Te Kāhui Kāhu



Social Sector Accreditation Standards

Level 2

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About us

Te Hītori | History

We were established in 1989 as part of the Department of Social Welfare (which later became the Ministry of Social Development), to assess social service organisations against a set of standards.

In 2016, a group of government agencies developed and published the Social Sector Accreditation Standards, which included ten core standards and specialist standards. Our unit became Social Services Accreditation and we expanded to provide assessment services for other government agencies.

In 2021 we became Te Kāhui Kāhu, which was endorsed by Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo (Māori Language Commission). We identified with 'Te Kāhui Kāhu' which refers to a cluster of hawks, a metaphor for the keen and sharp sight of our assessors.

We now assess organisations on behalf of six government agencies, including:

- Department of Corrections - Ara Poutama Aotearoa
- Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport
- Ministry of Justice - Te Tāhū o te Ture
- Ministry of Social Development - Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora
- Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children
- Social Investment Agency - Toi Hau Tāngata.

Our work means government agencies can be confident that approved or accredited providers have the systems in place to operate effectively and to deliver services that are safe for people to use.

Moemoeā | Vision

New Zealanders are confident to use social services that help them live the lives they choose.

Kaupapa | Purpose

We help to make sure that social services are safe for New Zealanders to use.

Aronga| Mission

We assess social services against a set of standards to help them succeed.

Ngā Uara | Values

In February 2025, we launched our new uara, co-designed with kaimahi (staff). To help embed these meaningfully, tohu (symbols) were created. Each tohu draws on toi Māori principles and tells the story of the uara it represents.



Te honohono | Connection
We build strong relationships



Te ngākau tapatahi | Integrity
We are honest and follow through on our commitments



Te whakawhirinaki | Trust
We create a sense of worth and respect



Te tautika | Equity
We are fair and impartial

Introduction to the standards

There are 10 core standards and three specialist standards. Each standard has a set of criteria with guidance to help you understand how to meet the criteria.

Using the guidance

We collaborated with a group of social service organisations to understand how they use our information to meet the standards, what works for them and what causes problems. The providers told us they want us to be clearer about what they must do to meet the standards.

The guidance now explains this more clearly. Under each criteria we will ask you for documents or a conversation to understand whether your organisation has met the criteria. We may also ask for further information to confirm that what you have shown or shared with us is reflected in your practice.

We provide a series of prompts, which are explained below:

- **Show us** means we need to see evidence. This could be a physical or electronic document, record, policy, procedure, or something we can see when we visit
- **Share with us** means we need you to explain how something works in your organisation
- **Scenario** are lived examples of practice
- **Notes** are additional information that will help you meet the standard
- **Important** highlights significant information
- **Recommended resources** link you to additional information
- **Legislation** links you to legislation
- **Tickable circle** if you want to tick off each show us/share with us when they are done.

At the end of each standard is a list of **Words and terms you need to know**, with explanations to make their meaning clear.

Acknowledgements

We extend our humble appreciation to the community leaders and social service providers, who generously contributed their time, expertise, and insight to the preparation of this document. Their involvement was fundamental to ensuring inclusion, cultural integrity, and māramatanga (understanding). Their partnership has enriched this project and its outcomes.

Contributing organisations

- Barnardos Aotearoa
- Christchurch Resettlement Services
- Kainga Pasifika Services
- K'aute Pasifika Trust
- Kura Kārearea
- Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services
- Out of School Care Network (OSCN)
- Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa
- Raukawa Whānau Ora
- Wellington Women's Refuge

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Client-Centred Services

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



Why this standard matters

People using your service have the right to be heard, respected and actively involved in decisions that impact them. They deserve to be treated with manaaki and mana.

Criteria 1

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

Guidance



Share with us

- How you involve clients in developing your services, and how you seek their feedback on the services they receive.

Criteria 1.1

The organisation involves its clients and stakeholders in planning, implementation and evaluation at all levels of the service to ensure services are current and responsive.

Guidance



Share with us

- How you involve your clients and stakeholders in planning and programme decisions.



Scenario

ABC Provider encourage clients, whānau and stakeholders to share what's important to them. Getting their input helps to make sure that services and programmes stay relevant and meet the needs of people who use them.

Recently, a client gave feedback about how they were welcomed into the service. After a discussion with the team, ABC Provider agreed to welcome all new clients and their whānau with a mihi whakatau.

Criteria 2

The organisation provides services that are accessible to people with disability.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You make sure people with disabilities have the same quality of service as others, by:
  - taking steps to make it easier to use your service
  - supporting people to make their own decisions and express their preferences
  - providing essential facilities that meet their needs, such as accessible toilets, if your services are delivered on site.

Share with us

- ◯ If you have decided not to provide a service to someone because of their disability, and how you reached this decision.

Note: You must attempt to accommodate a person's needs before deciding not to provide a service. You may only decline service if:

- providing the service would cause serious difficulty for your organisation, e.g. because of cost, lack of resources, the impact on your service
- there is a health and safety risk that you cannot reasonably reduce or manage.

Scenarios

Scenario 1: Delivering services differently	Scenario 2: Responding to specific needs
ABC Provider operate from a multi-purpose facility. They received feedback that their main entrance is hard to access for people with mobility issues. To fix this, the organisation: • added clear signage directing people to accessible entry points • offered home visits to clients that can't access the building easily • gave clients the option to have a virtual meeting.	ABC Provider work in a shared community space. A rangatahi using the service for the first time shared with the kaiako that the waiting room was noisy, and it wasn't clear where they needed to go or how they could ask for help. This made them feel very anxious. To fix this, the organisation: • made a quiet space where people can go if they feel overwhelmed • created easy-to-read guides and signs to help people know what will happen during their visit • trained kaimahi to understand and support people with neurological differences and mental health issues.

Criteria 3

The organisation provides services that are free from any discrimination, coercion, harassment, and sexual, financial or other exploitation.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have a staff code of conduct that:
  - clearly explains how staff are expected to behave and treat people
  - sets expectations for online interactions
  - requires staff to follow your organisation's policies and procedures
  - makes it clear that staff must follow the organisation's policies if they see or suspect abuse or unsafe behaviour in the service or during service activities
  - requires staff to agree to follow the code of conduct.
- ◯ You have a policy or procedure that protects clients who raise concerns in good faith.

Share with us

- How you set behaviour expectations for people who work with clients but are not staff.

Note: This could include parents/caregivers who help out at events, community members, guest speakers, groundskeepers, visitors or people you work with from other organisations.

Criteria 4

The organisation recognises and facilitates the right of people to advocacy and/or support persons of their choice.

Guidance

Share with us

- How your clients are made aware of:
  - the right to an advocate or support person
  - how you help them to find someone of their choice.

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Access	A person can use, enter, take part in or benefit from services, places, information or activities in the same way as everyone else.
Accessible	Services, places, information or systems are set up so people with disabilities can use and understand them easily, safely and with dignity – without needing extra help.
Advocacy	Supporting or speaking on behalf of a person or people to ensure their rights, needs and interests are heard and respected.
Clients	People who use your service or take part in your programmes. This might include individuals, families, whānau or groups you support.

