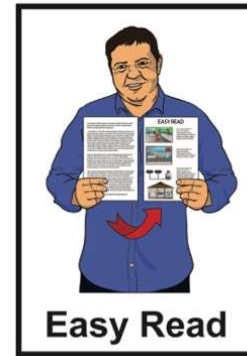


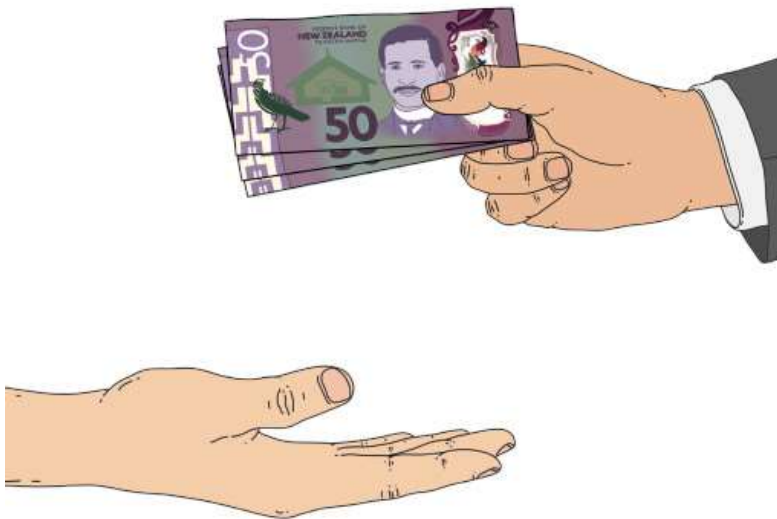
Disability Support Services



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA



Factsheet – changes to assessments and allocations and flexible funding



Published: September 2025

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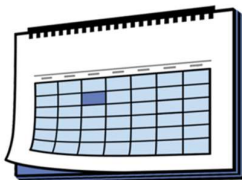


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What this Easy Read is about

Disability Support Services

This Easy Read is from
Disability Support Services unit at the
Ministry of Social Development.



In this Easy Read **we / us** means
Disability Support Services.



It is information for people who are
getting Disability Support Services.



The information in this factsheet is
true as of September 2025.



Some of the information in this
factsheet may change in the future.



In 2024 we changed the way people can spend their **disability support funding**.



Disability support funding is money from the Government to pay for things someone needs because of their disability.



People in the **disability community** told us that the changes did not work well for a lot of people.



Here the **disability community** is:

- disabled people
- whānau / families
- carers.



In 2026 we are going to change the rules for disability support funding to work better for disabled people.



These changes are for people who get disability support through a **Needs Assessment Service Coordination organisation**.



A Needs Assessment Service Coordination organisation supports disabled people to work out:

- what they need for a good life
- what support they can get.



In this Easy Read **Needs Assessment Service Coordination organisations** are called **NASCs**.

Enabling Good Lives

If you get support through **Enabling Good Lives** everything will stay the same for now.



Enabling Good Lives is a different way of thinking about disability support.

Enabling Good Lives is about having:

- choice and control in your life
- the support you need and want
- a good life.



There may be changes to Enabling Good Lives later.



Your disability support funding will stay the same until we make these changes.

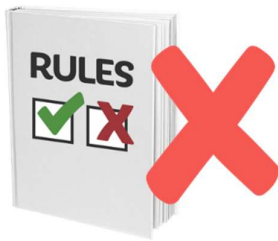
What are the main changes?



People who get **flexible funding** will have more choice about how to use their funding.



Flexible funding is money that you can choose how to spend.



We will take away the **purchasing guidelines**.



The **purchasing guidelines** are the rules about how people can spend their disability support funding.



All NASCs in Aotearoa New Zealand will do their **assessments** the same way.



Here an **assessment** means working with a NASC to decide the support you:

- need
- will get.

Changes to NASC assessments



People in the disability community told us assessments can be:

- stressful
- confusing.



We will make sure everyone gets better information about what will happen at their assessment.



All NASCs in Aotearoa New Zealand will do their assessments the same way.



When all NASCs do their assessments the same way they will make decisions that are:

- fairer
- consistent / the same for everyone.



