



Report

Date: 10 March 2021

Security Level: IN CONFIDENCE

To: Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development and Employment

Final Cabinet paper - Social Security (Subsequent Child Policy Removal) Amendment Bill: Approval for Introduction

Purpose of the report

- 1 This report provides you with the final version of the Cabinet paper titled *Social Security (Subsequent Child Policy Removal) Amendment Bill: Approval for Introduction* (the Cabinet paper), for lodgement with the Cabinet Legislation Committee (LEG) for its meeting on 18 March 2021.

Recommended actions

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **note** that we have incorporated feedback on the Cabinet paper received through cross-agency consultation
- 2 **note** the Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) has made further changes to the Social Security (Subsequent Child Policy Removal) Amendment Bill (the Bill), to ensure it aligns with our advice and your decisions in REP/21/2/059
- 3 **note** that the final version of the Cabinet paper is attached (subject to any final changes from your office), alongside the Bill and departmental disclosure statement
- 4 **agree** that the Cabinet paper, departmental disclosure statement and Bill will be considered at LEG on 18 March 2021

Agree / Disagree

- 5 **note** an aide memoire will be provided to support your presentation of the Cabinet paper and officials are available support you, if required.

Leah Asmus
Policy Manager
Welfare System Policy

10/3/2021

Date

Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Minister for Social Development and Employment

10/3/21

Date

Minor changes have been made to the Cabinet paper and Bill

Background

- 2 In early February 2021, you agreed to seek LEG approval on 11 March 2021 for the introduction of the Bill (REP/21/2/059 refers). You also agreed to the proposed 28-day transition period both prior to and following the law change on 8 November 2021 (the transition period), to reduce complexity for clients and ensure that the treatment of different client scenarios in the transition period aligns with the policy intent of removing the subsequent child policy (the policy).
- 3 Later in February, we provided you with a draft Cabinet paper to seek LEG approval for the introduction of the Bill, alongside the draft Bill and departmental disclosure statement (REP/21/2/118 refers). You agreed for the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to circulate the package of documents for agency consultation.
- 4 Your office has since advised that more time for Ministerial consultation was required, and subject to your agreement, you will now seek LEG approval on 18 March 2021.

Minor changes have been made to the Cabinet paper and Bill

- 5 Feedback received through agency consultation has been supportive of the proposal, and we have made minor changes to the Cabinet paper since the draft version. This includes:
 - replacements for the placeholder text (such as the addition of names of departments that were consulted in the cross-agency consultation)
 - further information/context on the policy for clarity (such as an explanation that the policy still applies even if a client leaves and then returns to benefit)
 - the addition of a client example where the 28-day transition period **following** the law change may be required.
- 6 PCO has also made minor changes to the Bill itself, including:
 - a change to the name of the Bill and general wording amendments, for clarity
 - elaboration of the general change on 8 November 2021, as well as the two transitional provision scenarios (change in circumstances and application for benefit within the transition period)
 - clarification that when the policy is removed, unless the client informs MSD that they wish to continue to receive Jobseeker Support, MSD will transfer affected clients from Jobseeker Support to Sole Parent Support (subject to the criteria).
- 7 The final version of the Cabinet paper is attached (subject to any final changes from your office), alongside the Bill and departmental disclosure statement.

Next steps

- 8 Subject to your agreement, the attached Cabinet paper, departmental disclosure statement and Bill will be considered at LEG on 18 March 2021.
- 9 An aide memoire will be provided to support you in your presentation of the Cabinet paper to LEG. If required, MSD officials can be available to attend LEG on 18 March, to speak to the Cabinet paper in detail as needed.
- 10 Subject to Cabinet agreement for the introduction of the Bill, we will continue to support you in progressing the Bill through the House.

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