



COVID-19 Emergency Benefit for temporary visa holders extended

- The COVID-19 Emergency Benefit for temporary visa holders has been extended a further six months.
- This short-term support was set to end on 28 February but has been extended to 31 August this year.
- With COVID-19 still limiting travel to certain countries, extending the Emergency Benefit means the Ministry of Social Development can continue to help people with temporary visas who need support, are in hardship and can't return home because of COVID-19.
- The Emergency Benefit may help with basic living costs for people who can't support themselves and can't return home due to COVID-19.
- **Under COVID-19 Alert Level 1:** People need to visit a Work and Income service centre to have their Emergency Benefits payments extended beyond 28 February or to apply for the first time. To find your nearest service centre, please click on the following link:
<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/find-a-service-centre/>.
- **Under COVID-19 Alert Level 2, 3 or 4:** People may phone 0800 559 009 to book a call-back to have their existing Emergency Benefit payments reassessed and extended beyond 28 February or to apply for the first time.
- People who qualify for the Emergency Benefit may also get Family Tax Credit and Best Start Tax Credit and, from 1 May 2021, the Winter Energy Payment.
- Temporary visa holders who are receiving the Emergency Benefit are expected to be looking for work or other ways to support themselves, including returning home when possible.
- The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) will continue to link people with suitable temporary employment opportunities, wherever possible.
- Help with applying:
 - You can ask someone to help you complete the application form, including staff at the Work and Income service centre. Make sure this person completes the Helper's Statement in the application form.
 - You can also choose to have someone else act on your behalf when dealing with the Ministry of Social Development. This person is called an agent. More information on having someone else act on your behalf is available here:
<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/on-a-benefit/your-rights-and-responsibilities/having-someone-act-on-your-behalf.html>
 - You can request to speak to someone in your own language. Interpreters can be arranged for appointments over the phone, or in person when alert levels allow. More information on interpreters is available here:
<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/language-lines/index.html>
- There's more information about the COVID-19 Emergency Benefit for temporary visa holders is available on the Work and Income website: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/covid-19/temporary-visa-holders.html>.

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