



29 May 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 15 April 2025, requesting information about the income thresholds for the Invalids Benefit and Supported Living Payment for the years between 2010 to 2024.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request below.

Please see the attached **Appendix** which provides the abatement thresholds for Invalids Benefit and Supported Living Payment from 2010 to 2024.

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.

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 or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Background

Clients that received Invalids Benefit or Supported Living payment between the beginning 2010 to the end of 2024 were subject to the part-time abatement regime. Before tax income is used to calculate the abatement and the benefit payment amount after tax is abated.

The part-time abatement regime from the beginning of 2010 to 26 September 2010 allowed clients to earn of up to \$80 per week without any reduction to benefit payments. Income over \$80 per week reduced the benefit amount by 30 cents for every dollar of income earnt. Income over \$180 per week reduced the benefit amount by 70 cents for every dollar of income earnt.

From 27 September 2010 the part-time abatement regime changed. It was increased to allow clients to earn up to \$100 per week without it affecting benefit payments. Income over \$100 per week before tax reduced the benefit amount by 30 cents for every dollar of income earnt. Income over \$200 per week reduced the benefit amount after tax by 70 cents for every dollar of income earnt.

Invalids Benefit became Supported Living Payment on 15 July 2013 through the Welfare Reform. The part time abatement regime explained above (from 27 September 2010) was maintained and applied to clients now receiving Supported Living Payment. An additional income exemption of \$20 per week was introduced and applied to personal earnings (This applied only to income earned by the client receiving Supported Living Payment (i.e., not including earnings of a spouse) through their own effort (e.g., employment)) and all the earnings of a blind beneficiary were exempt. This did not apply to the earnings of a spouse/partner unless they also qualified for the Supported Living Payment in their own right.

On 1 April 2020, benefit abatements changed. The part time abatement regime for Supported Living Payment was increased to allow clients to earn up to \$115 per week without it affecting benefit payments. Income over \$115 per week reduced the benefit amount by 30 cents for every dollar of income earnt. Income over \$215 per week reduced the benefit amount by 70 cents for every dollar of income earnt. Personal Earning Exemption remained for the primary client receiving Supported Living Payment.

On 1 April 2021, further changes were made to benefit abatement regimes. The part time abatement regime for Supported Living Payment was increased to allow clients to earn up to \$160 per week without it affecting benefit payments. Income over \$160 per week reduced the benefit amount by 30 cents for every dollar of income earnt. Income over \$250 per week reduced the benefit amount by 70 cents for every dollar of income earnt. Personal Earning Exemption remains for primary client receiving Supported Living Payment. There were no further changes to the part time abatement regime before the end of 2024.

Date applicable	Abatement Threshold (gross)	Reduction in Benefit Rate (net)
Before 2010 - 26 September 2010	\$0-\$80	No reduction
	\$80-\$180	30 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	\$180+	70 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
27 September 2010 – 14 July 2013	\$0-\$100	No reduction
	\$100-\$200	30 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	\$200+	70 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
15 July 2013 - 31 March 2020	\$0-\$100	No reduction
	\$100-\$200	30 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	\$200+	70 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	Personal earnings exemption (primary client): \$20 or all exempt if client is blind	
1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021	\$0-\$115	No reduction
	\$115-\$215	30 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	\$215+	70 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	Personal earnings exemption (primary client): \$20 or all exempt if client is blind	
1 April 2021 – 31 December 2024	\$0-\$160	No reduction
	\$160-\$250	30 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	\$250+	70 cent reduction in benefit payment for each \$1.00 of weekly income
	Personal earnings exemption (primary client): \$20 or all exempt if client is blind	