



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Implementation of the Accommodation and Welfare System Approaches under the COVID-19 Protection Framework

**Portfolios**                      **Housing / Social Development and Employment**

On 20 December 2021, Cabinet:

- 1        **noted** that, in line with earlier Cabinet decisions [CAB-21-MIN-0493], on 3 December 2021, the accommodation and welfare system approaches started supporting households who contacted the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) for welfare support to self-isolate;
- 2        **noted** that governance and referral functions have been established by MSD, other government agencies and partners, including in regions, to support the welfare needs of people identified by the health response;
- 3        **noted** that functions have also been set up to enable community providers to deliver local support to people required to self-isolate;
- 4        **noted** that a reporting approach is being implemented to enable oversight of how the welfare system approach is delivered;
- 5        **noted** that on 22 November 2021, Cabinet:
  - 5.1      invited the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Social Development and Employment to report back to Cabinet in March 2022 to show how the funding has been allocated to meet costs to support people who are self-isolating under the COVID-19 Protection Framework, including appropriate metrics;
  - 5.2      authorised the above Ministers to draw down the tagged operating contingency for the welfare system approach;

[CAB-21-MIN-0493]

#### Accommodation approach

- 6        **noted** that health entities (District Health Boards, Public Health Units and Primary Health Organisations) are responsible for assessing, prioritising, and placing people into alternative accommodation options when the initial health assessment indicates alternative accommodation for self-isolation is required;
- 7        **noted** that procurement of alternative accommodation will be managed through an agreed procurement agency;

- 8 **noted** that agencies have established an Alternative Accommodation Escalation Pathway to help health entities find local options for alternative accommodation;
- 9 **noted** that availability of alternative accommodation remains a critical constraint due to wider housing supply challenges and the increase in tourism over the summer period;
- 10 **noted** that for people who test positive for COVID-19 while they are away from home over the summer period, travelling home safely while maintaining isolation will be the first course of action ahead of considering alternative accommodation options;
- 11 **noted** that housing data and insights have been provided to health agencies to ensure higher-risk accommodation sites are triaged quickly to reduce the risk of further transmission should a tenant/client test positive for COVID-19;
- 12 **noted** that the Ministry of Health has s 9(2)(f)(iv) left uncommitted in its Community Supported Isolation and Quarantine Service funding pool that it is proposing to use for additional supply over the summer months, but that further funding is likely to be required in early 2022 for further procurement;

### Further report

- 13 **invited** the Minister of Housing and the Minister for Social Development and Employment to provide an oral update to Cabinet in February 2022 on the implementation of the housing and welfare system approach.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet