MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

18 September 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your request for information about Case Management and receiving support via Case Managers.

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

  1) *Assigning Case Managers*

  2) *Clients receiving support through Case Management*

The attached information is regarding the Ministry of Social Development's (the Ministry) Case Management Services, including information the Ministry's Customer Service Representatives use when taking calls from clients who have a Case Manager allocated.

The link below provides you with information about the Ministry's Employment Investment Strategy for 2025-2028, outlining the Ministry's efforts to meet the Government's target for reducing jobseekers and addressing other key priorities, which includes the investment into the allocation of Case Managers: The Investment Approach - Ministry of Social Development

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

Case Management Services - Employment, Phone-based, Integrated Services and Dedicated

This page provides additional information about our case management services for Employment Case Management (ECM), Employment Case Management Reserve (ECM-R), Phone-based Case Management (PBCM), Dedicated Case Management (DCM), and Integrated Services Case Management (ISCM).

On this Page:

Employment Investment Strategy

MSD has updated it's Employment Investment Strategy for 2025-28 that will help us target investment, including case management to where it has the biggest impact.

This will ensure that case management is targeted to the right people, at the right time, to support them into work and off benefit.

It'll help us identify the jobseekers that are most likely to benefit from case management to help them get a job while identifying those unlikely to benefit from the service to ensure the best use of our case manager resources.

These changes will see the introduction of a new programme tag Labour Market Indicator 1' that will help identify clients that are less likely to benefit from case management.

Alongside this we will begin to transition clients out of case management who have been in service longer than 12-15 months because they've already received the maximum benefit from case management.

Expectations

It is expected that all staff in employment-related case management align their work with the **Core Expectations and Service Standards**

Maintaining full caseloads at all times, and clients are selected for service in line with national cohort priorities

Those with work obligations have the appropriate employment tools (JSP, IEP, etc)

Engaging appropriately, regularly, and correctly

Case managers are providing their contact details

Service standards are being upheld

Continue supporting sustainable employment

Here you will find **the full core expectations:** Case Management Core Expectations [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/helping-clients/work-and-income/our-service/case-management-services/case-management-services.html]
Here you will find **the Service Standards:** Service [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/helping-clients/work-and-income/our-service/case-management-services/service-standards.html] Standards [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/helping-clients/work-and-income/our-service/case-management-services/service-standards.html]

Managing caseload

Face-to-face caseloads

must be at **105**

Phone-based caseloads

must be at **110**

Note: Phone-based caseloads are made up of Jobseeker work ready clients from Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Wellington and Canterbury regions.

Priority Cohorts

The Employment Investment Strategy guides the priority cohorts that we should be working with, within employment-related case management (face-to-face and phone-based).

Caseloads should be made up of the following priority cohorts:

50% 18-24 year old (youth) with part or full-time work obligations
The majority of these clients Jobseeker Work Ready (JSWR), but some are JSHCID or SPS clients.

30% JSWR clients on benefit for less than 24 months
10% JSWR clients on benefit for more than 24 months
10% JSWR clients with dependent child/children

Note: When assigning caseloads, give first priority to 18-24 years old who have part or full-time work obligations.

New programme tag

'Labour Market Indicator 1' an automatically assigned programme tag that identifies clients likely to find work on their own within three months, without employment related case management support

We recommend that employment case managers consider **not adding** people with this tag

Case managers make the final decision on what service is appropriate for a client and can remove the tag if they think case management is needed now.

Case managers may also believe another service is more suitable for the client, like a contracted service or digital offering

If a client is **already** on your caseload and has now has the tag, you need to **continue working with them**.

Assigning clients

You can find a guide here [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/helping-clients/service-delivery/planning-and-analysis/viya.html] to help you assign clients using SMRT Caseload - SAS [https://iapviyaweb.ssi.govt.nz/SASVisualAnalytics/?appSwitcherMessage=%7B%22type%22:%22App.Open%22,%22data%22:%7B%22directive%22:%22SASVisualAnalytics%22,%22targetUri%22:%22/reports/reports/cd4ccd6c-29d2-4258-863c-efea635f5212%22,%22targetPublicType%22:%22report%22,%22params%22:%7B%22page%22:%22vi2%22%7D%7D%7D]

The document below outlines a structured approach and an easy way to guide conversations when onboarding new clients into case management.