Word/term	Explanation
Client-centred practice	Practice that focuses on respecting and empowering people by involving them in decisions, tailoring support to their needs and prioritising their values and goals.
Coercion	When someone is made to do something against their will by being threatened or pressured.
Disability	A physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological or learning impairment (whether temporary or permanent) that affects a person's ability to carry out normal activities.
Discrimination	Treating a person or people unfairly or differently because of who they are, for example, because of their disability, race, gender or religion.
Financial exploitation	When someone takes advantage of, and benefits from, another person's money in a dishonest or unfair way.
Good faith	An example of acting in good faith is when a person raises a concern because they genuinely believe it is true and important, not to cause harm or mislead others.
Harassment	Unwanted and offensive behaviour that demeans, intimidates, threatens or humiliates a person.
Kaiako	Māori word that refers to a teacher or tutor.
Kaimahi	Māori word that refers to a worker or employee.
Mana	Māori word that refers to dignity, strength and integrity.
Manaaki	Māori word that refers to support, taking care of, giving hospitality to, protecting, looking out for, showing respect, generosity and care for others.
Mihi whakatau	Māori word that refers to a welcome ceremony.
Rangatahi	Māori word that refers to young people, adolescents.
Sexual exploitation	When someone uses their power or influence to pressure or force another person into unwanted sexual activity for their own benefit.
Stakeholders	People or groups who have an interest in your organisation and the work you do. This could include funders, partners, community groups, staff or the people who use your services.
Whānau	Māori word that refers to family, extended family, friends and connections who support one another.

Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Community Wellbeing

The organisation provides services that reflect the principle that the welfare and interests of the child or young person are first and paramount, and the wellbeing of all is upheld.



Why this standard matters

People need to know your services will protect the rights and safety of mokopuna, tamariki, rangatahi, kaumātua and vulnerable adults.

Criteria 1

The organisation provides services in a manner consistent with section 4A of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, where services reflect the principle that the welfare and interests of the child or young person are the first and paramount consideration.

Guidance



Important: This criteria only applies to providers who deliver services directly to children and/or young people.



Share with us

- ◯ How you make sure that a child's safety, wellbeing and best interests are paramount in all decision-making.
- ◯ How you involve children and young people in decisions that affect them in ways that are appropriate to their age, understanding and circumstances.



Show us

- ◯ Your policies and procedures for managing behaviour include:
  - how to manage behaviour in a safe and respectful way while upholding the mana of children and young people
  - behaviour management that is not to be used, e.g. physical punishment, seclusion or punitive practices
  - how you determine when a behaviour support plan is needed for a child or young person, and strategies to reduce the need for intervention
  - how you involve the child or young person and their family or whānau in behaviour support plans, where possible.

Criteria 2

The organisation has a process for dealing with allegations of abuse and situations that raise concerns about the safety of a client or associated community member.

Guidance

Important: This criteria is not limited to concerns about your client. It also applies when a client or another person shares information about anyone who may be at risk, e.g. a whānau member or friend. Your organisation must have a process for responding to any abuse or safety concerns.

Show us

- ◯ Your policies and procedures for managing allegations of abuse or other concerning situations. These must include:
  - clear information about the different types of abuse or neglect
  - how staff respond if someone is in immediate danger, including calling 111
  - that staff are required to report any disclosure of abuse or harm, and how you tell clients about this requirement
  - the steps staff must follow when responding to a concern, and how the process will be recorded
  - the steps for reporting concerns to Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police or relevant professional bodies
  - how you treat everyone involved honestly and fairly as you respond to a disclosure
  - the steps for managing allegations of abuse against a staff member
  - how client safety will be regularly monitored.
- ◯ Your records of any allegations of abuse or concerns raised about a person's safety, and how these were managed. If the concern involves a client, show us that it is documented in their client record.

Legislation:

Child protection policies | The Children's Act 2014

Recommended resources:

Identifying Elder Abuse | Office for Seniors

What is Child Abuse? | Child Matters

Criteria 2.1

The process specifically includes guidelines on how the organisation makes referrals under section 15 of the Oranga Tamariki Act.

Guidance

Important: The law allows anyone who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived to make a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki or NZ Police.

Show us

- Any records or reports of concern about children or young people that your organisation has made to Oranga Tamariki or NZ Police.

Legislation:

Reporting of child abuse | Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

Criteria 3

The organisation promotes awareness of the unacceptability of abuse, ways in which abuse may be prevented, the need to report all cases of abuse and how to respond to all types of abuse. Abuse includes physical, emotional or sexual harm, ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation, either passive or active.

Guidance

Share with us

- How your organisation makes it clear that abuse is not acceptable, what you do to prevent it, and how everyone you employ or engage in your organisation understands their role in keeping clients safe.

Criteria 4

The organisation promotes awareness of where a conflict between the needs of a client and others might arise, and uses a process to respond to such conflicts.

Guidance

Show us

- That your policies and procedures include:
  - how you identify and manage any conflicts between the needs of a client and others
  - how clients, their family and whānau, as well as staff, are made aware of these.

Share with us

- How and when you've used these procedures to manage conflict between the needs of a client and others.

Note: These are examples of the types of conflict that might arise. Your organisation may face different situations depending on the people you support and the nature of your service.

Type of conflict	What it might look like
Family or whānau conflict	A client wants privacy, but their whānau wants to be involved in decisions about services.
Client–staff conflict	A client is related to a staff member and feels uncomfortable receiving services from them.
Client–client conflict	Your service is supporting both a victim and the person who harmed them.
Cultural, religious or personal values	A client's cultural, religious or personal values are not respected by their whānau or support people.

Criteria 5

The organisation has a procedure to identify clients who may have limited ability to give informed consent. This procedure ensures that such clients can exercise the ability they have to the fullest extent possible.

Guidance

Important: Everyone has the right to be involved in decisions about the services they receive. A limited ability to give informed consent means a person (over 16 years) cannot fully understand or make decisions about a service. This may be because of cognitive impairment, developmental disability or other factors.

Note: This criteria is focused on people over 16 years who may have difficulty giving informed consent. For information about consent processes for children and people who can give informed consent, see the Client Services and Programmes Standard, criteria 2.1.

Show us

- ◯ Your policies and procedures for identifying when a client may have limited ability to give informed consent.
- ◯ If you work with clients who have limited ability to give informed consent, your procedures include:
  - who is involved in decision-making, e.g. whānau, enduring power of attorney, legal and/or welfare guardian, Oranga Tamariki or nominated person
  - that you clearly document all steps and decisions
  - that you support your client to take part in decisions as much as they are able, including their right to say no to services, change their mind and express a preference for who supports them
  - that you regularly monitor your client's capacity, recognising it may change over time.

Note: These are examples of situations where a client may have limited ability to give informed consent. Your organisation may come across other situations, depending on the people you support and the services you offer.

Situation	What it might look like
Alcohol or other drug use	A client is intoxicated or in withdrawal and is unable to make safe or informed decisions.
Cognitive impairment	An older client with dementia struggles to understand their service plan or explain their choices.
Communication barriers	A client with limited verbal communication needs visual tools or extra time to make informed choices.
Developmental disability	A young person with an intellectual disability needs extra support to understand what they're agreeing to.
Mental distress or illness	A client experiencing acute mental distress can't fully understand the risks or benefits of a decision.
Temporary medical condition	A client is recovering from a head injury and is not yet able to make safe or informed decisions.

