



17 July 2024

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 27 June 2024, requesting information about guidance on addressing and resolving issues in emergency housing. I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision set out below.

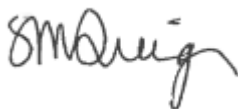
I have attached the Ministry's Emergency Housing Resolution Framework which is held on the Ministry intranet as well as the Emergency Housing Resolution Escalation Process (April 2024) to this letter which addresses your query regarding how the Ministry addresses and resolves issues within Emergency Housing.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

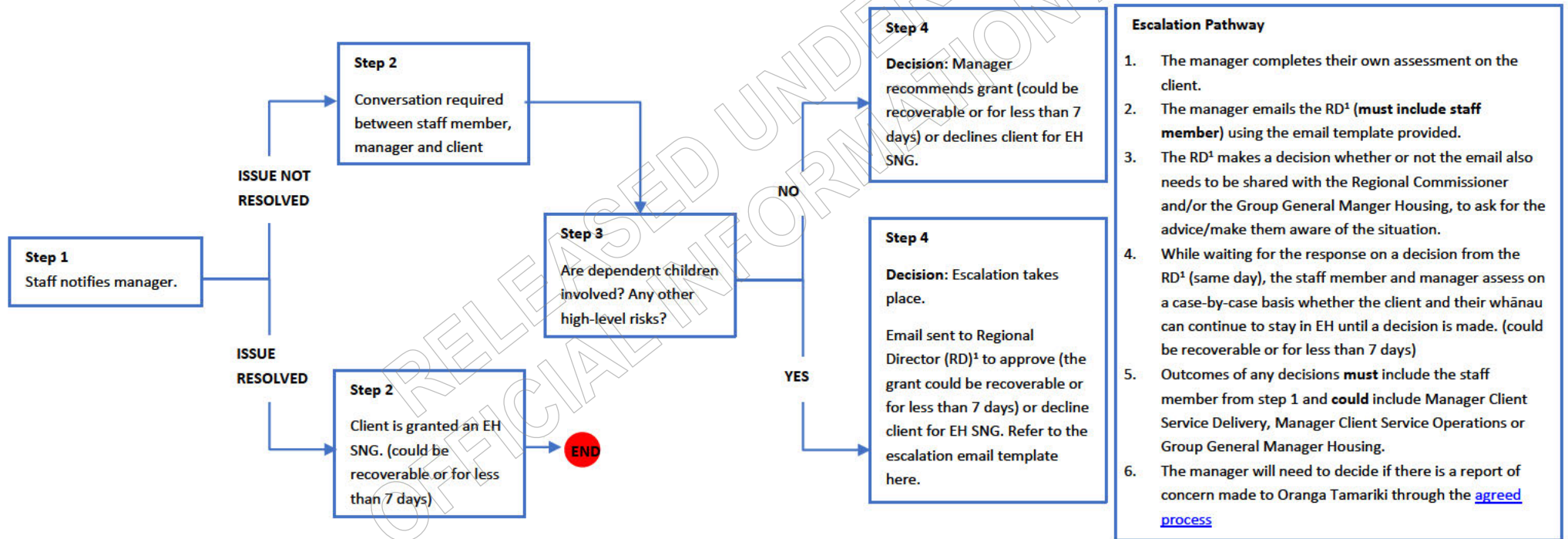
pp. 

Magnus O'Neill  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**



# Escalation Process

When a client has shown anti-social and challenging behaviour and unreasonably causing or contributing to their immediate housing need, use this escalation process. This will help determine if the EH SNG can be [declined](#).



<sup>1</sup>For Youth Clients (YSSU), it will be Manager Centralised Services (MCS)

## Emergency Housing Resolution Framework

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The purpose of the Emergency Housing Resolution Framework is to support you when you are considering whether or not to grant an EH SNG and when to escalate decisions. It can be used at the time of an EH SNG application for an initial EH SNG or a subsequent grant.

On this Page:

[Explore other options](#)

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### Access to other adequate accommodation

If a client has access to other [accommodation options \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/examples-of-adequate-accommodation.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/examples-of-adequate-accommodation.html), adequate for their needs, they are not eligible for an EH SNG.

You must consider the circumstances of the client and their immediate whānau on a case-by-case basis when considering if they have access to other adequate accommodation options.

### Other MSD support or assistance

Check the [MSD support \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-can-meet-immediate-need-in-another-way.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-can-meet-immediate-need-in-another-way.html), that may be available to help them stay in their current accommodation (if appropriate) or to help them find other accommodation that is adequate for their needs.

This includes considering:

if they can stay with whānau or friends

where they have been staying previously and why they are no longer able to stay there

a Transitional Housing referral (if there is a suitable vacancy)

other MSD financial assistance or support (for example Housing Support Products (HSP) or Accommodation Supplement)

if employment would support the client and their whānau to stay where they are

if the client has been referred to a work broker or housing broker.

Barriers may include:

previous tenancy issues or issues with the tenancy tribunal

no whānau for the client to stay with.

