



# Guide to response and recovery support for the North Island Extreme Weather Events

## Cyclone Recovery Unit

10 July 2023

The following information is a summary of the services, funds, and helplines available to support communities affected by the North Island Extreme Weather Events.

### SERVICES

#### Temporary Accommodation Service

The [Temporary Accommodation Service](#) (TAS) assists households affected by a natural disaster to find safe, secure, and accessible temporary accommodation while their home is repaired or rebuilt. The Service has been activated following Cyclone Gabrielle, to support people in:

- Te Tai Tokerau/ Northland Region
- Waikato Region
- Tairāwhiti/ Gisborne Region
- Te Moana a Toi/ Bay of Plenty Region
- Te Matau-a-Māui/ Hawke's Bay Region
- Tararua District

The service can connect people to services and resources to help get them back on their feet. The TAS has coordinators that can work with affected households to understand their housing requirements, identify temporary accommodation options, and provide guidance on how to access support services such as insurance advice and financial assistance.

#### Helplines

During natural disasters and times of uncertainty it's normal to feel overwhelmed, distressed, and uneasy. Support is available, so please reach out if you or your whānau need it. A range of services are available to help support your mental health and wellbeing.

#### *Business*

Advice and guidance on support for affected businesses is provided by the Business Helpline, delivered by network partner, the Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA). Call 0800 500 362 or email [info@businesshelpline.co.nz](mailto:info@businesshelpline.co.nz).

#### *Disabled people*

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Deaf, disabled people and their whānau can contact the Disability Helpline by texting 8988 or calling 0800 11 12 13.

### *Youth*

Contact YouthLine by calling 0800 376 633, text 234 or email [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz)

### *Counselling*

For counselling services, call or text 1737 any time to talk to a trained counsellor, contact the Depression Helpline at 0800 111 757 or text 4204 or for young people contact the text support service Lowdown at 5626.

### *Health*

Call Healthline on 0800 611 116 for health advice and information

### *Alcohol Drug*

Call 0800 787 797 to speak with a trained counsellor.

### *Rural Support Trusts*

Each of the country's 14 Rural Support Trusts have local, rural people who know from experience that pressures can mount up. Local trusts can provide support and advice. Talking to them is confidential, and free of charge. They can connect people with the services they need, whether it's financial and business advice or health services. Contact 0800 RURAL HELP or 0800 787 254.

## **Mana Ake**

[Mana Ake – Stronger for Tomorrow](#) provides mental health and wellbeing support for children in primary school years 1-8 across Canterbury. It has been expanded to Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti primary and intermediate schools. Mana Ake kaimahi (workers) are employed by one of 12 NGO providers and support schools, families and whānau when children are experiencing issues that impact their wellbeing such as managing emotions, friendships and bullying, parental separation and grief and loss.

## **Insurance Council of New Zealand**

The Insurance Council of New Zealand help ensure New Zealanders they can have trust and confidence in the insurance industry since 1895. They also perform an important role in educating consumers about key insurance issues and risk management. They have resources for [individuals](#) on disaster recovery, your rights, and making a claim.

## **General practices**

At most general practices people can phone and book in to see a Health Improvement Practitioner (HIP), a registered mental health professional who provides advice and support promoting self-management, and connects people to other services they may need. Every day, HIPs have appointments that are not pre-booked so people can phone a general practice where they are enrolled and book in on that day.

## **Access and Choice**

The [Access and Choice](#) programme is free, accessible and has a range of [wellbeing resources](#). The programme rollout started in February 2020.

## **Animal Welfare**

MPI, the SPCA, Helping You Help Animals (HUHA), and other animal support agencies have worked together to help meet animal welfare needs in areas affected by Cyclone Gabrielle.

There is still animal welfare support available in both Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti as the shift to recovery gathers momentum. For advice on animal welfare or to report concerns, contact MPI's animal welfare team on 0800 00 83 33.

### **Farmstrong**

[Farmstrong](#) is an initiative to help farmers, growers and their families to cope with the ups and downs of farming by sharing things they can do to look after themselves and the people in their business.

### **Inland Revenue**

Affected businesses can access tax relief including alternative payment arrangements and removing penalties and interest. Go to the [IRD website](#) or call 0800 473 566

### **First Steps**

[First Steps](#) is a space that encourages business owners, managers and employees to prioritise wellbeing and awareness, so they can continue to grow impactful and profitable businesses while living balanced and fulfilling lives.

### **New Zealand Claims Resolution Service**

The [New Zealand Claims Resolution Service](#) provides people with advice and support with their insurance claim. The service can be a case manager where it can take the lead on coordinating with all agencies involved in a claim and ensure a streamlined resolution process. We know this is about more than settling your claim – it's also about getting your life back on track.

