



18 DEC 2015

L K Barber
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Dear L K Barber

I am writing in response to your request of 6 December 2015 for the guidelines used by staff when a client applies to add more children to a Widows Benefit. The Chief Executive has asked me to reply on his behalf.

As you may be aware, in 2013 as a result of Welfare Reform, Widows Benefit for clients with dependent children aged 14 years or older, or who have no children, was replaced by Jobseeker Support. Widows Benefit for clients with dependent children aged under 14 years was replaced by Sole Parent Support.

We have also changed the way we manage people who have additional children while receiving a benefit. Under the new policy, having an additional child while still receiving benefit gives parents only a one year exemption from work search expectations. After that time, their work search expectations will be based on the age of their previous youngest child. The one year minimum exemption aligns the benefit system with the extended leave provisions for working parents, and reflects the fact that the majority of New Zealand mothers are in the labour force when their child is one year old.

Policy guidelines are publicly available on our website and the guidelines for adding a subsequent dependent child can be found at:
<http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/additional-or-subsequent-child/client-has-an-additional-subsequent-dependent-child.html>.

If you require clarification of any of the information, you can telephone Work and Income on 0800 559 009.

I hope this information is useful for you.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Sutherland
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services