Criteria 6

When it is confirmed that a client has limited ability to give informed consent, the organisation acts appropriately. For those organisations that must comply with the Health and Disability Commissioner (Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights) Regulations 1996, this will mean following the principles of Right 7.

Guidance



Share with us

- How you support clients with limited ability to give informed consent, including how you:
  - involve them in decisions about their lives
  - uphold their right to say no to services, change their mind and choose who supports them.



Recommended resource:

Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights | Health and Disability Commissioner

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Allegation of abuse	A formal statement or claim regarding the occurrence of abuse, which is investigated and managed according to policy.
At risk	An adult is considered vulnerable or at risk if they have been deprived of liberty or are living in care. An adult may also be considered vulnerable due to a physical or intellectual disability, or mental health status.
Behaviour support plans	Customised plans designed to address specific behavioural needs of a child or young person, reducing the need for protective interventions.
Children's best interest	A legal and ethical principle that requires decisions impacting a child to prioritise their overall wellbeing, including their physical, emotional and psychological needs, safety, cultural background and personal development.
Cognitive impairment	A condition where a person's ability to process thoughts, make decisions or recall information is diminished.
Documentation of concerns	The process of recording all actions, reports and responses related to concerns about a client's safety or wellbeing.
Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA)	A legal document which sets out who can take care of a person's personal or financial matters when they lose the ability to do so. Source: Enduring Power of Attorney | New Zealand Government
Informed consent	The process of obtaining agreement from a person who fully understands the nature of the service or intervention being provided.
Kaumātua	Māori word that refers to an adult or elder.
Legal guardian	A person legally designated to make decisions for someone who cannot make decisions for themselves, typically for minors or those with limited capacity.
Mana	Māori word that refers to authority, dignity, respect, and spiritual power.
Mokopuna	Māori word that refers to grandchildren/children.

Word/term	Explanation
Multidisciplinary meetings	Meetings involving professionals from various disciplines, e.g. healthcare, social services, law enforcement to address client needs or concerns.
Paramount consideration	This means that whenever a decision is made about a child or young person, their safety, wellbeing and best interests must come first, ahead of other factors.
Rangatahi	Māori word that refers to young people and adolescents
Risk assessment	A process to identify the likelihood of a client being harmed, harming themselves or harming others.
Substitute decision-making	When someone other than the individual, e.g. a guardian or legal representative makes decisions on their behalf due to limited capacity.
Tamariki	Māori word that refers to children.
Vulnerable adult	A person who may need extra care and support to live as independently as possible. This could be because of a disability, health condition or other challenges. A person may also be considered vulnerable if they live in a care setting where they do not have full control over their daily life.
Whānau	Māori word that refers to family, extended family, friends and connections who support one another.



Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Cultural Competence

The organisation provides services that are culturally appropriate to clients.



Why this standard matters

When you embrace people's culture, values, religion and traditions, you foster respectful partnerships that uphold the principles of manaakitanga.

Criteria 1

The organisation provides services that recognise and respect clients' ethnic, cultural, and spiritual values and beliefs.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You have written information on how your service and/or programmes consider and respect people's cultural identities.



Share with us

- ◯ How you collect and use information about ethnicity, iwi and/or hapū to support and improve the experience of people who use your service.
- ◯ How you recognise, respect and respond to the cultural values, beliefs and needs of the people you support.



Scenario

ABC Provider are committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to being culturally responsive. This is reflected in their policies, procedures and founding document. ABC Provider assess client diversity by collecting data and engaging with agencies and iwi. They consider people's cultural strengths when hiring staff. This helps programmes and services to be culturally inclusive.

Staff are encouraged to expand their cultural knowledge through training, seeking guidance from cultural experts and discussing cultural considerations during supervision sessions. Feedback from clients made clear they felt comfortable and valued by the service provided.

ABC Provider actively collaborate with community organisations, complete referrals to other agencies and maintain a strong understanding of the communities they support.

Criteria 1.1

The organisation provides services which meet the specific needs of Māori.

Guidance

Share with us

How you meet the needs of Māori, by any of the following:

- ensuring representation of Māori in service delivery, leadership and governance roles
- fostering relationships and/or partnerships with local iwi, hapū, kaumātua and community leaders
- building partnerships with Māori health and social service providers
- implementing processes to make connections with whānau, hapū, iwi and marae where tamariki and rangatahi are Māori
- providing staff training in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, te ao Māori, and te reo Māori
- adopting service delivery models that incorporate kaupapa Māori approaches
- using appropriate Māori models, e.g. Te Whare Tapa Whā, Te Wheke, rangatiratanga
- using te reo Māori, tikanga and kawa throughout service and programme delivery
- developing culturally appropriate resources written in te reo Māori.

Scenario

As a 'by Māori, for Māori' kaupapa Māori service, ABC Provider have extensive knowledge of their hapū, iwi networks and their hāpori. Te ao Māori is deeply embedded in ABC Provider's strategic plan, mission, values, policies, procedures and day-to-day operations. The services they provide are grounded in tikanga, te reo Māori and Māori values.

Specialist training in mātauranga Māori equips kaimahi with the cultural insight, relational skills and knowledge to engage respectfully and effectively with Māori whānau.

Criteria 1.2

The organisation provides services that meet the specific needs of Pacific peoples.

Guidance

Share with us

○ How you meet the needs of Pacific peoples, by any of the following:

- ensuring representation of Pacific peoples in service delivery, leadership and governance roles
- fostering relationships with Pacific leaders, communities and churches
- implementing processes to make connections with the Pacific community where children and young people are of Pacific descent
- providing staff training in Pacific cultural beliefs, languages and practices
- adopting service delivery models that incorporate Pacific frameworks, e.g. Fonofale, Va Tapuia
- building partnerships with Pacific health and social service providers
- developing culturally appropriate resources and communication in Pacific languages.

Scenario

ABC Provider include relevant Pacific cultural practices in their service delivery. Staff are encouraged to engage in cultural trainings, seek advice from other Pacific cultural groups and access specific cultural information or services that support the needs of their Pacific clients.

Criteria 2

The organisation consults with, and where appropriate makes referrals to and negotiates protocols with, Māori, Pacific peoples, and other cultural and specific interest services.

Guidance

Share with us

- How you work collaboratively with other services, for example by:
  - how you make referrals to Māori, Pacific, and other cultural and specific interest services that meet clients' needs
  - how you consult with Māori, Pacific, and other cultural and specific interest services
  - how information about services for Māori, Pacific, and other cultural and special interest groups is made available to clients and staff.

Note: Specific interest services may include those that support particular communities, such as gender diverse people, disabled people, ethnic communities or faith-based groups. These services may have unique cultural or identity-based approaches that are important to capture in service provision.

