



25 February 2026

Tēnā koe

**Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email dated 14 January 2026 in which you requested information about the assistance to purchase whiteware the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) provides to people who meet the qualifications.

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

- 1. Requesting Work and Incomes policy (See SOAR) Page 2, number 6, regarding refunds from winz supplier (Fisher and Paykel).*

Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the document you have requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Although the Ministry does not hold a specific policy document regarding refunds from Work and Income suppliers, there is a process guide. Please see **Appendix 1**.

- 2. Who has the right to refund (myself or Winz)?*
- 3. Who the owner of whiteware belongs to.*
- 4. Who refunds should be given to in case of major fault with a product.*

When a client who meets all qualifications has an essential and immediate need for a fridge, freezer, fridge-freezer, or a washing machine (collectively known as whiteware), and cannot meet this need with their own resources, the Ministry can approve an Advance Payment of Benefit (Advance) to meet that need. Prior to 3 September 2025, Fisher & Paykel (F&P) was the Ministry's only preferred supplier for whiteware.

A client becomes the owner of a whiteware appliance once it has been delivered to them and they have signed the delivery receipt. Section 11.1 of the Ministry's contract for commercial services with F&P states:

*"The parties agrees that all title and property in all deliverables provided pursuant to this Agreement vests in the Ministry's Client's as and when such Deliverables provided as been paid for in full by the Ministry."*

If a refund is due, the supplier will pay it to the Ministry's Crown Revenue Team. This is because the Ministry makes the initial payments to the supplier, on behalf of the client by approving an Advance; they do not have access to the Ministry's system showing whether the client has repaid their debt to the Ministry for the appliance.

The Ministry's management of the refund depends on whether the client has other Advance debts that are being actively recovered. For example:

- If they have repaid all Advances previously issued in total - the Ministry will refund the full amount to the client.
- If the client only has one Advance with active repayment, and they have repaid part of the amount owing - the Ministry will refund the amount the client has repaid to the client.
- If the client has multiple active Advance repayments - the Ministry will apply the refund received from the supplier to the oldest debts. This is a limitation of the software the Ministry uses to process refunds. I acknowledge that this can be confusing for clients. To minimise this confusion, the Ministry has added a message to MyMSD, the Ministry's online client portal, stating: "Generally, most payments received will be credited to your oldest debt first."

On 17 June 2025, the Ministry released information under the Act that relevant to this part of your request, in response to another request. You can view that information here: [www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/official-information-responses/2025/june/17062025-msd-guidance-on-whiteware-supply-and-most-recent-contract-with-fisher-paykel.pdf](http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/official-information-responses/2025/june/17062025-msd-guidance-on-whiteware-supply-and-most-recent-contract-with-fisher-paykel.pdf).

*5. And why they have allowed Fisher and Paykel to not provide sales receipts to WINZ clients.*

Prior to 3 September 2025, under the Ministry's preferred agreement with F&P, clients could choose suitable Haier branded whiteware, with support from Ministry staff, from an approved catalogue. Through this arrangement, the products and prices clients paid were pre-determined. Once the appliance was delivered, and the client had signed the delivery receipt, the company that delivered the whiteware would retain the delivery receipt to confirm that the appliance had been delivered to the correct person and address.

When the Ministry approves an Advance for whiteware, a hardship approval letter will be issued to the client. This letter serves as the client's proof of purchase.

I will publish 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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Graham', written in a cursive style.

Anna Graham  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**

## Supplier/provider refunds MSD

This page outlines the process to follow, when a supplier or provider needs to refund money back to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).

On this Page:

### Refund required

Circumstances that may require a supplier/provider to make a partial or full refund to MSD:

- A client no longer requires the product or service.
- Only part of the amount was used.
- A supplier/provider was paid in error.

#### Recoverable assistance payments made in error

For recoverable assistance payments made in error, the debt will remain on SWIFTT/TRACE. However, this debt should not be recovered from the client.

