focused on our purpose.

Our primary governance body is the Leadership Team, comprising our Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executives. The Leadership Team is responsible for setting our strategic direction, driving organisational performance, overseeing organisational risk and assurance and leading a positive culture.

The Leadership Team is supported by three other committees which are led by members of the Leadership Team and include senior leaders from across the organisation.

Our Chief Executive is supported by three independent advisory groups consisting of external members. The Risk and Audit Committee provides advice to the Chief Executive on risk assurance and auditing requirements for MSD. The Māori Reference Group and Pacific Reference Group provide a strategic reference point and advice on matters impacting and relating to the wellbeing of Māori and Pacific peoples, whānau, families and communities.

Figure 3: MSD’s governance framework



We will use data, analytics and information to make the right decisions for New Zealanders

Using data, analytics and insights helps deliver our outcomes by enabling effective decision making, focusing resources on effective investments, and understanding and evaluating performance. High-quality insights will direct investment to where it will make the greatest difference for New Zealanders. Our insights will be easily accessible for those who need it, including partners where appropriate, and specific to the unique needs of people and whānau.

Through data-driven decision making, MSD will apply and embed an investment approach, enabling us to understand the long-term outcomes for different groups of clients, and identify those policies and services that will support us to intervene early.

We will focus on building our clients' trust in the security and integrity of the information we hold – treating information as taonga. We will continue embedding MSD's Privacy, Human Rights and Ethics (PHRaE) framework into our data collection, information management, system design, and privacy and security processes. This will ensure we are open, transparent and responsible stewards of client information

We will enable smarter investment and asset management

We will make sure our assets, including offices and information technology applications, are suitable by managing them well and regularly monitoring their performance. Our asset portfolio is large, so reliable and up-to-date information will ensure our planning and oversight in this area is done well. We will prioritise the assets that enable us to deliver to our strategic direction, while working within our existing baseline.

We will continue to strengthen our commercial operations

We have continued to strengthen our commercial operations group to better support our organisation as it transforms.

We have implemented a modern financial system which provides a repository for all commercial contracts. This reduces administrative tasks and improves data and financial decision making. We have also lifted the capability of our procurement and commercial management teams to better support key procurement activity and management of suppliers.

We are now leveraging our commercial capability to support the demands of transformation through:


- technology improvements that enable procurement and contract management capability for social commissioning outcomes
- evolving and maturing our supplier relationship management framework to deliver enterprise capability
- making it easier to transact with us through e-invoicing and expanding to zero touch processes and engagement with suppliers.

We will introduce more sustainable practices which will reduce our carbon emissions

We are continuing to reduce our emissions in areas such as electricity, gas and vehicle use as part of delivering to our emissions reduction targets in the Carbon Neutral Government Programme.

We will continue to deliver to our strategies

In addition to our key organisational strategies Te Pae Tawhiti – Our Future, Te Pae Tata, our Māori strategy, and Pacific Prosperity, our Pacific strategy, we own and deliver to a number of other strategies such as our People Strategy. These address a range of specific services, programmes and cohorts, as well as how we deliver our services and build internal capability. We also support strategies led by other government departments. Most of MSD's strategies are published on our website.



Appendix

Services we provide

Āpitihanga

Ā mātou ratonga

Our services include:

Employment services and support

- Connecting clients to employers and job opportunities
- Upskilling clients through industry-based recruitment partnerships
- Responding to local labour market conditions by working with local employers and industry partners through our regional employment teams
- Supporting young people to gain the skills they need to work and have an independent future
- Offering employment programmes that help people obtain and stay in employment
- Operating Jobs and Skills hubs that connect with local industry to support large infrastructure projects.

Income support, superannuation, student loans and allowances

- Benefits and hardship assistance
- New Zealand Superannuation and Veteran's Pensions
- Housing-related financial support
- Student financial support via StudyLink
- Child-related benefits
- Paying Working for Families Tax Credits to clients on behalf of Inland Revenue
- Other financial support.

Housing support services

- Assessing people's eligibility for social housing and managing the Social Housing Register
- Reviewing social housing tenancies of eligible tenants paying market rent
- Calculating and reviewing Income-Related Rent
- Referring people to transitional housing, social housing and private accommodation
- Determining eligibility for the Emergency Housing Grant and supporting people in emergency housing to find sustainable housing
- Providing recoverable assistance to help people obtain and retain their housing.

Contracting and funding community services

- Prevention and crisis response in relation to family violence by supporting victims, survivors and perpetrators of family violence and sexual violence
- Reducing the isolation, abuse and neglect of older people
- Building people's financial capability and resilience
- Supporting rural and isolated communities to access government and community services
- Supporting refugee and migrant communities to participate in local initiatives
- Supporting disabled people and people with health conditions to engage in the community
- Supporting youth development
- Delivering Pacifica Proud family violence prevention and education services.

Disability support services

- Residential-based support services. This includes funding for:
 - residential support for disabled people living in a group home, or in an aged residential care facility
 - facility-based respite (short-term relief support)
- Community-based support services. This includes funding for:
 - supports that assist people to live in their community such as household management and personal care
 - some of the costs of care and support for a disabled person while their carer takes a break
- Funding for children who are referred for specialist support to reach developmental milestones
- Funding for specialist support for disabled people and their whānau to find positive ways to communicate and strategies to reduce harmful behaviour
- Free or subsidised equipment and modifications for disabled people to help them with everyday activities
- Connecting disabled people with supports through Needs Assessment and Service Coordination organisations and Enabling Good Lives sites
- Support for people detained in secure hospital level care under the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation) Act 2003 and other relevant legislation.

Welfare system support

We provide a range of services to the Government to support the welfare system, including:

- Advice to Ministers on a wide range of social policy issues, employment programmes, income support, active labour market policies, housing-related social assistance, support for children and young people, retirement income, child poverty, social policy issues relevant to seniors and disabled people, social sector policy initiatives, regional development and governance, and our international obligations
- Protecting the integrity of the welfare system by minimising errors, client debt and fraud, and managing the collection of overpayments and recoverable assistance loans
- Assessing and resolving claims of abuse and neglect for people who were harmed while in the care or oversight of Child, Youth and Family or its predecessors
- Responding to adverse events such as floods, droughts and earthquakes, and providing a supporting role across the emergency response system as set out in the Civil Defence Plan
- Monitoring a small number of Crown entities and providing advice to the responsible Minister.

Welfare services and other social service functions

We work with others to deliver effective welfare services and other social service functions, including:

- Leading relationship agreements and accords with iwi on behalf of the Crown:
 - Te Hiku o te Ika Iwi – Crown Social Development and Wellbeing Accord
 - He Tapuae – Ngāi Tūhoe Service Management Plan
 - Koiora Accord (Waikato-Tainui)
 - Te Atiawa and Ngāti Toa – Tākai Here
- Contributing to cross-government initiatives, including:
 - working with hapū and iwi towards improving outcomes for Māori
 - supporting the Child and Youth Strategy
 - sponsoring We Enable Us, an all-of-government disabled employee network in the public sector
 - strengthening oversight of the Oranga Tamariki system, including independent monitoring
 - supporting place-based initiatives
 - contributing as a member of several cross-agency groups, including the Digital Government Leadership Group, the Government Health and Safety Lead and Te Aorerekura (the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence)
 - supporting community-led responses to the harms and drivers of organised crime, through the Resilience to Organised Crime in Communities (ROCC) Community Resilience and Whānau Support Fund
- Accrediting social service providers contracted by partner agencies, managing Core Worker Exemptions and Social Worker Registration non-compliance.



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