Words and terms you need to know

The following te reo Māori words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Hāpori	Community or society.
Hapū	Kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe – section of a large kinship group and the primary political unit in traditional Māori society. It consisted of a number of whānau sharing descent from a common ancestor, usually being named after the ancestor, but sometimes from an important event in the group's history.
Iwi	An extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race – often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.
Kaimahi	Worker or employee.
Kaumātua	An adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman, old man – a person of status within the whānau.
Kaupapa	A topic, matter for discussion or plan.
Kawa	Customs, protocols or traditional practices.
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, kindness, generosity, support – the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.
Marae	A traditional meeting ground with an open area in front of the wharenui (meeting house) where formal greetings and discussions take place.
Mātauranga Māori	A holistic Māori knowledge system rooted in ancestral wisdom, encompassing language, spirituality, environmental practices and cultural traditions. It reflects an interconnected worldview and continues to evolve across generations.
Rangatahi	Young people, adolescents.
Rangatiratanga	The ability to maintain and protect Māori customs, language and ways of life.
Tamariki	Māori word that refers to children.
Te ao Māori	The Māori worldview – the unique way Māori understand and experience life. It includes their values, traditions, spirituality and deep connection to land, community and ancestors.
Te reo Māori	The Māori language – the indigenous language of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Word/term	Explanation
Tikanga	Correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol – the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context.
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	Also known as the Treaty of Waitangi, this is the agreement signed in 1840 between Māori and the British Crown. It is New Zealand's founding document and sets the foundation for a respectful partnership. The Treaty outlines the rights and responsibilities of both parties, aiming to protect Māori cultural heritage and ensure fairness in the nation's development.
Whānau	Family, extended family, friends and connections who support one another.



Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Staffing

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



Why this standard matters

Taking steps to employ and engage people who can keep others safe will uphold the mana of your organisation and the communities you serve.

Criteria 1

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

Guidance



Show us

- You have a policy or procedure that protects staff who make a protected disclosure.



Share with us

- How you ensure your staffing policies and procedures meet current employment laws.



Scenario

ABC Provider took time to make sure their staffing policies met all legal requirements. They used the Workplace Policy Builder to help them. After their policies were in place, they set a six-monthly review cycle to stay up to date with any changes. A staff member monitors the Employment New Zealand website and subscribes to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) newsletter.

When a change is identified, ABC Provider discusses or consults with staff as required by the terms of their employment agreement, then updates the relevant policies and procedures, the staff handbook, and payroll systems and/or terms of their employment agreements.

ABC Provider routinely checks:

- current minimum wage requirements
- rules for deducting money from wages
- minimum leave and rest break entitlements
- their staff's written agreements of service align with their policies.

Criteria 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.

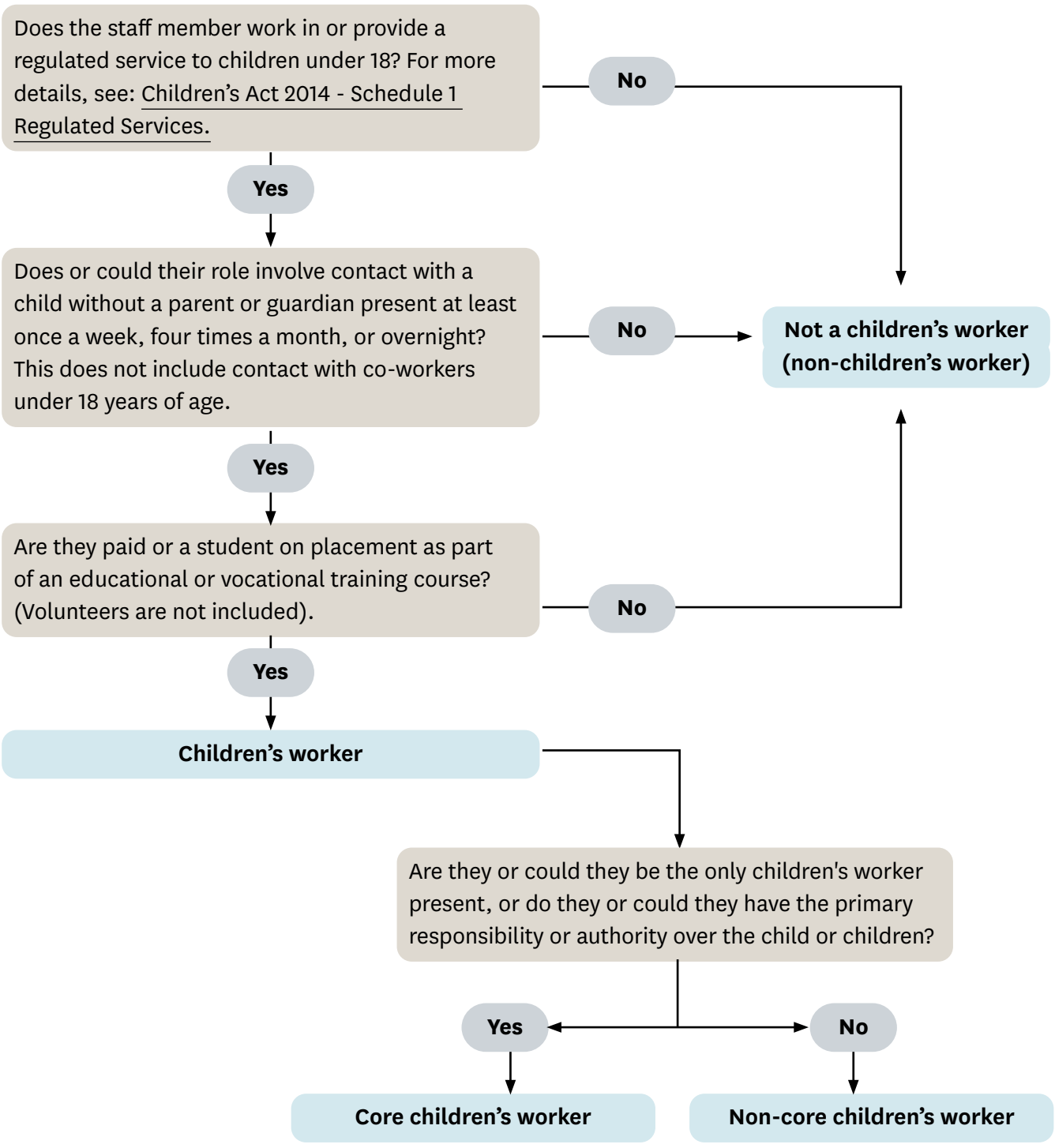
Guidance



Show us

- ◯ Your staffing policies and procedures define 'staff' as anyone working for your organisation. For example:
  - paid employees
  - governance members, e.g. board or committee members
  - contractors
  - interns
  - volunteers
  - people involved in religious ministry, e.g. pastors, priests or faith leaders.
- ◯ You have identified and documented which roles in your organisation, if any, are core children's worker roles or non-core children's worker roles.

You can use this flowchart to help you work out whether a staff member is a **children's worker** under the Children's Act 2014, and whether they are **core** or **non-core.**



Recommended resources:

Definition of children's worker | The Children's Act 2014

Guide to children's worker safety checking | Oranga Tamariki

Scenario

Core children's worker scenario	Non-core children's worker scenario
Aroha is a social worker in several local kura. She works in partnership with staff, vulnerable tamariki and rangatahi, their whānau to develop safety plans, promote wellbeing and educational outcomes. As a Social Worker in Schools (SWiS), Aroha has primary responsibility for the tamariki and rangatahi when she is working with them, and monitors their progress. Aroha is a core children's worker.	James is a youth programme assistant at an after-school centre. He supports lead staff during group sessions, helps supervise activities and prepares snacks. James does not have primary responsibility for any child and is never the only children's worker present with children. James is a non-core children's worker.

