

Social Sector Accreditation Standards

Level 4

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Introduction and information

These Social Sector Accreditation Standards have been produced by the New Zealand Government for the accreditation of providers funded by government to deliver social services.

All levels of the standards are periodically reviewed to ensure that content and references are up to date. To access the latest versions, or for more information about the accreditation process, visit [Te Kāhui Kāhu: Social Services Accreditation](#).

You can email Social Services Accreditation at: accreditation@tekahuikahu.govt.nz.

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Client-centred services

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The organisation treats people with respect and delivers services in a manner that has regard for their dignity, privacy and independence.

1. The organisation promotes client-centred practice as central to its service development and delivery.

Guidance:

Evidence may include:

- client participation in development, review and continuous improvement
- programme responsiveness to client's ethnic, cultural and spiritual values and beliefs, their physical needs and the trends of clients
- client-centred practice training, education and staff development

Staffing

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The organisation has the staffing capability and capacity to deliver services safely.

1. The organisation's staffing and staff relations policy and procedures comply with the relevant legislation.

Guidance:

Relevant legislation includes, but is not limited to: the Children's Act 2014; Employment Relations Act 2000; Minimum Wage Act 1983; Holidays Act 2003; Health and Safety at Work Act 2015; Human Rights Act 1993; Privacy Act 2020; and the Protected Disclosures Act 2000.

Evidence may be found in policies and procedures relating to the following:

- recruitment, induction, training and professional development
- equal employment opportunity
- wages, leave and working conditions
- training programmes
- support and/or supervision
- performance review and management
- standards of conduct and disciplinary procedures
- conditions and procedures for termination, early retirement and resignation
- responses to bullying or harassment.

2. The organisation includes in its definition of staff anyone the organisation relies on to deliver its services. This includes caregivers, volunteers and contractors, as well as paid staff members.

Guidance:

Human resource policies and procedures will include:

- a definition of staff that covers all positions stated in this criterion
- the definition of volunteer includes the members of governance and management committees.

3. All staff members have a written agreement of service.

Guidance:

Evidence will include templates the organisation uses for individual employment agreements and position descriptions, including, but not limited to:

- position descriptions
- employment agreements/contracts
- volunteer agreements

4. The organisation uses a clear, transparent and open process for recruiting and vetting suitable staff, including members of the organisation’s governance body. Vetting of staff is to include, but is not limited to, a New Zealand Police vet.

Guidance:

Human resource policies and procedures will include:

- the recruiting and vetting or background checking of all staff, volunteers and governance members
- formal, recorded processes for verifying references and credentials
- a formal, recorded process for carrying out a criminal background check using the New Zealand Police vetting service, or, if the position does not meet the criteria for NZ Police vetting, a Ministry of Justice criminal history check.

4.1 The organisation will follow a robust decision-making process in responding to the results of vetting, including safety checking.

Policies and procedures will include a formal, recorded process for considering the results of vetting.

Where the vetting process raises serious concerns—for example, a Police vet returns a criminal history—decisions will be made at an appropriate level of governance in response to all relevant evidence.

All decisions relating to the appointment of a staff member with a conviction will be documented. This will include evidence of the staff or governance member’s agreement to any management plan, restrictions, controls, increased supervision, or vetting strategies proposed for the appointment.

The organisation will provide evidence that all children’s workers meet the following safety checking requirements:

- confirmation of identity
- at least two referee checks
- qualifications checks
- a work history, in chronological order, for the last five years
- a formal risk assessment.

4.2 The organisation effectively manages any staff with a conviction, including members of governance.

Under [Schedule 2](#) of the Children's Act 2014, unless a core worker exemption is held, an organisation will not employ a core children’s worker who has a conviction for a specified offence.

The organisation ensures clients, staff and visitors are protected from risk.

1. The organisation ensures clients, staff and visitors are protected from risk.

Guidance:

The organisation will have written health and safety policies and procedures in place which align with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

Health and safety policies include:

- hazard identification processes
- regular, recorded maintenance inspections of all places of work and facilities the organisation uses to provide its services, including maintenance reports to management and governance
- evidence of effective worker engagement and participation in health and safety matters
- a detailed business continuity and disaster recovery plan
- appropriate safety and emergency plans

The organisation will understand and fulfil its statutory and/or regulatory obligations in relation to essential notification reporting.