Clients transitioning from Case Management

A Case Manager continues to be able to decide what service is appropriate for a client; however, there are some guidelines that should be followed.

When case management isn't effective for clients, they'll be transitioned out of the service between **12-18 months**.

Caseload VA Tool [https://iapviyaweb.ssi.govt.nz/links/resources/report?uri=%2Freports%2Freports%2F4dc2d948-44a2-4aa3-8179-45334de3b358&page=vi1] will help you identify clients who are ready to be transitioned out of service.

Clients highlighted green have been in service for under 12 months
Clients in orange have been in service for 12 to 18 months, and
Clients in red indicate a service duration of 18+ months.

Keeping clients in case management when participating in a contracted service

To ensure we're spreading our employment investment across case management and purchased services to as many clients as possible.

A client does not need to be kept in caseloads while they're participating in the following:

An employment placement, work-readiness or skills for industry services, and
Where their involvement is going to be similar to what they'd receive in case management, and
Over 4 weeks in length

A client may be kept in caseloads while participating in:

Short course/service, particularly in the work-readiness space

For clients that go into a contracted service and leave case management, once their programme has finished you don't need to re-assign back into caseloads.

Note: CM's can always use their discretion to assign clients back onto their caseloads if they feel the client would benefit from ongoing support.

Exiting clients from Employment, Employment Reserve or Phone-based Case Management

There will be situations where a client is no longer suitable for an active case management service and will need to consider exiting employment case management.

When making this decision about who should exit the following are our key considerations:

Prioritise those clients who have been in case management for longer than **12-18 months**
Who have not responded to employment interventions **or**
Are not engaging with their Case Manager

If a client **isn't suited** for Employment, Reserve or Phone-based Case Management, try to engage with them proactively before exiting them from the service, this will ensure the client is receiving their:

Full and correct entitlement **and/or**
A referral to a programme, provider, or better suited case management service (e.g., Integrated Case Management, external provider, or training)

if this isn't possible the Case Manager should consider completing an exit interview with the client and provide

Advice on how to access support through our business-as-usual channels **and**
Complete the below *where applicable*

When exiting a client from case management complete the following actions:

Un-tag yourself as the Case Manager in CMS.
If **transitioning to another case management service** – **arrange a hand-over** (conversation; meeting with them and the client)
If they have an **Individual Employment Plan (IEP)**, make sure all activities **have been closed**
If the client **is starting employment**, a conversation should be held regarding:
Support that may be needed
Client may qualify for (TTW; Relocate for Work; Flexible Childcare Assistance etc)
Consideration for referring to In Work Support (if starting employment)

Full notes on file – summarising change in clients' circumstances; key information other staff may need if client makes representation in the future.
Consider making this a 'Must View Note' if client makes representation.

Remove the clients Programme Tag in CMS.

The table below shows appropriate reasons for exiting case management:

Reason	When would you use this reason?
Length of time in service	The client has been in service for several months, it is not likely to be effective for them no matter how long they remain in service. This should be reviewed at regular intervals.
Receiving other long-term service	The client is receiving an external service that is better suited for meeting their needs than the caseload they have been assigned to. This may be social support, employment, or training service. **For example**: if they have gone into long term training or being supported by an external agency
Low motivation or contact	You are unable to contact the client over an extended period to arrange any meaningful engagement with them. **Note**: you should have considered all available options to improve motivation or contact, including applying obligations failures and sanctions before considering

Aggressive behaviour	It is not safe to ask the client to come into the office because of their behaviour, as it creates risk for the site. **Note**: phone-based case management may be considered in this case.
Other	The client does not meet any of the above criteria, but you have determined the service is not appropriate for them.

Monitors and measures

To make sure we are on the right track, there are a few key measures to keep in mind.