Criteria 3

The organisation has sufficient qualified and competent staff to deliver its services.

Guidance

Share with us

- How you ensure your staff have the appropriate skills, qualifications, cultural knowledge or experience to perform their roles effectively.

Show us

- Your staff hold current professional registration if required for their roles, e.g. social workers.

Note: Staff do not need to hold a qualification unless it is required for their role or by your funding agreement. For example, social workers must be registered which requires them to hold the relevant qualification.

Criteria 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



Important: A children's worker safety check has several components, which are listed in the table on page 35. The safety check is not complete until every component has been completed. The risk assessment must be completed last, as it should consider all information gathered during the earlier steps. A risk assessment is required even when no concerns are identified.



Show us

◯ Your recruitment policies and procedures include processes for:

- assessing the skills, experience and qualifications relevant to the role
- completing reference checks
- checking the status of professional registration, if required
- completing an MoJ check or NZ Police vet
- completing safety checks for children's workers before they are employed or engaged.

Important: If you employ or engage core children's workers (see definition on page 31), your recruitment policies and procedures must include a process to identify whether an applicant has a specified offence under Schedule 2 of the Children's Act 2014, or an equivalent overseas offence.

It is illegal to employ or engage any person as a core children's worker if they have a conviction for a Schedule 2 (Children's Act) offence in New Zealand, or an equivalent offence overseas, unless they have a core worker exemption.

Show us

- ◯ If you employ or engage core children's workers, your recruitment policies and procedures for checking overseas convictions include how you:
  - identify whether an applicant for a core worker role has an overseas conviction
  - decide whether any overseas offence is equivalent to a Schedule 2 (Children's Act) New Zealand offence
  - inform the applicant they can seek a review of any assessment that the offence is equivalent
  - advise the applicant to apply for a core worker exemption if required, and
  - document the process, including how you have decided whether or not an overseas conviction is equivalent to a Schedule 2 (Children's Act) New Zealand offence.

Note: A NZ Police vet will identify specified offences committed in New Zealand. You can request an Australian police vet through the New Zealand Police vetting service but this will not inform you if the offence is equivalent to a Schedule 2 (Children's Act) New Zealand offence. For information on obtaining checks from countries other than New Zealand and Australia and for determining whether overseas offences are equivalent to specified offences, see the Ministry of Education's guidance.

Recommended resources:

Core children's workers and overseas convictions | Ministry of Education

Core children's workers and overseas convictions | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Core worker convicted of specified offence not to be employed or engaged | Section 28 of the Children's Act 2014

Specified Offences | Schedule 2 of the Children's Act 2014

Show us

○ Staff records include evidence you have completed the following initial vetting checks, as applicable:

Requirement[1]	Children's workers	All other staff
Identity confirmation	✓ (incl. checking the identity hasn't been used before)	✗
5-year work history	✓	✗
Reference checks	✓ (1x non-whānau)	✓ (1x)
Professional registration if required (for example a current practising certificate)	✓	✓
Interview	✓	✗
NZ Police vet	✓	✓ (or MoJ check[2])
Overseas conviction process	✓ (core children's workers only)	✗
NGO caregiver vet	✗ [3]	✗ [3]
Risk assessment	✓	✗ [4]

1 These requirements are explained in more detail in the 'Words and terms you need to know' section.
2 The type of vet or check that is needed for each role is explained in the next section.
3 Unless required by your contract.
4 Not required unless information from the recruitment or vetting process raises a concern (see Criteria 5).

Use the following information to decide if a NZ Police vet or MoJ check is required for the role.

A NZ Police vet is required for:

- core or non-core children's workers, and must be completed as part of the safety check, before employment
- any staff member or volunteer who:
  - works or volunteers with vulnerable adults
  - volunteers with children
  - works with children but is not considered a children's worker.

A MoJ check is required for:

- all other staff, including governance members.

Note: If you employ or engage a children's worker who is registered and has a current practising certificate from the Teaching Council of New Zealand, they will already have been Police vetted as part of their three-year certification process.

Note: A NZ Police vet must match the role of the staff member. If they move into a role that requires a NZ Police vet, a new one must be completed. If they become a children's worker, a full safety check (including receiving and reviewing the NZ Police vet result) must be completed before they begin the new role.

Note: If you request a NZ Police vet for an applicant and your request is declined by the Vetting Service, complete a MoJ check and keep the decline in your records.

Show us

- ◯ You have completed a risk assessment for each children's worker. The assessment must be completed before staff begin their role, and must consider:
  - all information gathered during the safety check
  - whether the person is safe to work with children, any risks they present and how serious those risks are
  - whether a core worker exemption has been granted (if relevant see criteria 5.2).

Recommended cover sheet for children's worker files:

Children's worker initial safety checking cover sheet | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Recommended resources:

Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015

Criminal record check | Ministry of Justice

NZ Police Vetting Service | NZ Police

Vetting | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Show us

- ◯ For staff who are not children's workers, your recruitment policies, procedures and the letter of offer or agreement clearly state that:
  - job applicants must be vetted (including but not limited to a NZ Police vet or MoJ check, as required)
  - job offers will not be made until the vet or check results have been received and reviewed, or will be conditional on a satisfactory result from the vet or check.

Share with us

- ◯ How you made sure clients were not exposed to undue risk if a staff member who is not a children's worker started in their role before vet or check results were received and reviewed.
- ◯ What actions were taken, if any, once the results were received.

Criteria 5

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

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ Your staffing policies and procedures include:
  - how you respond to and record concerning findings from vetting of new or existing staff
  - who is responsible for decisions to appoint or retain staff, and any action to be taken when concerns arise
  - a decision-making process for addressing concerns about new or existing staff that considers
    - how serious the concern is
    - conviction history, how recent, if it shows a pattern of behaviour, and any rehabilitative steps they have taken
    - how it affects their suitability for the role
    - any risk to the safety and wellbeing of the people you support.
- ◯ The documented process you followed to decide whether to appoint or retain any staff whose vetting checks raised concerns.

Criteria 5.1

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

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ Your staffing policies and procedures include a documented risk management plan for any new or existing staff who may present a risk to other people. This covers:
  - what risk has been identified
  - who is involved and their responsibilities
  - the staff member's agreement to the risk management plan
  - review timeframes
  - any required supervision, restrictions or supports.
- ◯ You have completed risk management plans for any staff who have been identified as presenting risk to other people.

Criteria 5.2

Unless a core worker exemption is held, an organisation does not employ a core children's worker who has a conviction for a specified offence under Schedule 2 of the Children's Act 2014.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ If you have employed or engaged a person who requires a core worker exemption:
  - a letter from Te Kāhui Kāhu addressed to your organisation confirming the individual holds a current core worker exemption
  - a record of your decision-making process and the agreed risk management plan
  - records of any changes made to the risk management plan or employment conditions
  - records of any disciplinary action taken.

