



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Community Connection Service Service Guidelines

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1. About these Guidelines

Introduction

These Guidelines are for providers who hold a Ministry of Social Development (the Purchasing Agency) Outcome Agreement to host the Community Connection Service.

Outcome Agreements with providers of this service require that they are delivered in accordance with these Guidelines.

Purpose

These Guidelines have been developed to assist stakeholders by:

- a) providing detailed information about the service in a more easy-to-read format than is possible to include in an Outcome Agreement
- b) being a resource tool to help providers deliver services consistently and in line with the original intent
- c) being a way for the Purchasing Agency to improve its responsiveness to feedback regarding changes to the service delivery component of the Outcome Agreement.

Using these Guidelines

These Guidelines should be seen as setting the minimum standard from which the provider can develop a service that reflects their organisation's philosophical base, incorporating local need and the culture within which the provider works.

The provider should use these Guidelines to assist them to competently deliver the service.

Review of Guidelines

This is a living document. As the service is implemented, the Guidelines will be updated to ensure:

- a) they reflect the most current decisions of the Government that affect the service and the activities being funded
- b) reporting measures are up-to-date, relevant and collecting the most useful information on the service and its effectiveness.

2. Relationships

Relationship principles

Both parties shall collaborate to ensure the services are effective and accessible. In so doing they recognise that the service is a joint endeavour, in which both parties have a shared goal to achieve positive benefits for the target group.

The following principles guide all our dealings under the Outcome Agreement. Both parties agree to:

- a) act honestly and in good faith
- b) communicate openly and in a timely manner
- c) work in a collaborative and constructive manner
- d) recognise each other's responsibilities
- e) encourage quality and innovation to achieve positive outcomes.

Both parties shall appoint contract managers who will be responsible for effectively managing the contractual relationship between us, by providing assistance and support as required. Details of the contract managers nominated by both parties are set out in the Outcome Agreement.

Cultural responsiveness

Both parties recognise the needs of all people, including Māori, Pacific, ethnic and culturally and linguistically diverse communities and all other communities, to have services provided in a way that is consistent with their social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual values.

Good practice approach

Both parties support the development of good practice in the delivery of this service. This includes:

- a) basing the service on current good practice approaches and considering community context and the knowledge and skills relevant to the purpose and focus of this service
- b) being people and whanau focused – including recognising the importance of cultural responsiveness in service delivery and designing services and physical facilities in a way that supports accessibility to services.
- c) using a collaborative approach across services and agencies where possible
- d) undertaking regular review, reflection and monitoring of the effectiveness of the service, including people and whānau, staff and external feedback, and changing and modifying practice in response
- e) ensuring that formal feedback processes are used for reporting purposes and that people and whanau participating in them are aware of how the information they provide will be used
- f) undertaking any relevant professional development and (where appropriate) supervision.

3. Service Overview

Service summary

As part of the psycho-social response and recovery plan for COVID-19 the Ministry is investing in Community Connector positions (Full Time Equivalents referred to as FTEs from hereon in) to provide connections and direct support to people so they can access information and services in the community.

There will be an increase in the demand and support for services – both immediately and longer-term psycho and social needs. As part of getting back into employment or other life activities, some people may need to interact with multiple government agencies and providers but may not have the knowledge or confidence to do so. As a result, they could miss out on entitled support and services and subsequently their health, wellbeing and future could be negatively impacted as a result.

The role of a Community Connector will be determined by the needs of the people and whānau they are helping and is expected to comprise of some (or all) of the following activities:

Supporting people and whānau

- Helping people to access online services and to fill out government forms and applications
- Providing support-related information and advisory services to people and whānau or to people of specialised agencies/managed facilities or targeted people via telephone, face to face or web-based mediums
- Supporting the administration of the service (raising community awareness, responding to online, telephone and face to face enquiries and invoicing related to discretionary funding etc.)
- Maintaining up to date information on local and regional services and developing an understanding of their functions, how they operate and how they are best engaged

Supporting communities

- Coordinating and facilitating access to services including referring people to appropriate agencies and making appointments with service providers
- Networking with a range of providers in the community to respond to peoples' unique needs (including attending any network and development meetings to raise awareness of the service)
- Being a conduit between the community and agencies by way of linking people in with a range of services according to their needs

Supporting other providers and stakeholders

- Collaborating with local community groups, organisations and government agencies on initiatives and community events
- Coordinating, facilitating or participating in agency meetings which promote government services so that they are encouraged and supported to do their work in ways which best meet peoples' needs
- Establishing regular liaisons with the community, government agencies, district and councils, local rūnanga and other service provider networks

- Developing and maintaining stakeholder relationships with a foundational understanding of each stakeholder’s role and operations to enable co-ordination of services provided where appropriate.

Social sector accreditation standards

Providers delivering the Community Connection Service are required to meet Level Three, Ministry of Social Development specific accreditation standards. Providers are required to maintain their accreditation level according to the Ministry’s relevant Social Sector Accreditation Standards.

Outcomes/Results we expect to achieve

Outcomes for this service are related to employment, education, crime and family violence prevention, civic engagement and broader family and community wellbeing.

This service will enhance and complement other ‘connector/navigator’ type services by:

- Increasing the:
 - workforce available to support people and whānau
 - number of people and whānau who are able to access a holistic service model
- Expanding the availability of connection services (geographically)
- Strengthening integration between community and government organisations

Reporting measures

The reporting measures for this service are listed below:

Quantity – how much?	Number of people and whānau who received the service
Effectiveness – is anyone better off?	Narrative as specified in the Outcome Agreement

Provider reporting

Reporting is necessary to ensure accountability to Government for the funding provided in terms of the Community Connection Service outcomes. The Ministry has agreed on the quantity and nature of the services that government funding supports, and we are required to report to Government that this has been achieved.

During the term of the Outcomes Agreement, providers are required to provide responses to the above Reporting Measures to the Ministry’s contract manager. From time to time requests for additional information to support these Reporting Measures may be made.

Where possible and agreed, extending existing Provider Return Reports (which providers may be using to report on other contracted services) to include the reporting measures for the Community Connection Service is allowed. Reporting frequency is specified in the Outcomes Agreement. Annual audited financial reports may also be requested.

Family services directory

Throughout the term of the Outcome Agreement with the Ministry, providers must ensure that their organisation is listed on the Ministry's Family Services Directory (<https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory/>) and that necessary information is updated when required.