**Note: If there is family violence or concerns of this, it must be addressed immediately.**

[Assess the client's need](#)

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### Qualifications for emergency housing

A client or partner may be able to get an EH SNG if they meet the [qualifications for emergency housing \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/qualifications-for-emergency-housing.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/qualifications-for-emergency-housing.html).

To get an EH SNG, the client must have an [immediate housing need \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/definitions/immediate-emergency-housing-need.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/definitions/immediate-emergency-housing-need.html).

You must also consider if there are any identified risks to the welfare of the client or their immediate whānau, or if they would be in serious hardship if the grant were not paid.

You must consider:

if the client has made a [reasonable effort \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-not-made-reasonable-efforts-to-access-other-sources-of-housing-assistance.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-not-made-reasonable-efforts-to-access-other-sources-of-housing-assistance.html), in their circumstances to access other sources of housing assistance (and whether they agreed to this for their previous grant).

if the [client has unreasonably caused or contributed to their immediate housing need \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-has-unreasonably-caused-or-contributed-to-their-immediate-need.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-has-unreasonably-caused-or-contributed-to-their-immediate-need.html), e.g. cannot remain in their current place due to damaging the property, or exhibiting anti-social behaviour such as threats, intimidation, drug or alcohol abuse, or theft.

whether they have refused or failed to pay their emergency housing contribution

**Note:** You must record notes about the client's EH situation and your decisions in the structured Client Event Notes (Screening Pre-Emergency Housing or SNG Emergency Housing Required). This includes when they have not made a reasonable effort to find housing or when they have unreasonably caused or contributed to their EH need, for example, any behaviour issues while in EH.

## When a client may not be eligible for an EH SNG

There are situations when a client is not eligible for an EH SNG. See: [When MSD cannot grant an EH SNG \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/when-msd-cannot-pay-a-special-needs-grant-for-emergency-housing.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/when-msd-cannot-pay-a-special-needs-grant-for-emergency-housing.html).

### If you are considering granting

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#### Granting less than 7 nights

An EH SNG may be granted for less than 7 nights if that is appropriate in the client's circumstances. It could be the client's initial EH SNG or a subsequent grant.

There may be exceptional circumstances where a client is unable to be seen face to face, the EH SNG would need to be granted until the client can be seen in the next available face to face appointment. This could mean granting for 1 - 4 nights.

For scenarios, see: [Counting the first 7 nights of a new emergency housing event. \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/counting-the-first-7-nights-of-a-new-emergency-housing-event.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/counting-the-first-7-nights-of-a-new-emergency-housing-event.html)

If the client is likely to apply for a subsequent grant, book a Face-to-Face appointment before the end period of their current grant.

#### Granting 7+ nights

Generally, an EH SNG will be paid for up to 7 nights at a time. However, we have discretion to pay for periods [longer than 7 nights \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/longer-grant-periods.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/longer-grant-periods.html) in several situations:

for up to 14 nights at a time, when there is low availability of emergency housing in the region or

for up to 21 nights at a time, when:

a client has had an EH SNG for at least 7 nights and  
meets additional qualifications

#### When an EH SNG is granted

Explain to the client their conditions and responsibilities of the EH SNG grant:

they're expected to follow the supplier's rules of stay, and are responsible for any loss, including damages caused by them or anyone staying with them.

they're required to take the reasonable steps discussed, including the consequences of them not taking the agreed reasonable steps, e.g., subsequent EH assistance may be declined or made recoverable.

if they cause or contribute to their need for EH (e.g., break the supplier's rules of stay and are asked to leave), we may not be able to pay subsequent EH SNGs.

they must attend all follow-up booked appointments, and for all subsequent EH grants (after their first 7 nights of stay in EH), these are booked face-to-face appointments.

Ask the client to sign their EH SNG form to confirm they understand and agree to the conditions and responsibilities of payment.

**Note: Attending a Social Housing assessment can be set as a reasonable step.**

### If you are considering granting (recoverable)

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#### When an EH SNG can be made recoverable

If the client has not met their EH requirements, including the client unreasonably causing or contributing to their immediate EH need or not making a reasonable effort to access other sources of housing assistance, the [EH SNG can be made recoverable \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/when-a-sng-for-emergency-housing-is-recoverable.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/when-a-sng-for-emergency-housing-is-recoverable.html).

An EH SNG can also be made recoverable if the applicant has not paid an emergency housing contribution for a previous EH SNG.

A recoverable grant can be paid when there are grounds for declining an EH SNG, but to do so would increase or create a risk to the client or their immediate family's welfare, worsen the client's position, or create serious hardship to the client or their immediate family. Refer to the Escalation Process.

See [scenarios on MAP \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/example-when-risk-to-welfare-needs-to-be-considered.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/example-when-risk-to-welfare-needs-to-be-considered.html)

### If you are considering declining

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If you are considering [declining the client for an EH SNG \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/when-msd-can-decline-a-special-needs-grant-for-emergency-housing.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/when-msd-can-decline-a-special-needs-grant-for-emergency-housing.html), you must first consider the circumstances of the

client and their immediate whānau, particularly when dependent children are involved.