When the money is returned from the supplier/provider it will be offset against the client's debt. Payments automatically go towards the oldest debt - please add notes about where the payment needs to be applied, so Crown Revenue can apply it to the correct line of debt. Follow the [instructions below](https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/integrity/debt-management/receipting/supplier-provider-refunds-msd.html#Vhahatodofyuhavspaidasupplienneroz2) <https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/integrity/debt-management/receipting/supplier-provider-refunds-msd.html#Vhahatodofyuhavspaidasupplienneroz2>.

#### Non-recoverable hardship assistance payments made in error

For non-recoverable hardship assistance payments made in error, **the refund should not be applied to the client's record**, so it is important that the supplier/provider follows the instructions below when returning the money.

If the supplier/provider advises they have returned the payment, you can check for the payment in SWIFTT (SLCPI screen) or TRACE (RCPTI). If the payment has been received in either system and relates to non-recoverable hardship assistance, please inform Crown Revenue, as the payment will need to be removed and sent to the correct MSD bank account.

### What to do if you have paid a supplier in error

It is the responsibility of the staff member/site who paid a supplier/provider in error to manage the process to fix it. You can either stop the payment (on the same day) or request and arrange for the payment to be returned.

Situation	Action
You made a payment in error to a supplier/provider (the same day).	You can stop the payment on the same day. Refer to the process on the <a href="https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/community/display/HIYA:Payment+and+supplier+administration">Payment and supplier administration</a> <a href="https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/community/display/HIYA:Payment+and+supplier+administration">https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/community/display/HIYA:Payment+and+supplier+administration</a> HIYA page.
You have made a payment in error to a supplier/provider (the following or subsequent day).	Phone the supplier/provider and ask them to refund the money. Email the supplier using the email template. The email template includes the link to the <a href="https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/getting-payments-from-us/register-as-a-supplier/index.html">Work and Income Register as a Work and Income supplier</a> <a href="https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/getting-payments-from-us/register-as-a-supplier/index.html">https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/getting-payments-from-us/register-as-a-supplier/index.html</a> page, which includes details on how to make the repayment.
The supplier/provider does not make the refund.	Phone the supplier/provider again. Send a follow up email requesting the amount to be refunded.
You phoned and emailed the supplier/provider, but have not received a response or payment.	Send the supplier/provider letter, requesting the amount be refunded.
The supplier/provider won't refund the money owed.	Contact your CSI site liaison, as they can raise this as a fraudulent action. If the supplier/provider is being uncooperative, CSI will investigate, and they can potentially remove the supplier/provider as a preferred supplier/provider.
The supplier/provider has sold the business, and the new owner won't/can't refund the money.	Consider writing the amount off under <a href="https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/current-client-debt/debt-write-off-criteria.html">R208 Office Error</a> <a href="https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/current-client-debt/debt-write-off-criteria.html">https://dcooole.ssi.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/current-client-debt/debt-write-off-criteria.html</a> .

Client Support Debt Management (CSDM) will manage any debts that have transferred to TRACE, once the staff member/site who paid a supplier in error has completed the above steps.

### Returned payments

Crown Revenue manages all returned payments for MSD. It's crucial that the supplier/provider who is returning money provides enough information so that Crown Revenue can correctly apply the payment.

### How the supplier/provider can refund money to us

Direct credit money back to the Ministry:

**Account name:** MSD ROBOC 3

**Account number:** 03-0049-0006243-25

**Reference:** Add the letter C and client's 9-digit reference number (without spaces or dashes) e.g. C123456789

**Code:** RFD

**Particulars:** Client's surname and initial

The supplier/provider should then email [Crown.Revenue@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Crown.Revenue@msd.govt.nz) to confirm a refund has been paid and include the following details:

- the amount
- customer's surname and initial
- customer's 9-digit MSD reference number
- what the refund is for e.g., washing machine.