Memo

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

To: Rachel Petterson, Director Office of the DCE OAC

From: Sally-anne Lynch, Director Service Improvement & Delivery

Date: 19 October 2026

Security level: Unclassified

Miscellaneous updates

Overview

We have updated MSD's webpage with several resolved alignment issues, with links to key information. Since 2024, we have also resolved four matters which did not require Ministerial or Cabinet decisions. These are listed here for completeness.

2026

Commencement dates

We have changed our practice to ensure consistency with how we apply the 28-day rule and stand downs. We have also made changes to our benefits payment system - SWIFTT.

2025

Funeral Grants

We made changes to operational guidance to broaden the types of reasonable funeral costs that may be included in a Funeral Grant assessment. Costs like kai/food, flowers, and venue hire can now be included when they are determined to be reasonable.

Also see: Reasonable funeral expenses - Map

2024

Jobseeker Support Student Hardship

We updated operational guidance and practice to clarify that Jobseeker Support Student Hardship (JSSH) can only paid for the break between academic years.

Also see: Qualifications - Map

Sole Parent Support

We updated our benefits payment system, SWIFTT, so that we can record when a sole parent benefit applicant made themselves unemployed voluntarily (known as 'Voluntary Unemployment').