### **Cyclone Recovery Visa**

The Recovery Visa (a Specific Purpose Work Visa), will allow employers to sponsor migrants to come to New Zealand for a specific event or purpose, including working on an emergency response. INZ will aim to process applications for the Recovery Visa within a week. The initial visa will last up to 6 months. The \$700 fee will be refunded for successful applicants.

### **Community Connectors**

Community Connectors are employed by non-government organisations and are a trusted service to help people understand the many types of support options available through Government agencies or other service providers. Community Connectors can assist people to connect with the supports and services they need. Each Community Connector also has access to discretionary funding to support their work on a case-by-case basis. To find a Community Connector in your region go to the [Family Services Directory](#).

### **Direct support for disabled people**

There is a range of [support available](#) for disabled people. In addition to the wider Community Support Package initiatives, some disability providers are administering dedicated support and services that are only available for disabled people and their whānau in affected regions. Select providers can work with disabled people and their whānau to ensure they get appropriate support. Depending on the circumstances, the provider may be able to assist in funding essential items, such as assist in buying services, devices, or equipment for you.

### **Mental health training for emergency-affected communities**

The Red Cross has mental health training specifically [available](#) in response to emergencies or disasters. We may be able to cover the cost of courses for people and organisations in need in areas affected by Cyclones Hale and Gabrielle. They can run Psychological First Aid training, Psychological First Aid in disasters workshops and Recovery Matters workshops.

### **Feed Coordination Service**

MPI and Federated Farmers have restarted the national Feed Coordination Service to support farmers recovering from the cyclone. The service helps match people with grazing or supplementary feed for sale to those who need it. To offer or request feed or grazing, freephone 0800 FARMING (0800 32 76 46).

### **Duty relief for cyclone-affected businesses**

The damage from recent weather events has impacted many people and businesses across the country. We are aware that some members of the wine, beer and spirit industry have been impacted by this. If you operate a CCA and have any Customs issues, for example, if you have sustained damage to goods and are seeking remission of excise duty, or you are unable to submit your monthly entry, please inform your local excise team, or email us on [ClientService-Licensing@customs.govt.nz](mailto:ClientService-Licensing@customs.govt.nz). If cash flow is an issue, Customs will consider a payment plan on a case-by-case basis.

## **FUNDS**

The following is not an exhaustive list of funds but reflects the most recent announcements from Government and local authorities. More information on funds is available on agency websites.

### **North Island Weather Events Loan Guarantee Scheme**

The [North Island Weather Events Loan Guarantee Scheme](#) is targeted to provide relief for businesses highly impacted by the NIWE. The scheme supports the provision of scheme loans to viable businesses. It encourages banks, non-bank deposit takers (non-banks) and non-deposit-taking lenders to lend with favourable terms, including reduced interest rates, by the Government taking up to 80% of the loan's default risk. Borrowers remain liable and must pay back the debt, with interest, in the usual way.

### **North Island Weather Events Primary Producer Finance Scheme**

The [North Island Weather Events Primary Producer Finance Scheme](#) is targeted at North Island land-based primary producer businesses that have been severely affected by the North Island Weather Events (NIWE) in early 2023, including Cyclone Gabrielle. The scheme is specifically for the North Island affected regions of Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay, Tararua and Wairarapa. If you are a business that has been severely affected, and has a reasonable likelihood of being commercially viable again with further support, but can't currently access commercial finance from lenders, this scheme may be able to help. The scheme enables the Government, through Kānoa, to provide concessionary loans and equity finance to help severely-affected businesses get back to a point where they can re-engage with commercial lenders.

### **North Island Weather Events Fund**

The [North Island Weather Event Recovery Fund](#) is offering \$35.4 million to support rural communities affected by North Island weather events, including Cyclone Gabrielle. The funding is open to all primary industries such as horticulture, agriculture, fisheries, and forestry. The fund is split into two parts.

#### *NIWE Isolated Rural Communities Recovery Fund*

This fund is available for various activities to support rural communities affected by the weather events. This includes supporting the establishment and operations of hub locations, such as marae or other suitable facilities, to serve as central points for community support. Community groups and support networks will receive funding to coordinate community-led recovery efforts and improve access to necessary support for community members. Logistical costs of operating in heavily impacted areas will be covered, and initiatives focused on the well-being of iwi will be developed. Community hubs will also host regular clinics and events, specialized support and

information resources will be provided, and efforts will be made to maintain telecommunications links. Additionally, materials, equipment, and personnel will be supplied to community hubs in isolated regions.

It is seeking expressions of interest from suppliers who can provide services and projects related to health and safety, animal welfare, and community-led recovery for the affected areas. Eligible entities must operate within the primary industries, be registered for GST, a registered charity, Māori iwi group, or recognized representative body.

