

Cyclone Gabrielle response

13 February 2023.

Help is available if you're affected by Cyclone Gabrielle.

There are lots of ways we may be able to help, and we can point you in the right direction based on your situation. You don't have to be on a benefit. You may have to pay the money back depending on your situation.

What we can help with

Civil Defence Payments

Civil Defence payments are available to meet the immediate needs of people who are affected by a civil defence emergency.

Civil Defence assistance payments can cover the following costs:

- for accommodation to hosts for evacuees (billeting in private homes, marae or community centres).
- for accommodation in motels, hotels and temporary rental accommodation.
- loss of livelihood payments for affected people who cannot work and lose income due to the civil defence emergency i.e. the person cannot go to work, the work place is closed or they need to remain with their family.
- food, clothing, and bedding.

Civil Defence emergency assistance does not have to be repaid (insurance exception applies - see application process), is not income and asset tested and, when granting this assistance, you are not required to take into account any other special needs grant assistance that has been paid to the applicant over the last 52 weeks.

No income and asset test

There is no income or asset test. Civil Defence Payments are non-taxable and do not affect a person's eligibility for most other forms of social assistance. This is due to the exceptional circumstances of those affected by a civil defence emergency or an adverse event.

We also provide other help such as benefits and help with paying your housing costs. Everyone's situation is different, so what you qualify for will depend on your situation.

You may have to pay the money back depending on your situation.

Get in touch

If you've been affected by cyclone and you're in Northland, Auckland or Waikato, call us on [0800 400 100](tel:0800400100) to talk about what you need and how we can help. We're open 7am-5pm, Monday to Wednesday, and 8am-5pm Thursday and Friday.

If you're outside of Northland, Auckland or Waikato and you've been affected by the cyclone, call us on [0800 559 009](tel:0800559009).

Our service centres and appointments

Some offices are closed due to the cyclone or power cuts, however most remain open. You can see a list of our service centres here, this is updated if a service centre is closed:

[Find a service centre](#)

All our service centres in the East Coast are currently closed.

Appointments with us

Many appointments in the worst affected areas are being done by phone. You'll be contacted if your appointment will be over the phone.