



19 November 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 21 October 2025, requesting information about discretionary accommodation costs.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

- *Whether a particular item of maintenance is suitable to be applied as a discretionary accommodation cost.*

Please see the following link that outlines when essential repairs and maintenance can be included in a client's accommodation costs: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/essential-repairs-and-maintenance-01.html.

This includes some general guidelines for the Ministry to consider when determining if something is an accommodation costs, such as:

- repairs or maintenance must be essential to maintain the house and property to a habitable standard
- any repairs and maintenance should be made to meet the homeowner and families current housing needs
- all costs claimed must be verified with receipts which, if necessary, are detailed enough to verify the work undertaken was essential or needed for maintenance
- *The period of time that maintenance items can be applied as a discretionary accommodation cost. For example – if a roof is repaired at a cost of \$15,000 – how long can that particular maintenance cost be considered as a discretionary accommodation cost by MSD given the maximum accommodation supplement rate applicable is \$105/week – maximum reimbursement of \$5460 over a course of 12 months.*

Please find the attached **Appendix** for internal policy around essential repairs and maintenance.

Accommodation Supplement is a subsidy paid towards a client's accommodation costs. It is not intended to cover the entirety of a person's accommodation costs.

The rate of Accommodation Supplement is paid when a client's accommodation costs are more than the entry threshold. The entry threshold varies depending on the family situation. For every dollar over the entry threshold that a client pays in accommodation costs they receive a 70% subsidy.

The 70% subsidy is only paid up to the maximum rate of Accommodation Supplement, which is based on the client's circumstances.

Please see the publicly available links below for further information.

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/calculating-rate-general-formula-01.html
- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/entry-threshold-01.html
- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/extra-help-information/accommodation-supplement-tables/entry-thresholds-and-maximum-rates.html

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

Accommodation Supplement - Essential Repairs and Maintenance

This page provides information for staff about how to process Essential Repairs and Maintenance costs for the Accommodation Supplement in SWIFTT.

Essential Repairs and Maintenance

Homeowners can claim the costs of essential repairs and maintenance to their house as accommodation costs, including costs already paid for. [MAP Accommodation Supplement Essential Repairs and Maintenance](http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/home-ownership-01.html) [<http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/home-ownership-01.html>]

Cost already paid

If a client has already met the cost of a repairs and maintenance need and they have provided receipts from the previous 12 months to verify that they have already paid from their own resources the cost can be included in Accommodation Supplement.

The costs must be necessary in order to maintain the house and property; and meet the client's current housing needs. **This costs may only be included for a maximum of 12 months.** At the end of this period the cost should be removed and the AS reviewed.

Repayment cost

Homeowners can claim for costs if they have extended their mortgage to cover the costs of essential repairs and maintenance. The [ongoing mortgage repayment](http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/mortgage-repayments-01.html) [<http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/mortgage-repayments-01.html>][\]](http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/mortgage-repayments-01.html) to cover the cost of essential repairs and maintenance can be included as an allowable cost until it is repaid.

If a [recoverable assistance \(SNG or Advance\)](http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/home-ownership-01.html) [<http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/home-ownership-01.html>][\]](http://doogle/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/home-ownership-01.html) has been granted for the cost of the repairs and maintenance, the cost of the offset can be included as an allowable cost until it is repaid.

Note: Repayment and/or offset amounts can be included in Accommodation Supplement for as long as the client is meeting the repayment cost.

Once these costs have been repaid, the client's Accommodation Supplement should be reviewed and reassessed in the normal way.

Costs under essential repairs and maintenance should be updated when completing the client's annual review.

Note: Temporary Additional Support (TAS) should also be reassessed when the accommodation supplement rate changes.