Share with us

- ◯ How you implemented the risk management plan agreed to at the time the person was appointed.
- ◯ How you ensure that any conditions attached to the core worker exemption are being met.

Recommended resource:

Core worker exemption application process | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Criteria 6

All staff members have a written agreement of service.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ An agreement of service for each staff member that is signed by the staff member and your organisation, and is one of the following:
  - an employment agreement that includes or is accompanied by a job description or position description
  - a volunteer agreement
  - a contractor agreement
  - an agreement for people involved in religious ministry, e.g. pastors, priests or faith leaders
  - any other relevant agreement.

Show us

- ◯ Documents confirming the appointment of any governance members, e.g. governance meeting minutes, a governance declaration, agreement, deed of appointment or consent to act.

Criteria 7

The organisation provides adequate induction, training, professional development and support for all staff.

Guidance



Show us

- Staff have completed an induction programme that includes training in your policies and procedures for:
  - complaints
  - privacy
  - recognising, preventing, identifying and responding to abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults
  - health and safety.
- Records of the training, professional development, supervision and support you provide to staff, both general and role-specific. Where relevant to the role, this includes:
  - cultural inclusiveness and support
  - child protection
  - behaviour support and management strategies
  - training for specialist staff working with clients who are neurodiverse, have experienced trauma, or have high and complex needs.

Criteria 8

The organisation uses an effective performance management system for all staff.

Guidance



Show us

- How you manage staff performance. This could include:
  - meetings between staff and management
  - performance appraisals
  - professional development plans that support staff development.



Note: If you employ staff who are part of a registered profession, you may be required to report concerns or employment issues to the relevant professional body.



Show us

- How you make sure that your disciplinary process for staff is fair.



Note: A fair process means your organisation follows the requirements of the Employment Relations Act 2000 and the principles of natural justice. You must be clear about the issue, give the staff member a chance to respond and genuinely consider what they say before making a decision.



Recommended resource:

Fair process | Employment New Zealand

Criteria 9

The organisation will complete NZ Police checks, and any other relevant vetting for all staff at least every three years.

Guidance

Important: If a re-check of vetting uncovers new information since their employment or engagement, it is your responsibility to consider the results and decide any further action.

Show us

○ Your staff records include evidence that you have completed the following **repeat** vetting checks every 3 years, as applicable:

Requirement[1]	Children's workers	All other staff
Identity confirmation (If name has changed since last vetting check)	✓	✗
5-year work history	✗	✗
Reference checks	✗	✗
Professional registration if required (for example a current practising certificate)	✓	✓
Interview	✗	✗
NZ Police vet	✓	✓ (or MoJ check[2])
NGO caregiver vet	✗ [3]	✗ [3]
Risk assessment	✓	✗ [4]

1 These requirements are explained in more detail in the 'Words and terms you need to know' section.
2 The type of vet or check that is needed for each role is explained in criteria 4.
3 Unless required by your contract.
4 Not required unless information from the recruitment or vetting process raises a concern (see criteria 5).

Show us

- ◯ That records of police vetting and MoJ checks are kept for all staff from the time they started with your organisation.
- ◯ A copy of the name change document used, if the person's name has changed since their last vetting check. See 'Words and terms you need to know' for the list of documents.
- ◯ If staff have a risk management plan, it is updated with new information including re-vetting results.

Recommended cover sheet for children's worker files:

Children's worker periodic safety checking cover sheet | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
5-year work history	A summary of the work history of a children's worker for the past five years, including roles held and dates of employment. A CV is often used to show this. If a full five-year history isn't available, this should be noted in the risk assessment with an explanation.
Agreement for people involved in religious ministry	Often referred to as a 'call agreement' or 'terms of call', this is a written agreement that outlines the relationship between a religious member, e.g. a pastor, priest or ordained leader and a specific congregation or religious organisation. It typically sets out expectations, responsibilities, and any support or remuneration provided.
Consent to act	A document signed by a governance member (such as a board or trust member) confirming they have agreed to take on the role and that they understand their responsibilities. It makes sure the responsibilities of the role are clear and means the governance member can be held responsible for their decisions or actions. It is sometimes required for legal or registration purposes, e.g. by the Companies Office for company directors (under the Companies Act 1993) or for incorporated societies or charitable trusts.

Word/term	Explanation
Contractors	People or organisations contracted to deliver social services on behalf of your organisation who are not employees, e.g., counsellors, youth workers or programme facilitators. This does not include contractors who provide other services like building maintenance or IT support.
Identity confirmation	Checking a person is who they say they are. This involves sighting original official documents either through an electronic identity service (like RealMe) or by checking primary and secondary forms of ID. In some cases, this may include requesting a statement from a referee or confirming any name changes with supporting documents. As part of the identity confirmation of the safety check, you must also confirm that the identity of a children's worker hasn't been used by anyone else in your organisation. RealMe details, see: Vetting | Te Kāhui Kāhu
Interview	A conversation with a potential candidate to help assess their suitability for a role. Interview notes must show questions were asked to help determine if the person is safe to work with children. It can be held in person, by phone or via technology such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
Mana	Māori word that means respecting a person's dignity, strength, and integrity.
Ministry of Justice criminal record check (MoJ check)	A check that shows a person's criminal and traffic offence history. It does not include charges that haven't gone to court, charges where the person wasn't convicted or infringements.

Word/term	Explanation
Name change document	A legal document that shows a person has officially changed their name, this includes: • a birth certificate (reissued or updated) • a change of name by statutory declaration • a deed poll change of name • a name change certificate • a marriage certificate • a civil union certificate • a court order dissolving a marriage or civil union • a court order declaring a marriage or civil union void. Source: Supporting name change documents | Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015
New Zealand Police vet	A background check completed by NZ Police to help assess whether a person is suitable to work or volunteer in certain roles, such as those that include the care and safety of children or vulnerable adults. It includes relevant information held by NZ Police in addition to criminal convictions that may be relevant to the person's suitability for a role.
NGO caregiver vet	When a staff member works directly with children or young people in specific services funded or contracted by Oranga Tamariki (including Youth justice or Transition to adulthood programmes), the organisation must request an NGO caregiver vet. Also known as a CYRAS vet from Oranga Tamariki, this vet is required by contract or service specifications. This vet involves checking for reference to the person in Oranga Tamariki's internal systems, to identify any records or concerns about child protection or youth justice that involve them.
Professional body	An organisation responsible for regulating or overseeing people in a specific profession. This may include setting standards, maintaining a register, and investigating concerns. Examples include the Social Workers Registration Board, Teaching Council and Nursing Council.

