

Social Workers

Pay Equity Claim Update

April 2024



In 2024 there has already been progress which is outlined below. However, the recent change in government has meant we are now waiting for some important policy and funding decisions on pay equity to be made. These will be pivotal as to how we move forward through the rest of this year.

Update on the Social Workers Claim

Review of the social worker settlement

Any pay equity settlement must include a process for the parties to periodically review whether sex-based discrimination and undervaluation has occurred again. Following pay increases for Oranga Tamariki social workers, the joint employer/PSA review in October 2023 raised questions. We are engaging with Oranga Tamariki on these matters.

Meeting the expectations of the extension

While most providers have received the expected additional funding and most social workers have received a pay increase, we understand that not everyone's expectations are being met and the amount received is not always what was anticipated. Please do not hesitate to reach out to one of the contacts below for help.

We are also aware that there have been some providers which missed out on the professional development portion of the pay equity uplift and other providers where there have been errors meaning their data was not included in the extension process. Te Pai Ora SSPA has raised these matters directly with Ministers as well as Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Social Development for urgent resolution. We will keep you updated with any progress. This has been the first extension of its kind and we are learning from this experience to improve the process used in the future.

Contacts for information

- Your contract manager - this is the first person to approach in most instances
- Oranga Tamariki - contact your relevant Māori, Partnerships and Communities Advisor
- MSD - community_information@msd.govt.nz
- Whatu Ora - Caitlin.Finnegan-Ramanui@TeWhatuOra.govt.nz
- Te Pai Ora SSPA [Belinda Himiona](#) or [Brenda Pilott](#)

Understanding the new social worker pay spine

Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission has prepared two powerpoints that provide straightforward information on how the new pay spine works, who it covers and how each of the four pay categories is determined.

[Guidance on the new pay spine for social work in community and iwi organisations](#)

[Who is covered by the social work pay equity extension](#)



Social Service Workers Pay Equity Claim Update

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Update on the Social Service Workers Claim

Oversight of the claim

A focus for early 2024 has been negotiating with officials about how they will provide oversight for this claim. Oranga Tamariki has agreed they will take the role of lead funding agency. One of the key roles of the lead funding agency is to convene an oversight group of the main funders to review the various Milestone reports, and to provide advice to Ministers including on the funding needed to settle a claim. The next step will be to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between Te Pai Ora SSPA, the employers and Oranga Tamariki.

Milestone 2 report

The Milestone 2 report, which sets out the eight representative employers' initial bargaining strategy, has been submitted to the Oversight Group. This includes a framework based on job families and categories of roles. The job families have been created by grouping occupations with shared commonalities. This will form the basis for how the work assessment will be done for the many occupations within this claim. We have recommended the Oversight Group endorse the report, and confirm that in-principle funding has been agreed to enable investigation of the claim to progress towards settlement.

Next steps

Once we have the go-ahead from the Oversight Group, we will start the process of building a good understanding of each of the occupation groupings contributing to the provision of social services.

Our eight representative providers and the PSA will need to agree the roles that present a good cross-section of the claim. We will be seeking input from a wider group of providers, as well as some external organisations representing specific occupational groups. This will be a vital foundation for the extensive research and analysis necessary to support the claim. We established a reference group for the Social Worker claim, which provided valuable advice to the process. We will be setting up one or more groups to support this claim - more about this later.