This may include, but is not limited to, notifying:

- WorkSafe New Zealand, as well as government agencies, of any notifiable injury, illness or incident (as defined in the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015). Notification to WorkSafe New Zealand must be made in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
- any purchasing agency of an incident, hazard or risk concerning health and safety. Written notification must be made to the purchasing agency/ies within reasonable time of this incident, hazard or risk occurring or being recognised.
- of any criminal event, the New Zealand Police.

The organisation will, as reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities with the purchasing agency/ies regarding the health and safety of workers engaged to perform a service, and the safety of the public.

Governance and management structure and systems

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The organisation has clearly defined and effective governance and management structure and systems.

1. The organisation has a clearly defined and effective governance and management structure and systems.

Guidance:

The organisation will have documentation in place which clearly defines its legal status. Evidence may include the:

- certificate of incorporation
- trust deed
- constitution
- charters
- company registration
- organisation's rules.

2. The organisation collects, records, stores, and uses information, in keeping with the relevant legislation.

Guidance:

Relevant legislation may include, but is not limited to:

Privacy Act 2020; Public Records Act 2005; Domestic Violence Act 1995; Health (Retention of Health Information) Regulations 1996; Tax Administration Act 1994; Goods and Services Tax Act 1985; and Electronic Transactions Act 2002.

2.1 The organisation will follow policies and procedures for the collection, use and retention of personal information.

The organisation will have policies and procedures in place to ensure that:

- information collection, sharing and retention is in keeping with relevant legislative requirements
- personal information is collected for a clear and lawful purpose
- clients will be fully informed of who will have access to personal information the organisation holds about them, and how that information will be used
- clients are informed of their right to access information collected about them, and to the correction of that information (if necessary)
- when information is collected from children or young people, extra care is taken to ensure it is collected fairly and is not unreasonably intrusive
- information is disposed of securely when it is no longer required
- all privacy matters are responded to, and serious privacy breaches are reported to the Privacy Commissioner.

2.2 The organisation will have appropriate information technology and cyber-security safety measures in place to protect the privacy and security of information.

The organisation will have information technology and cyber-security safety measures to suit the needs of the organisation and the systems it uses.

This includes:

- the secure storage of all paper-based (hard-copy) documentation and client files
- having measures in place to protect electronic information and systems from unauthorised access or loss (for example, firewalls; system updates; antivirus software; password protection)
- regular review of user accounts, passwords and system access
- the physical security of IT hardware and devices, including processes for e-waste disposal.

2.3 The organisation will ensure staff members understand privacy requirements.

The organisation will demonstrate that it has staff who understand privacy requirements, including:

- appointing one or more individuals as privacy officers who are responsible for ensuring the organisation complies with the Privacy Act 2020
- training for all staff on the organisation's privacy policies and procedures.

Financial management and systems

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The organisation is financially viable and manages its finances competently.

1. The organisation is financially viable.

Guidance:

Accounts and reports will show:

- the organisation is solvent
- the organisation is able to pay its debts as they become due in the normal course of business
- the value of the organisation's assets is greater than the value of its liabilities
- processes are in place to ensure the organisation remains financially viable.

2. The organisation has financial management systems appropriate to the size and complexity of the organisation.

Guidance:

Financial management systems will align with the organisation's trust deed, constitution, rules or other founding documentation and relevant legislation.

All government funding is required to be shown as separate line items in the organisation's financial statements.

3. The organisation has adequate insurance cover for the size and complexity of the organisation.

Guidance:

The organisation will provide evidence it has an appropriate and current level of insurance. This may include, but is not limited to, indemnity for staff, including governance, asset and property insurance and business continuity insurance.

Resolution of complaints related to service provision

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The organisation uses an effective process to resolve complaints about service provision.

1. The organisation uses an effective process to resolve complaints about service provision.

Guidance:

The organisation will ensure:

- people are kept safe through the complaints process and complaints are resolved in a reasonable timeframe
- clients and staff have been informed of the complaints process and know how to make a formal complaint
- complaints inform or lead to service improvements.