### When MSD can decline an EH SNG

There are circumstances when MSD can decline to pay an EH SNG. These circumstances include, but are not limited to, the client [unreasonably causing or contributing to their immediate EH need \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-has-unreasonably-caused-or-contributed-to-their-immediate-need.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-has-unreasonably-caused-or-contributed-to-their-immediate-need.html).

Some examples of when a client may have unreasonably caused or contributed to their immediate EH :

they continue to not take [reasonable steps \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-not-made-reasonable-efforts-to-access-other-sources-of-housing-assistance.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-not-made-reasonable-efforts-to-access-other-sources-of-housing-assistance.html), (which they have agreed to in previous grants) to access other sources of housing assistance that could resolve their housing need.

the client cannot remain in their current accommodation due to damaging the property, or exhibiting anti-social behaviour such as threats, intimidation, drug or alcohol abuse, or theft.

If the client has shown anti-social and challenging behaviour and unreasonably caused or contributed to their immediate housing need, refer to step 1 in the [Escalation Process \[http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/emergency-housing/eh-resolution-escalation-process-april-2024.pdf\]](http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/emergency-housing/eh-resolution-escalation-process-april-2024.pdf). This will help determine if the EH SNG can be declined.

**Note:** A recoverable grant can be paid when there are grounds for declining an EH SNG, but to do so would increase or create a risk to the client or their immediate family's welfare, worsen the client's position, or create serious hardship to the client or their immediate family. Refer to the Escalation Process.

See [scenarios on MAP. \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/example-when-risk-to-welfare-needs-to-be-considered.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/example-when-risk-to-welfare-needs-to-be-considered.html)

### Final actions

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Provide the client with [Emergency housing – what you need to know \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/emergency-housing/emergency-housing-client-guide-v6.pdf\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/emergency-housing/emergency-housing-client-guide-v6.pdf), which covers what they can expect from us, from their accommodation provider, their responsibilities and conditions of payment, and how to make a complaint.

Refer the client for intensive case management while they are in EH.

If the client is not on the Social Housing register, complete screening/assessment and/or book client a Social Housing Assessment Appointment.

If the client is on the Social Housing Register, make sure their current circumstances are reflected in their application by adding any new information to their CMS Housing Application.

### Escalation to Oranga Tamariki

If there is a risk to a child including physical or sexual harm, exposure to family violence or neglect, the manager will need to make a report of concern to [Oranga Tamariki. \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/community/display/HIYA/Referrals+and+Escalations#expand-OrangaTamariki\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/community/display/HIYA/Referrals+and+Escalations#expand-OrangaTamariki)

### Important: Record complaints and notes

Record any complaints in the [HIYA complaints system. \[http://hiya.ssi.govt.nz/Alerts/Complaints/Complaint\\_New.jsp\]](http://hiya.ssi.govt.nz/Alerts/Complaints/Complaint_New.jsp)

### List of MSD support options available

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Accommodation Supplement  
Advance Payment of Benefit  
Assess and review F.A.C.E  
Building Financial Capability products and services  
Family Violence Response Coordinator  
Flexi-Fund  
Housing Broker referral  
Housing Support Products  
Integrated Service Case Management  
Navigational Services  
Oranga Tamariki report of concern  
Project Coordinator referral to training programmes  
Public/Social Housing assessment  
Ready to Rent programme  
Recoverable Assistance Payments  
Regional Health & Disability support and advice

Temporary Additional Support  
Tenancy Costs Cover  
Transitional Housing referral  
Work Broker referral  
Youth Service

## Considering whether the client has taken reasonable steps

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Map outlines points to consider when deciding if the client [has made a reasonable effort. \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-not-made-reasonable-efforts-to-access-other-sources-of-housing-assistance.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-not-made-reasonable-efforts-to-access-other-sources-of-housing-assistance.html)

### Reasonable steps may include:

completing the Social Housing Assessment process  
looking for other places to stay i.e. with whānau or friends  
registering with rental agents and applying for private rentals  
looking for employment (if applicable)  
meeting with the Work Broker (if applicable)  
meeting with the Housing Broker  
attending a Ready-2-Rent programme  
appointing an agent/support person for help when engaging with landlords  
meeting with a Budget Advisor  
agreeing to and working with a Navigator/Support Service  
attending appointments with a Case Manager, Youth Coach or an Integrated Service Case Manager (including at second and subsequent grant).

## Considering whether the client has contributed to their EH need

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Map outlines points to consider when deciding if the client [has contributed to their EH Need. \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-has-unreasonably-caused-or-contributed-to-their-immediate-need.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/emergency-housing/client-has-unreasonably-caused-or-contributed-to-their-immediate-need.html)

### Contributing to their EH need may include:

Seeking EH in one region while travelling to another (just passing through)  
causing significant damage in their previous EH or Transitional Housing placement  
breaking the rules of stay in their EH placement and being asked to leave/evicted from accommodation  
being evicted from EH accommodation due to anti-social or dangerous behaviour  
due to situations involving anti-social and/or dangerous behaviour, exhausting all EH options in the region, with suppliers refusing to accommodate the client and their whānau  
refusing other options including but not limited to Transitional Housing  
not attending follow-up appointments with MSD, without a good and sufficient reason's

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Content owner: [Housing](#) Last updated: 05 April 2024