The funding must address community needs, support regional recovery, and be completed by December 31, 2023. Expressions of interest can be submitted via email, and more information can be found on the [Ministry for Primary Industries website](#).

#### *NIWE Time-Critical Primary Industries Recovery Fund*

The fund is specifically designated for urgent maintenance necessary for the safety of livestock and people, as well as transportation of essential supplies, individuals, and animals. Expert advice is also provided to assist in decision-making and management actions related to time-critical health and safety, animal health and welfare, and ongoing operations' safety.

Several months after the North Island floods and cyclones, businesses and communities still face significant needs, including risks to health and safety due to damaged infrastructure and equipment, as well as risks to animal welfare.

The funding aims to support rural businesses in meeting compliance requirements, minimize additional social, economic, and biosecurity harm, and promote equitable recovery outcomes for rural businesses and communities, including Māori landowners and vulnerable populations.

#### **Hawke's Bay Sediment and Silt Recovery Fund**

The Government allocated significant financial support for the removal of sediment and debris caused by Cyclone Gabrielle in the Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti regions. A total of \$102 million is dedicated to assisting councils in processing and disposing of debris from residential properties and addressing sediment on council-owned land to make it accessible to the public again. Another \$70 million is specifically allocated to commercial entities, including farmers and growers, to support land clean-up and help them return to profitability.

Funding is also available for the removal of debris and sediment from Māori land. The funding is administered by local authorities and is available to eligible commercial entities in the Hawke's Bay region. Eligible entities can receive up to \$40,000 as a grant and up to \$210,000 on a cost-share basis, where the entity covers 50% of the costs. The funding cannot be used for indirect costs, unrelated activities, or the purchase of non-consumable or capital assets.

The eligibility criteria include being primarily located in Hawke's Bay, demonstrating recoverability or posing significant risks if the sediment and debris are left unmanaged, and not having received funding for sediment and debris works from other entities. Commercial entities that primarily provide services or goods for profit, have significant impact from sediment and debris in Hawke's Bay, and are viable both before and after the cyclone are eligible to apply. Applications for funding close on July 31, 2023.

#### **Cyclone Gabrielle Welfare Support Grant**

The [Cyclone Gabrielle Welfare Support Grant](#) is a time-limited Government fund. It is intended to reimburse certain emergency costs that have already been incurred by marae, iwi, and recognised community organisations (including rural groups, Pacific organisations, and ethnic service providers) to care for people who were affected, displaced, or isolated during the state of national emergency.

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This Grant recognises that these organisations have used their own resources to fund their immediate response to Cyclone Gabrielle. It provides a faster alternative to the normal process of seeking reimbursement through local authorities for emergency response costs.

The National Emergency Management Agency (“NEMA”) administers the Grant on behalf of the Government. Applicants will need to meet certain eligibility criteria and conditions to receive funding. Grants are usually capped at \$40,000 (excl. GST), but organisations may be able to apply for a subsequent Grant after discussing their circumstances with NEMA.

### **Solid Waste Management Fund**

The [Cyclone Gabrielle Solid Waste Management Fund](#) has up to \$15 million to reduce financial barriers to clearing solid waste from residential properties as soon as possible. The Fund is administered by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). NEMA will make payments to eligible local authorities through a monthly reimbursement process. To receive funding, you will need to provide NEMA with a completed application form and details of your claim, including supporting invoices.

### **Mayoral Relief Funds**

A mayoral relief fund is used to support those affected the North Island extreme weather events. The funds are made up of contributions from the Government and donations from private parties. Each affected region has their own relief fund and process for accessing their fund.

## **OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

[Hawke's Bay Foundation](#): Cyclone Relief Fund Provides cyclone-specific funding to charitable organisations.

[Community Matters](#): Contact their Napier office for details about how your organisation can register for grant applications.

[Harcourts Foundation](#): Funding for community projects.

[Napier Council Community Services Grant](#): Funding for community projects.

[Eastern & Central Community Trust Grassroots Fund](#): Community service and initiatives.

[Evergreen Foundation](#): The Evergreen Foundation is supporting the families and communities in the horticultural and agricultural sectors in Hawke’s Bay and Tairāwhiti/Gisborne through its Cyclone Relief Fund.

[Pub Charity](#): For projects of community benefit.

[One Foundation](#): Funding for community projects.

[First Light Foundation](#): Funding for community projects.

[The Lion Foundation](#): Grants for cultural, health, sports, and education initiatives.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

For more information, contact the Cyclone Recovery Unit at [cyclonerecoveryunit@dpmc.govt.nz](mailto:cyclonerecoveryunit@dpmc.govt.nz)