LEG-26-MIN-0214

Cabinet Legislation Committee

Minute of Decision

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Social Security (Exemption from Stand Down—Parental Income Requirement) Amendment Regulations 2026 and Social Security (Modernisation) Amendment Regulations (No 2) 2026

Portfolio **Social Development and Employment**

On 24 September 2026, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

Stand-down exemption regulations

1 **noted** that Cabinet, and the Minister for Social Development and Employment under delegated authority, have previously made decisions on the policy to tighten the eligibility criteria for Jobseeker Support and the equivalent Emergency Benefit by introducing a Parental Assistance Test for 18- and 19-year-olds [CAB-25-MIN-0126.61, SOU-25-MIN-0126, and LEG-26-MIN-0075];

2 **noted** that an amendment to add a new stand-down exemption to the Social Security Regulations 2018 is required to ensure the effective implementation of the Parental Assistance Test being introduced by Part 1 of the Social Security (Jobseeker Support and Accommodation Supplement) Amendment Act 2026 to give effect to the decisions above;

3 **noted** that, under Cabinet's delegated authority [CAB-25-MIN-0126.61], the Minister for Social Development and Employment has agreed to progress the Social Security (Exemption from Stand Down—Parental Income Requirement) Amendment Regulations 2026, to provide for a new exemption from the stand-down requirements in the following circumstance:

3.1 the qualifying client's relevant benefit is cancelled because they did not meet the Parental Assistance Test, or because they did not provide the required information to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) that shows they meet the test; and

3.2 the qualifying client's spouse or partner, who was included in the qualifying client's relevant benefit, applies for a relevant benefit to replace the cancelled benefit;

Mandatory reviews regulations: holiday period matter

4 **noted** that, under delegated authority from Cabinet for specific decisions related to mandatory reviews [SOU-25-MIN-0013], the Minister for Social Development and Employment has agreed to move mandatory reviews for specified benefits that fall within either the week preceding or including 26 December to the Monday after 2 January (or in the period from 25 December to 15 January, the next working day for Special Benefit) in the year immediately following;

5 **noted** that an amendment to the Social Security Regulations 2018 is required to give effect to the decision in paragraph 4 above;

Mandatory reviews regulations: specific engagements matter

6 **noted** that in January 2025, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee agreed that when a client has an engagement with MSD that confirms all of the same circumstances as their mandatory review, their review date will move to 52 weeks from that engagement [ECO-25-MIN-0002];

7 **noted** that an amendment to the Social Security Regulations 2018 is required to give effect to the decision in paragraph 6 above for clients receiving Accommodation Supplement and Disability Allowance;

Next steps

8 **noted** that the Social Security (Exemption from Stand Down—Parental Income Requirement) Amendment Regulations 2026 will come into force on 2 November 2026;

9 **noted** that the Social Security (Modernisation) Amendment Regulations (No 2) 2026 will come into force on 2 November 2026 for both the specific engagements matter and the holiday period matter;

10 **authorised** the submission to the Executive Council of the Social Security (Exemption from Stand Down—Parental Income Requirement) Amendment Regulations 2026 [PCO 29244/2.0] and the Social Security (Modernisation) Amendment Regulations (No 2) 2026 [PCO 29319/2.0].

Sam Moffett
Committee Secretary

Present:
Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Scott Simpson
Hon Cameron Brewer
Stuart Smith MP
Todd Stephenson MP

Officials present from:
Officials Committee for LEG