Monitor	Target	Definition
Accuracy	95%	Standard definition
Client requests	Monitor	8-12 minimum client requests completed daily on average. This can include completing: appointments, any client event in a CMS work queue including work from Ready for Processing, Work on Hold and Approval queues, and work from S2P queues
Completion Rate	Monitor	7+ appointments completed as 'show' daily on average
Return rate	Monitor	Monitor % of clients returning for the same appointment type within 7 working days
New client appointments	90%	New clients to service seen face to face (phone for PBCM) within 10 working days of being assigned to caseload (excl. GCM and transfers)

Employment focused measures are:

Monitor	Target	Definition
Work exits	Monitor	Number of clients who went through Employment Case Management and exited into work
Part time earnings	Monitor	Number of clients who went through or currently in Employment Case Management and declared new part-time earnings
Individual employment plans rates	90%	90% of clients in caseload with IEP within 10 days of being assigned.
Individual employment plans quality	90%	90% of IEPs are 'quality': with activities, ensuring no activities are overdue.
Referral to vacancies	Monitor	# and % of those referrals accepted, declined, interviewed and filled. The focus is the percentages, not volumes
Referral to programmes	Monitor	# and % of those referrals accepted, declined, participated, completed and outcome. The main focus is the percentages, not volumes

Phone-based Case Management

Follow the same standard expectations but through a virtual, phone-based case management approach.

This service is for clients in Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Wellington, and Canterbury regions.

In conjunction with the standard expectations set out as above, there are a few differences in this standard as follows:

Entering phone-based case maanagement

Clients will attend Kōrero Mahi – Let's talk work in their local Service Centre after being granted Jobseeker Support.
Clients will be programme tagged and assigned by the phone-based case management teams.
Phone-based case managers will book an initial appointment.
Phone-based case managers will send an appointment letter with point of contact and the appointment details.

Exceptions to phone-based case management

There are a few exceptions to this service. Clients with the following circumstances will not be part of the service:

face-to-face engagement
clients who are Low Trust (LTCM)
clients who have a VU imposed and/or have to complete a 6-week re-compliance activity
clients with an obligation failure and/or active sanction
clients who are in emergency housing or otherwise considered 'homeless'
clients with home detention and post detention conditions
clients who are part of the refugee quota

Connecting clients with phone-based case manager

Any work on hand requests submitted at sites should be referred to their appropriate CMS work queue for Ready for Processing or Hold

Whanganui Phone-based team use "Centralised in-bound Whanganui" Ready for Processing and Hold
Napier Phone-based team use "Centralised Services Hawkes Bay Unit" Ready for Processing and Hold

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Case Managed Clients

About these services

Dedicated

This service is for people requiring: on-going case management, who are not in a priority cohort for employment case management, and whose needs do not meet the threshold for integrated or intensive case management.

Integrated

A dedicated 1:1 service where case managers work directly with clients (and their partners) to understand their needs and support them to the right outcomes (income, employment and housing).

Employment

Clients (and their partners) who have an assigned case manager should go directly to them for all their needs, this includes Income, Housing and Employment.

However, there may be some occasions where the client is not able to get the assistance they need in a timely way.

In these situations:

- the contact centre can provide the usual transactional support to those tagged Employment Case Management, the same as any other non-case managed client.

In order to decide whether we can help from the contact centre:

- some extra care and attention should be taken to make sure the client remains connected with their case manager and understand the reason why they didn't contact their case manager for this assistance.

Employment Reserve

Employment Case Management – Reserve (ECM-R) is identical to Employment Case Management but is 'temporary additional support'.

