

Benefits and entitlements: What happens when you apply for Work and Income support?



This information sheet discusses what to expect when you apply for Work and Income support when you have been diagnosed with cancer. It offers tips and explains what you may experience when you apply for Work and Income support.

Further information is available in the Cancer Society's information sheet Benefits and entitlements. The resource explains some of the help you may be able to get from Work and Income if you or your family/whānau or caregiver's ability to work is affected by cancer.

If you would like more information and cannot access the internet, phone the Cancer Society's information staff on **0800 CANCER (0800 226 237)** or Work and Income's Work and Contact Centre (0800 559 009).

About the process

When applying for help, you'll usually need to meet with a case manager in a Work and Income office. You can take a support person with you to this meeting.

Work and Income will need to ask you questions so they know how to best help you. Make sure you take everything you have been asked for, including ID and income details to your meeting.

Read more about what ID to bring here:
<http://bit.ly/2bjhcPS>

When you go into a Work and Income office, it is important to remember that you have a right to privacy and the staff at Work and Income will do their best to make you feel comfortable during your appointments with them.

If you feel you need more privacy when you're at Work and Income, talk to the person you're meeting with or another appropriate staff member about it. Remember, you only need to tell the receptionist enough so they know what you're there for.

If you're asked to attend an appointment and can't make it, it's important you call Work and Income and explain why.

Read more about appointments here:
<http://bit.ly/28P92JE>

Read more about having some-one help you:
<http://bit.ly/2aWh9o6>

If you're undergoing cancer treatment or are unwell from the effects of your cancer, it can be helpful to appoint an agent (a person or an organisation) to act on your behalf and talk with Work and Income. This involves completing an "Appointment of an agent" form. You can get this from your oncology social worker or from Work and Income. You can change or stop your arrangement with your agent at any time by contacting Work and Income.

Read more about appointing an agent on the Work and Income website:
<http://bit.ly/2aXJw8t>

Download the Appointment of an agent form:
<http://bit.ly/28QMiMW>

If you've never been to a Work and Income office before, find out what to expect when you get there. You can find information on the websites below, or if you don't have internet access, you can contact the Work and Income Contact Centre (0800 559 009).

What to bring when you apply for financial assistance:
<http://bit.ly/2bjhcPS>

What happens when you go to a Work and Income office: <http://bit.ly/2bm3c3Y>

Medical certificates

You need a medical certificate to confirm your diagnosis and how it affects your ability to work. It should also include your plan for treatment. You can get this information from your hospital doctor or GP.

Most GPs can send medical certificates electronically to Work and Income. If your doctor can't do this, you can return it by post or take it into a Work and Income office.

Note: If you've got a job to return to, make sure you let Work and Income know. People on Jobseeker Support who expect to return to their job within 13

weeks only need the initial medical certificate.

When you are on a benefit

When you are receiving financial assistance from Work and Income you have certain rights and obligations.

The following tips can help:

- Don't ignore letters. You may receive standard Work and Income letters about looking for work and other obligations even though you may have an exemption.
- Keep appointments. If you are asked to go in for a meeting with Work and Income and can't make it you, or your agent, must contact Work and Income and let them know why you can't make it.
- Provide a medical certificate when asked. Work and Income needs to know how your health condition is affecting your ability to work and to make sure you're receiving the right levels of support.

How often you need to supply a certificate may depend on what type of benefit you're getting. If your medical certificate shows your cancer is advanced (terminal) you won't have to provide regular medical certificates. If you need to supply an updated certificate, you may be able to call your GP and ask them to send an updated medical certificate directly to Work and Income.

- Tell Work and Income about any change in your circumstances.

Read more about your Rights and Responsibilities:
<http://bit.ly/2busMoL>

Using Work and Income's online services

It can be helpful to sign up for Work and Income's online services. You can save yourself a phone call or a visit by updating your information online using My Account or MyMSD. There is little or no data cost to use these services if you are on Spark, Vodafone, 2degrees

or Skinny mobile networks.

MyMSD: This is an online service you can use on your smartphone, tablet or computer. It's for anyone receiving assistance from Work and Income, Senior Services or Youth Service.

My Account: You can set up a Work and Income account if you receive a payment such as benefits, financial assistance or NZ Super.

Read more about MyMSD and My Account on the Work and Income website:
<http://bit.ly/2aWhrvr>
<http://bit.ly/2bjrl8R>

Cancer Society support

Seeking financial support when you have cancer can be daunting but if you have any questions or concerns about the process, you may wish to speak with Cancer Society information staff. Call the Cancer Society's free and confidential Cancer Information Helpline, **0800 CANCER (0800 226 237)**.

Useful contacts

Cancer Society

Cancer Society website

www.cancernz.org.nz

Cancer Society Information Helpline

0800 CANCER (0800 226 237)

Work and Income

Work and Income website

www.workandincome.govt.nz

Work and Income Contact Centre (under 65)

Phone 0800 559 009

Seniors Contact Centre (65+)

Phone 0800 552 002

Community Services Card National Centre

Phone 0800 999 999