



25 August 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your verbal Official Information request received by the Kirikiriroa Service Centre on 25 July and your emails received 7 August 2025, requesting information about Unsupported Childs Benefit.

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

1. *Would you be able to advise of any legislation regarding:*
 - a) *A face to face is required to apply for a main benefit*
 - b) *17yr old child needs to attend New Application appointment for UCB*
2. *A copy of copies of any legislation that exists which unequivocally states it is a legal requirement that a NON MAIN BENEFIT applicant - e.g. for a UCB - must attend a face-to-face meeting. If no such legislation exists then you need to say this, also unequivocally, in your reply.*
3. *A copy of copies of any legislation that exists which unequivocally states that it is a legal requirement for a 17 year old child who is the subject of NON MAIN BENEFIT application - e.g. for a UCB - must attend a face-to-face meeting (with the applicant) Again if no such legislation exists then you need to say this unequivocally in your reply.*

Unsupported Child Benefit (UCB) is considered a main benefit. The requirement to attend a face-to face appointment, is part of the application process. The Ministry has an obligation to investigate applications including the person's eligibility for any assistance. A discussion at a face-to-face appointment ensures the Ministry is interviewing the correct person.

The Ministry also has a responsibility to consider all a client's needs and whether there are any risks to children or young people in the care of a caregiver, which is why a child or young person is requested to attend the UCB application.

You can find a list of main benefits, the relevant legislation for UCB and policy guidelines that ministry staff use when assessing eligibility for financial assistance here:

- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/index.html

- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/orphans-benefit-and-unsupported-childs-benefit/index.html
- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/requests-for-financial-assistance/application-for-benefit/investigating-applications-01.html
- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/orphans-benefit-and-unsupported-childs-benefit/care-and-protection-issues-01.html
- legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2018/0202/latest/LMS96673.html#LMS96673

I have attached the Case Manager guidelines for interviews for UCB which is found on the Ministry's internal intranet. Some of the information is deemed out of scope. The following links are the links on the attached page.

- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/orphans-benefit-and-unsupported-childs-benefit/independent-assessment-provider-01.html
- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/jobseeker-support/social-obligations-01.html
- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/orphans-benefit-and-unsupported-childs-benefit/breakdown-in-the-childs-family.html
- legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0028/latest/DLM296639.html

4. *Please provide me with a copy or copies of any legislation that exists which relates to a prior UCB applicant - where the application was granted and paid for a length of time - requested the UCB payments be stopped because the child moved out of the applicant's home, and where the child more than a year later moved back into the applicant's home causing the applicant to reapply for a UCB.*
5. *Please provide me with a copy or copies of any regulations, rules, policies, etc. which dictate and/or describe how WINZ must process a UCB application in a case where;*
 - a) the applicant was previously receiving UCB payments for a child*
 - b) the child moved out of the applicant's home*
 - c) the applicant requested WINZ stop the UCB payments and this happened*
 - d) the child moved back in to the applicant's home causing the applicant to reapply for a UCB*
 - e) WINZ has all of the information it needs to process the second UCB application and nothing has changed since the first UCB application was submitted, processed and approved other than the child's age (15 previously now 17)*
 - f) a second UCB application has been submitted to WINZ and with reference made to the original UCB application and all of its*

supporting documents proving all of the criteria and requirements have been met.

6. *Please provide me with a copy or copies of any legislation that exists which relates to a UCB application and the time-frame in which WINZ must process and either approve or decline an original or a second application. Once again, if no such legislation exists then you need to say this unequivocally in your reply.*

Generally, after an application for any form of assistance is submitted, a client has 20 working days to provide the required supporting documents, completed applications or evidence to the Ministry for a decision to be made on that application.

The Ministry requires a completed application form for all assistance, as this is used to confirm a client's eligibility for financial assistance at that point in time. In cases where a client has applied for assistance that they had received in the past, this is to confirm that the client remains eligible for this support. Once the last piece of supporting evidence has been received to complete that application, the Ministry has five working days to make a decision on that application and notify the client of the outcome. (grant/decline)

You can find the relevant information here:

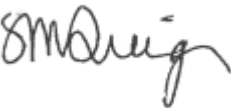
- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/requests-for-financial-assistance/application-for-assistance/index.html
- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/requests-for-financial-assistance/application-for-benefit/index.html
- workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/requests-for-financial-assistance/re-assessing-previous-applications/index.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