CSR process for Employment and Phone-Based

1.	Check the record for any Special Cautions, must view notes or other programme tags that requires handing the client back to the region. For example, other forms of case management, tagged low trust or request from the Case Manager. Does the client need an appointment with their Case Manager? • ○ yes: book an appointment using the BAU process: Appointments ○ no: continue to step 2
2.	Clients should be contacting their Case Manager directly for any assistance. Before deciding whether assistance can be granted from the Contact Centre, check previous notes on record to understand the client's history and try to understand the reason why the client didn't approach their Case Manager for assistance. • CSRs **can** support clients in getting assistance in a timely way, such as when the case manager may be unavailable. • CSRs **shouldn't** override decisions made by case managers or grant assistance where the client has bypassed the case manager. Some key things to look out for are: • Missed appointments with Case Manager • Pattern of calling the Contact Centre instead of their Case Manager • Any details in notes from Case Manager about their interactions Is there a good reason the client could not get assistance from their Case Manager? • no: book an appointment using the BAU process: Appointments • yes: continue to step 3
3.	Complete required actions to fulfil client's needs. This is the same as anything you would do for any client that is not Case Managed.
4.	Confirm the client's next appointment with their Case Manager or book them a new one in these scenarios: • the client has not met their CM or doesn't have their contact details • the client does not have their next appointment booked • the client has other needs you weren't able to fulfil from the Contact Centre • Book an appointment using the BAU process: Appointments **Note:** in some cases, the appointment has to be made directly with the Case Manager, such as when the client hasn't met their Case Manager before. If this is the case, and the Case Manager does not have an available appointment in Q Manager, include this in your summary email to CM in step 5.
5	Write full CMS notes and email the Case Manager to let them know actions taken (you can copy and paste your Client Event note). Outline in the CMS note/email: • ○ Reason for call (Client need/situation) ○ Reason for coming to Contact Centre instead of Case Manager ○ What actions we have completed (could be assistance that was granted, declined or queried) ○ If you've booked an appointment with the Case Manager and when ○ Any other details that may be relevant

Our Case Management Services & Core Expectations

Helping people, whānau, families and communities is at the centre of what we do.

On this Page:

Our case management service strives to help New Zealanders build the capabilities they need to contribute positively to their communities. Whatever the situation, we try our best to understand and connect people with all the support we can. We seek to do this with integrity and compassion, driven by our purpose to help New Zealanders be safe, strong, and independent [https //doogle ssi govt nz/about us/purpose and values/index html] .

Case managers work in an integrated way to serve the people that we come into contact with. Some clients will require financial support to alleviate their financial situation while others seek services to help re-enter the workforce. They may be a disabled person seeking temporary or permanent assistance to lead an independent life, a family dealing with violence, a person needing a safe, warm, and dry home, a parent needing help with the costs of childcare, or an older New Zealander applying for superannuation. Clients expect us to understand them and their whānau, help them in the way they need it, and for us to follow through and do it.

Woven into the fabric of our service are Manaaki, Whānau, Mahi tahi and Tika me to pono – the four values that guide [https //doogle ssi govt nz/about us/purpose and values/index html] our behaviour. Our four values are an expression of who we are and what we stand for. By working together, we can make a positive change for New Zealand.

Through our case management service, we provide the following help:

Case Management Services (PDF 66.04KB) [http://doogle/documents/business-groups/helping-clients/work-and-income/our-service/case management services/case management services pdf]

Employment support and services

Connecting clients to employers and job opportunities, upskilling clients through linking them with industry-based recruitment partnerships and supporting responses to the local labour market by working with

regional employment teams through Employment Case Management, Employment Case Management - Reserve, and Phone-based Case Management.

Employment Case Management, Reserve, and Phone-based Case Management [https //doogle ssi govt nz/business groups/helping-clients/work-and-income/our-service/case-management-services/employment-case-management.html]

Our employment service [https //doogle ssi govt nz/business groups/helping clients/service delivery/employment/our employment service/index.html]

Income support and superannuation services

Including benefits, hardship assistance, New Zealand Superannuation, accommodation-related support, and help for people with young families

Supporting Seniors Clients [https //doogle ssi govt nz/business groups/helping clients/work and income/our service/case management services/supporting-seniors-clients.html]

Housing support

Assessing people's eligibility for, and referring them to, emergency, transitional and public housing, and providing grants and recoverable assistance to help with housing costs.

Social housing, Transitional and Emergency Housing [https //doogle ssi govt nz/resources/helping clients/procedures manuals/social housing/index.html]

All Case Management Core Expectations

An integrated approach

It's expected that an integrated case management approach (responding to income, housing, and employment needs) is applied across our case management services.

This means, where possible, that clients should be able to resolve their needs across the range of our services with their Case Manager, and the need for further contact by other case managers or service lines is minimised.

Caseloads and engagement standards:

Caseloads are maintained at full capacity at all times, and clients are selected for service in line with national cohort priorities.

Every client included in case manager's caseload has a future engagement booked which is aligned to their plan (excluding suspended clients and people who have an active obligations failure).

Clients have an active MyMSD profile

Clients who have full or partial work obligations have:

A completed Jobseeker Profile.