We know that a lot of important support for disabled people is done by:

- whānau / families
- carers.



NASC assessments will look at support needs of:

- whānau / families
- carers.



NASCs will work with disabled people to make a **personal plan**.

Here a **personal plan** is a plan for how you will use your funding.



The personal plan will say what the funding is for in a way that is easy to understand.

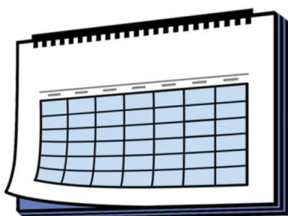
NASCs will not do any **reassessments** from:



- 1 February 2026

to

- 1 October 2026.



This will give them time to change how they do things.



Here **reassessment** means having another NASC assessment:

- to make sure your support is still working for you
- because your support needs have changed.

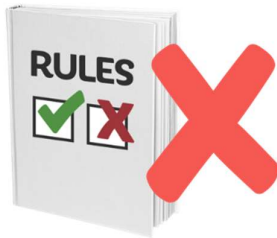


You can still ask for a reassessment if something in your life has changed

Changes to flexible funding



The changes to flexible funding will make it easier to use.



There will no longer be purchasing guidelines.



Disabled people will be able to choose how to spend their flexible funding.



There are still some things flexible funding cannot be used for like:

- alcohol
- tobacco like:
 - cigarettes
 - vapes
- **gambling.**



Gambling is trying to win money by doing things like:

- playing the pokie machines
- betting on horse races
- buying Lotto tickets.



There are also some things that you need to ask about before you spend flexible funding on them like:

- travel to other countries
- things that cost a lot of money.

People who get flexible funding will have a **budget** to use.

Here a **budget** is the amount of money you can spend.

We will give people support to manage their budget.



If your support needs change you can talk to your:

- NASC
- **Host.**



Here your **Host** is the organisation that supports you to manage your funding.

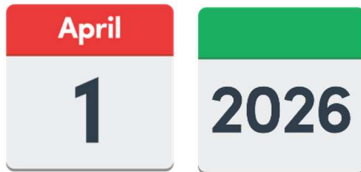


Flexible funding may not work for everyone.

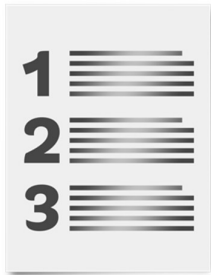


NASCs will work to make sure everyone gets support that is right for them.

How flexible funding budgets will be set



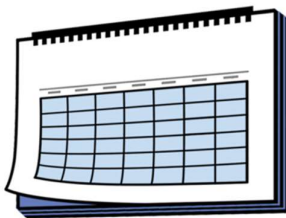
We will take the purchasing guidelines away on **1 April 2026**.



People who already have flexible funding will be given a budget.



Your budget will be worked out from how much funding you have used in the past.



It will take time for the new way of doing things to be set up.

Important dates



From **1 February 2026**:

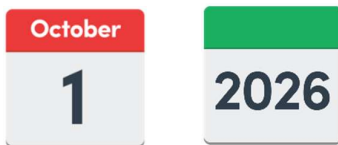
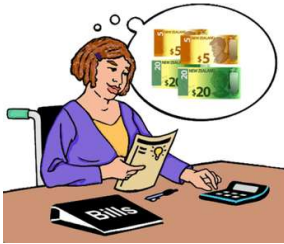
- people using Disability Support Services for the first time will have their assessment using the new process
- NASCs will stop doing reassessments until 1 October 2026.





From **1 April 2026:**

- people who already get flexible funding will be given a budget
- we will take the purchasing guidelines away
- we will work with NASCs to make sure the changes happen smoothly.



From **1 October 2026:**

- reassessments will start up again
- we will start working with people to make their personal plans.



More information



We will tell you what is happening as we make each change to Disability Support Services.



There is more information about the changes on the Disability Support Services **website** at:

www.disabilitysupport.govt.nz/dsschanges



If you have any questions you can **email** us at:

info@disabilitysupport.govt.nz

**Disability
Support Services**



This information has been written by Disability Support Services Ministry of Social Development Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora.

Make it Easy
Kia Māmā Mai



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.

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