Word/term	Explanation
Professional registration, e.g. a current practising certificate	Registration shows that the person has the right qualifications, meets professional standards, and meets the expected code of conduct. A current practising certificate is a document issued by the professional body. It proves that the person is authorised to do their job within a set scope and timeframe. A practising certificate also shows that the person is fit and proper, has kept their skills up to date and is meeting the rules of their profession. Examples of professional bodies that issue practising certificates include the Social Workers Registration Board, the Teaching Council and the Nursing Council.
Protected disclosure	Sometimes called 'whistleblowing', it is when a staff member reports serious wrongdoing they reasonably believe has been happening in the workplace.
Reference check	Information gathered from someone who knows the person in a professional or relevant context, to help assess their character, skills and suitability for the role. For children's workers, referees must not be part of the person's immediate or extended family.
Regulated services	Welfare, support, justice, health or education services. These are defined in more detail in Schedule 1 of the Children's Act. This includes OSCAR services. Source: Schedule 1 Regulated Services | The Children's Act 2014
Religious ministry	The organised activities, roles and services carried out by individuals or groups within a religious tradition to express, teach and uphold their beliefs, provide spiritual guidance and serve the needs of their faith community and the wider public. This can include preaching, pastoral care, religious education, charitable work and ceremonial duties.
Risk assessment	A review of all the information gathered during the vetting check to decide whether a person presents any risk to the safety of clients or others, and how serious that risk might be. Risk assessment is a required step in the children's worker safety check.

Word/term	Explanation
Risk management plan	A written plan that explains how an organisation will safely manage a staff member who may present a risk to others. The plan is put in place when concerns are identified, such as the outcome of a vetting check. It sets out how the organisation will reduce or eliminate risks to support safe practice. Risk management plans should be regularly reviewed and updated if appropriate.
Safety check for children's workers	A legal requirement under the Children's Act 2014 for anyone employed or engaged as a children's worker. It must be completed before they start the role and includes confirming identity, checking work history, interview, reference check, a NZ Police vet, professional registration (if required) and a risk assessment. Safety checking for children's workers must be repeated at least every three years from the date of their last safety check. A repeat check includes re-confirming identity, a new NZ Police vet, a repeat check for professional registration (if required) and a new risk assessment.
Staff	Anyone working in or for your organisation. This includes paid employees, governance members (such as board or committee members), contractors, volunteers and members of religious ministry.
Tamariki	Māori word that refers to children.
Tapu	Māori word that refers to integrity, intimacy and transparency.
Vetting	Vetting is a point-in-time check that shows whether a person is safe to work with children or vulnerable adults. It's not just about finding out if they have a criminal record, it's about looking at the whole picture before you decide to appoint them.
Vulnerable adult	A person who may need extra care and support to live as independently as possible. This could be because of a disability, health condition or other challenges. A person may also be considered vulnerable if they live in a care setting where they do not have full control over their daily life.

Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Social Sector Accreditation Standards
Level 2

Health and Safety

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



Why this standard matters

People who come to your premises, including staff, clients and visitors, should be kept safe from harm. They need to know how you will keep them safe, and what you will do if something goes wrong.

Criteria 1

The organisation ensures its place of work, and any place of work it uses or relies on for service delivery, complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.

Guidance



Share with us

- ◯ How you make sure your place of work is safe and suitable for staff and clients.



Show us

- ◯ A current Building Warrant of Fitness (BWOF) for your place of work.



Share with us

- ◯ If a BWOF is not required, how you have established that.
- ◯ How you are meeting any conditions that apply to your BWOF.
- ◯ If your BWOF is not current, what is being done to resolve this.

Criteria 2

The organisation will, as reasonably practicable, provide and maintain a working environment for its workers and members of the public that is safe and without risk to health.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have health and safety policies and procedures that include:
  - how you identify and manage hazards
  - who is responsible for health and safety, including monitoring hazards and risks
  - how staff are involved, including identifying hazards, assessing risks, and staying informed through regular updates or meetings.

Share with us

- ◯ How staff know who is trained in first aid.

Recommended resource:
Managing Work Risks | WorkSafe NZ

Show us

- ◯ You maintain a hazard register that includes:
  - each type of hazard identified
  - the potential risk each hazard poses
  - the steps taken to reduce or manage the risk.
- ◯ You have appropriately stocked first aid kits available in all locations where services are delivered, including vehicles.

Recommended resource:
First Aid Fact Sheet | Worksafe

Show us

- ◯ You keep records of regular maintenance inspections for all premises, and evidence that you have addressed all identified risks.
- ◯ You involve your staff in health and safety by:
  - including them in identifying hazards and assessing risks
  - keeping them informed through staff meetings, updates or other communication methods, e.g. email.
- ◯ The Risk Assessment and Supervision (RAS) forms that you use to assess and manage risk if you run programme activities with potential risks for children or adults. RAS forms will include staff-to-child ratios for group activities with children and young people.
- ◯ If you transport clients:
  - you have a procedure for keeping people safe while travelling, including children, high-risk clients and people with accessibility needs
  - all vehicles you use have a current registration and Warrant of Fitness (WOF) or Certificate of Fitness (CoF)
  - all staff who transport clients hold a current driver's licence and any necessary endorsements, e.g. passenger or class 2 licence
  - child restraints, including seatbelts meet requirements.

Recommended resource:
Child Restraints | NZ Transport Agency

Criteria 3

If applicable, the organisation ensures the safety of any children being supervised in the place of work while their parents or caregivers receive services.

Show us

- ◯ You have policies and procedures that describe how:
  - children are supervised safely
  - you manage difficult behaviour appropriately. For example, how you de-escalate a child's behaviour, or your process for returning a child to their parent or caregiver if you are unable to manage their behaviour.

Criteria 4

The organisation has safety and emergency plans for the evacuation of its place of work and any other place of work it uses for service delivery.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have safety and emergency plans that explain what people need to do in an emergency.
- ◯ You have clearly visible exit signs and evacuation instructions displayed, that are simple to follow.
- ◯ Emergency exit routes are safe, easy to find and not obstructed.

Recommended resource:
Evacuation Schemes and procedures | Fire and Emergency

Criteria 5

The organisation responds effectively to adverse events in the place of work.

Note: An adverse event is any accident, incident, or near miss that may cause harm to staff, clients or the public. A notifiable event is an adverse event that involves serious injury, illness, incident or death. Notifiable events must be reported to WorkSafe.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have policies and procedures for adverse events that include:
  - how staff respond and manage the event
  - what support will be provided to any clients or staff
  - who is responsible for notifying WorkSafe.
- ◯ You keep records of adverse events that include:
  - the date and time of the event
  - actions taken
  - evidence of any internal investigations completed
  - any new hazards you have identified – enter these in your hazard register
  - records of any notifications to WorkSafe and/or the New Zealand Police.

Criteria 6

The organisation has a business continuity and disaster recovery plan in place.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have a business continuity and disaster recovery plan that:
  - is tailored to the size of your organisation and the nature of the services you deliver
  - identifies potential risks specific to your operations
  - outlines strategies to manage these risks and maintain critical functions
  - outlines staff roles and responsibilities to carry out the business continuity plan
  - outlines how you will contact staff and who is responsible for doing this
  - includes how you notify clients of any impacts to services
  - includes a record of additional people or organisations you may need to contact, such as insurance companies, IT providers, service delivery partners, funding agencies
  - describes the civil defence supplies you hold, and how you make sure they are easy to find.

Recommended resource:
Get your work ready for an emergency | getready.govt.nz

Criteria 7

The organisation ensures that where an intervention, discipline or control is required or used, staff use appropriate methods that protect the physical and emotional safety of clients.