An up-to-date CV saved in CMS

An open Individual Employment Plan [https //doogle ssi govt nz/business_groups/helpi_g_clients/work_and_income/our_service/case_ management-services/individual-employment-plan.html] (IEP) with assigned relevant activities

A completed Pathways to Employment (PTE) plan, where appropriate

Referrals to Virtual Talent Pools (VTP), where appropriate.

Completed work-related engagement logs outlining discussions and any referrals.

Clients who have full or work preparation obligations have:

An open Individual Employment Plan (IEP) with assigned relevant activities

Clearly identified plans relating to their goals and aspirations

Complete engagement logs outlining plans and next steps and any supports being provided

Clients are referred to contracted services or work services teams, including profiling to work brokers, where appropriate

At each engagement the following areas should also be checked to see if any further needs can be resolved:

Clients eligibility to Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support etc, including checking partner's circumstances (if they have one)

S2P Service Centre Referral queue

Client event notes in progress, on hold or ready for processing

SWIFTT expiries (i.e., reapplications)

Redirections and debt offsets

Engaging with clients for the first time

The first appointment with a client should be face-to-face, focused on building a relationship, understanding the client's situation, and identifying their skills and things they have to manage, if appropriate at the initial appointment.

Ways to engage with a client for their first appointment

Verify client's identity in line with Ministry identification standards and save any evidence to client's record in CMS.

Contact client by phone in first instance, introduce yourself, your role and that you would like to meet face- to-face.

Send a letter to the client, inviting them to attend a proactive appointment.

Send a text message introducing yourself and that you have attempted to make contact and you will call the client at a certain time.

Key areas to focus on

Take time with the first appointment, to outline mutual expectations of the relationship.

Be clear that your role is to support and encourage the client as they work through what they need on their journey.

The first appointment should be positive, using clear language and open questions.

Acknowledge and recognise the client's efforts and what has worked well so far and use a strength-based approach to gather information and build rapport.

Acknowledge the client's skills and aspirations.

Ensure that the client is getting their full and correct entitlement.

Ensuring that the case management relationship has strong foundations

As part of initial engagement, clients should be made aware of the following key aspects of their case management relationship:

their Case Manager will continue to have a relationship with them until they have found employment or achieved their goals, with appropriate referrals to post-placement support where necessary.

their Case Manager is responsible for meeting the client's income, housing, and employment needs, and should be their first point of contact for any requests.

the contact details (name, phone/mobile and email) for their Case Manager to make direct contact when they need assistance.

Identifying next steps and planning future engagement

The information gathered during the interview should provide a better picture of the client's history, and future goals. This information can be used to outline clear steps and timeframes the client commits to working towards and prepare for the next appointment.

If the client has talked about work goals, you can also provide information about the local labour market, contracted services that may be suitable, or help available from the work services team.

A future engagement should be arranged at each appointment that a client attends.

On-going engagement

There is no one size fits all when engaging with clients. Through on-going engagement, it's expected that case managers will coordinate access to income, housing, and employment services, with a focus on identifying opportunities to support clients towards their goals and aspirations, alongside supporting things that need to be managed.

The frequency of engagement should be agreed between the client and Case Manager based on the clients next steps and plans the client has agreed to. The preferred method for engagement is face-to-face, and appointments should be at least every 28 working days as a minimum.

Service Standards

This page outlines the minimum standards required by case managers when supporting clients and their whānau:

> Service Standards [https //doogle ssi govt nz/business groups/helping clients/work and income/our service/case management services/service-standards.html]

Supporting sustainable employment

There are a range of factors that case managers should consider, to ensure that they're able to support people into work well. This includes:

Access to on-going supplementary assistance and payments such as the Work Bonus

Transition to Work Grant

Relocate for work – meets criteria and has secured sustainable employment if needs to relocate.

Access to Childcare Assistance

Transition of Working for Families Tax Credits to Inland Revenue

Connection to work services teams and In-work Support to provide a stair-cased option for post-placement support.

Debt suspension for 3 months and discussion on how client will manage repayments of outstanding overall debt with other parties.

It's expected that an agreement is reached between the client and Case Manager about the period that the Case Manager will continue to provide direct support (i.e., financial assistance, coordination, and access to other services).

Content owner: Client Service Delivery   **Last updated:** 15 September 2025