

Instrument amending Welfare Programmes 2025

This instrument is made under section 101 of the Social Security Act 2018 by the Minister for Social Development and Employment.

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Instrument

1 Title

This instrument is the Instrument amending Welfare Programmes 2025.

2 Commencement

- (1) Schedule 1 of this instrument comes into force on 26 May 2025.
- (2) Schedule 2 of this instrument comes into force on 20 October 2025.

3 Principal welfare programmes amended

This instrument amends the welfare programmes specified in Schedules 1 and 2 (the **principal welfare programmes**).

4 Amendments

Amend the principal welfare programmes in the manner set out in Schedules 1 and 2.

Schedule 1

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Amendments to welfare programmes

Special Needs Grants Programme (as established and approved on 18 December 1998)¹

Clause 9

Replace subclause 9.11 with:

An applicant is not entitled to a Grant if—

- (a) the rate of benefit being paid to the applicant is reduced (by half or to zero) under section 236 of the Act, or
- (b) a non-financial sanction that MSD imposed on P, under sections 236A or 236B, has effect; or
- (c) the benefit being paid to the applicant is suspended under section 237 of the Act; or
- (d) the benefit being paid to the applicant is subject to section 239 of the Act.

Emergency Housing Grants Programme (as established and approved on 26 August 2024)²

Clause 14

(1) Replace clause 14(1)(a) with:

(a) any of the following apply—

- (i) the rate of benefit being paid to the applicant is reduced (by half or to zero) under section 236 of the Act, or
- (ii) a non-financial sanction that MSD imposed on P, under sections 236A or 236B, has effect; or
- (iii) the benefit being paid to the applicant is suspended under section 237 of the Act; or
- (iv) the benefit being paid to the applicant is subject to section 239 of the Act; or”

¹ New Zealand Gazette 28 January 1999, No. 563, page 202.

² New Zealand Gazette 24 July 2024, No. 13594.

Schedule 2

cl 4

Further amendments to welfare programmes

Special Needs Grants Programme (as established and approved on 18 December 1998)³

Clause 9

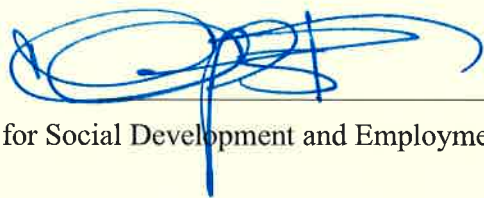
In subclause 9.11(b), replace “or 236B” with “, 236B, 236E, or 236H”.

Emergency Housing Grants Programme (as established and approved on 26 August 2024)⁴

Clause 14

In clause 14(1)(a)(ii), replace “or 236B” with “, 236B, 236E, or 236H”.

Dated at Wellington this 15th day of May 2025



Minister for Social Development and Employment



Associate Minister of Housing

Explanatory note

This note is not part of the instrument, but is intended to indicate its general effect.

This instrument, the majority of which comes into force on 26 May 2025, amends the Special Needs Grants Programme and the Emergency Housing Grants Programme to clarify that an applicant is not entitled to or eligible for grants under those programmes if the rate of their benefit is reduced by half or to zero (under section 236 of the Social Security Act 2018 (the Act)), if their benefit is suspended (under section 237 of the Act), if a non-financial sanction that MSD imposed on them has effect, or if their benefit is subject to section 239 of the Act. This amendment enacts the policy intent that persons who are subject to sanctions under the Social Security Act 2018 (the Act) are not able to access hardship assistance.

³ New Zealand Gazette 28 January 1999, No. 563, page 202.

⁴ New Zealand Gazette 24 July 2024, No. 13594.

The Social Security Amendment Act 2025 introduces the ability for MSD to impose a non-financial sanction, as an alternative to a reduction in the rate of a person's main benefit for a first obligation failure, if certain eligibility requirements are met. The amendments in this instrument enable the non-financial sanctions to be included as sanctions that make an applicant ineligible for Special Needs Grants or Emergency Housing Grants.

As the non-financial sanctions in sections 236E and 236H of the Act will only come into force on 20 October 2025, the amendments in Schedule 2 of this instrument (which insert the references to those sections in the relevant clauses of the Programmes), will only come into force on that same date.