

## Stakeholder email



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI

Friday, 13 December 2013

### **Social housing changes confirmed for 14 April 2014**

Changes to New Zealand's social housing sector, announced in this year's Budget, were confirmed on 20 November 2013. Parliament passed legislation enabling the transfer of housing assessments and associated functions from Housing New Zealand to the Ministry of Social Development on 14 April 2014. It also confirmed that from April 2014, income-related rent subsidies will be available for new eligible tenants of registered community housing providers. To date this has only been available to Housing New Zealand.

The Government's vision for social housing, announced in December 2010, is a diverse supply of homes in a social housing sector that is responsive to changing demands. The aim is to help those with greatest need while supporting more people to move to private rental or home ownership.

Transferring housing assessments to the Ministry of Social Development is an important step in realising that vision. The transfer of functions ensures people's eligibility and needs for social housing are assessed independently of the agencies that will provide the housing.

The change will also enable the Ministry to have a more comprehensive view of its clients' needs. Housing is a basic need – it impacts on health, education, connection to community, and employment. Adding housing assessments to employment and financial support will mean the Ministry has the potential to make an even bigger difference to people who most need support.

Until 14 April, Housing New Zealand will continue to conduct housing needs assessments. After 14 April, Housing New Zealand will continue to be a landlord to state housing tenants and be the main provider of social housing in New Zealand.

We will be providing more information in the New Year. This will include social housing briefings for community housing providers, beneficiary and tenancy advocates and other interested stakeholders in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. These will be an opportunity to receive some detail on housing needs assessments and how to receive an income-related rent subsidy.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment will also be consulting on the regulations that will apply for community housing providers and provide information on how to become a registered community housing provider.

If you want to talk to someone locally, please contact your local Housing New Zealand Area or Regional Manager or the Regional Commissioner for Social Development.

In the meantime, should you have any housing assessment transfer enquiries, please email [social\\_housing@msd.govt.nz](mailto:social_housing@msd.govt.nz). Housing New Zealand enquiries may be made to [enquiries1@hnzc.co.nz](mailto:enquiries1@hnzc.co.nz) and any enquiries about becoming a registered community housing provider to [info@socialhousingunit.govt.nz](mailto:info@socialhousingunit.govt.nz).

Some useful links to information are provided below. We have also attached a factsheet on the transfer of needs assessments.

You will be aware that reviewable tenancies are also planned for social housing tenants. No final decisions have yet been made about how they will be done or when they will start. There will be more information provided on reviewable tenancies in 2014.

Yours sincerely



**Debbie Power**  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Work and Income  
Ministry of Social Development



**Kay Read**  
General Manager  
Tenancy Services  
Housing New Zealand



**Michael Peard**  
Director Social Housing Unit  
Ministry of Business,  
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Useful links:

- [New era for social housing after bill passes](#), Housing Minister Nick Smith, 20 November 2013
- [Work and Income take on housing role](#), Social Development Minister Paula Bennett, 20 November 2013
- Information about social housing reform on the [Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's website](#), including FAQs for community housing providers
- [MSD's social housing webpage](#)
- Further information for community housing providers is available on the [Social Housing Unit's website](#)
- Information for tenants is available on [Housing New Zealand's website](#).