

# Social Security (Accident Compensation and Calculation of Weekly Income) Amendment Bill



New Zealand Council Of  
Christian Social Services

**February 2026**

## Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Social Security (Accident Compensation and Calculation of Weekly Income) Amendment Bill. NZCCSS recognises the intent of the Social Security (Accident Compensation and Calculation of Weekly Income) Amendment Bill to clarify potential inequities between people who receive ACC support at differing times. However, in order to not further penalise those already facing hardship, we believe consideration needs to be given to writing off debt that may be identified through the retrospective reviews proposed in the Bill.

## Taunakitanga | Recommendations

NZCCSS has heard from our member organisations consistently of the challenges facing our communities due to the high cost of living, increasing unemployment and complex needs. People may be eligible for ACC due to a health condition or disability which we know can impact further on wellbeing. Based on the 2025 Child Poverty Statistics, 1 in 4 children living in households with at least one disabled person were experiencing material hardship (Stats NZ, 2025). Over half of disabled New Zealanders (53%) struggle to afford basic costs like housing and food compared to 33% of non-disabled people (IHC, 2025). The proposed changes risk increasing financial hardship for people who have received additional hardship assistance while receiving ACC.

**Recommendation:** We recommend changes be made to ensure that those who were at the time legally receiving additional hardship assistance are not placed into hardship by any debt that may be identified through the review process. We propose amendments in line with hardship provisions provided in the Tax Administration Act. For example:

Additional text to be added in Section 198A (2) that the Ministry for Social Development (MSD) must take into account “whether the recovery of the outstanding debt would place the beneficiary in serious hardship”.

## Ngā Tohutoro | References

Intellectually Handicapped Children’s Society (IHC). (2025). *Disability survey data highlights inequities that could last generations*. <https://www.ihc.org.nz/news/disability-survey-data-highlights-inequities-that-could-last-generations>

Stats NZ. (2025). *No movement in child poverty rates for year ended June 2024*. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/no-movement-in-child-poverty-rates-for-year-ended-june-2024/>

## **Ko wai tātou | Who we are**

NZCCSS has six foundation members; the Anglican Care Network, Baptist Churches of New Zealand, Catholic Social Services, Presbyterian Support and the Methodist and Salvation Army Churches.

Through this membership, NZCCSS represents over 100 organisations providing a range of social support services across Aotearoa. Our mission is to call forth a just and compassionate society for Aotearoa, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Further details on NZCCSS can be found on our website - [www.nzccss.org.nz](http://www.nzccss.org.nz).

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