Note: If your service does not involve any form of intervention, discipline or control, this may not apply.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have policies and procedures in place to respond to situations where an intervention, discipline or control is required or used. These clearly outline:
  - when and how staff can intervene in unsafe situations
  - what methods or actions staff must not use
  - how staff actions and responses are designed to protect clients' emotional wellbeing as well as their physical safety.

Note: This information can be included in a behaviour management policy, child protection policy or another relevant document.

Criteria 8

The organisation reflects continuous quality improvement principles in identifying and managing risk.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have a formal system or regular review process that includes:
  - how you collect and assess information about health and safety risks
  - any improvements you've made to strengthen safety in your service.

Note: This information may come from incident reports, hazard registers, staff or client feedback, internal reviews or external audits – depending on the size and type of your service.

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Adverse event	An accident, incident or near miss that happens while delivering services, which could harm staff, clients or the public.
Behaviour management	Approaches used to respond to challenging behaviour in a way that keeps everyone safe and respected. May include calming strategies or de-escalation techniques.
Business continuity plan	A plan that helps your organisation keep operating during unexpected events like natural disasters or power outages.
Hazard	Something that could cause harm, such as unsafe conditions, equipment or actions.
Legal requirements	Laws that organisations must follow, such as those for health and safety, employment, privacy and industry-specific settings.
Notifiable event	A serious adverse event involving death, serious injury or illness, or a dangerous incident. These must be reported to WorkSafe NZ.
Premises	The physical locations where an organisation operates or provides services, such as offices, service delivery sites or other workplaces.
Risk	The chance that a hazard will cause harm and the impact it may have.
Risk assessment	The process of identifying hazards, evaluating risks and deciding how to manage them.
Risk Assessment and Supervision (RAS)	Used to plan activities where there's a potential risk. It helps identify hazards, assess how serious the risk is and set out steps to manage it. RAS forms are typically used for things like off-site visits, physical activities or transporting high-risk clients.

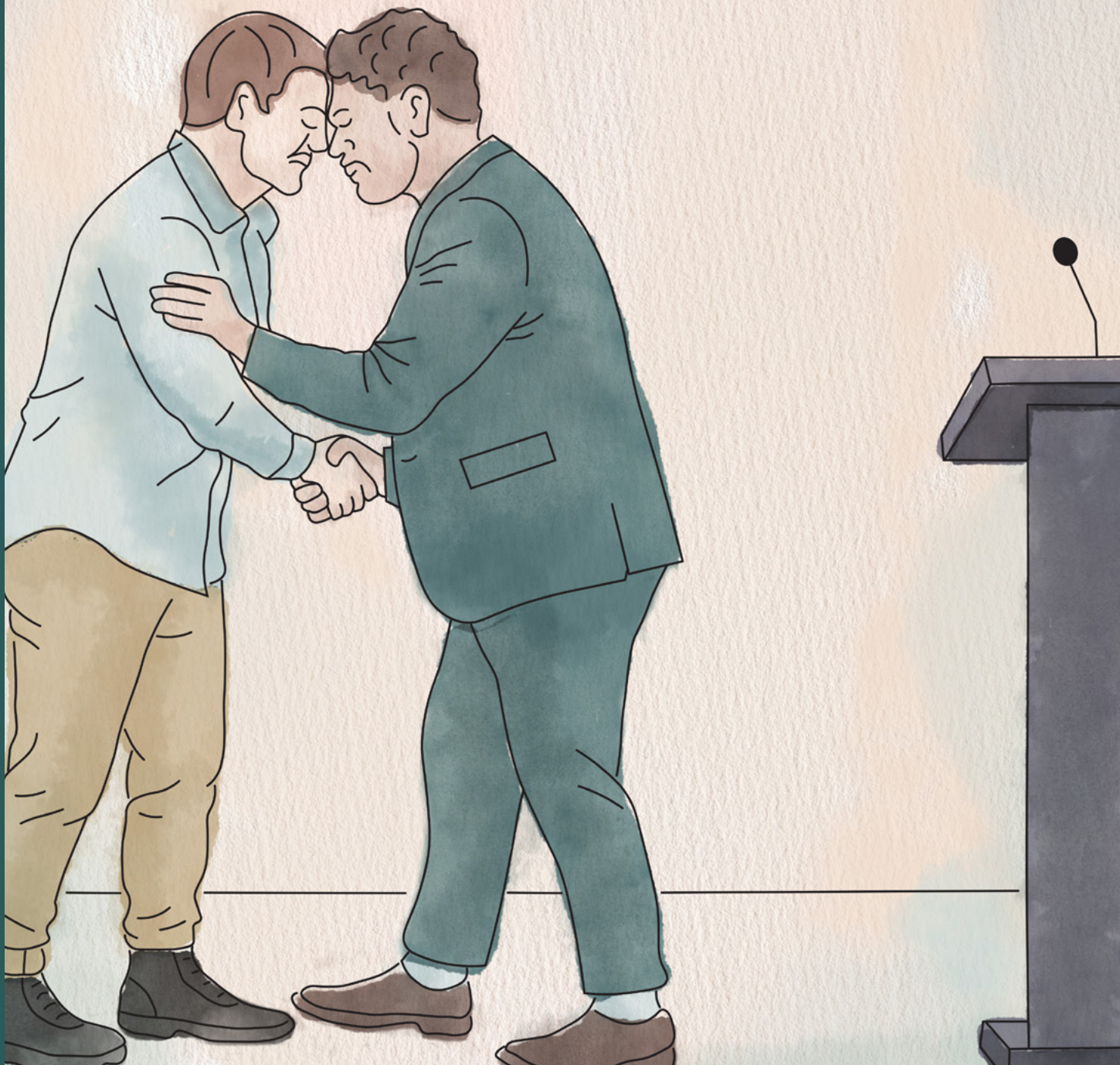
Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Social Sector Accreditation Standards
Level 2

Governance and Management Structure and Systems

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



Why this standard matters

A clear governance and management structure means people understand what their roles are, how decisions are made and who is responsible for them.

A well-defined structure, supported by kaitiakitanga, builds trust that decisions are made responsibly, and the safety, wellbeing and privacy of all people is protected.

Criteria 1

The organisation has a defined and current legal status.

Guidance



Share with us

- Your New Zealand Business Number (NZBN).



Note: We will use your NZBN to check your legal status is current.

Criteria 2

The organisation has an appropriate and clearly defined governance and management structure, the written record of which shows authorities, delegations, responsibilities and accountabilities.

Guidance



Show us

- You have documents that clearly define your governance and management structure, delegations, responsibilities and accountabilities. This could include any of the following:
  - an organisational chart that shows all staff and their reporting lines and relationships, including governance and management
  - documents that clearly describe delegations, authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities
  - organisational planning, such as a strategic or annual plan

Continues over the page

- formal agreements with other providers you use to deliver services and programmes to clients, where applicable
- governance and management meeting minutes, management reports or other records of decisions that show how you operate
- processes for monitoring and responding to management's performance
- a succession plan for key positions.



Scenario

At ABC Provider, the board is responsible for the organisation's direction, budgets and legal obligations. The management team handles day-to-day operations, like managing staff and delivering services.

Everyone is clear about their responsibilities because they're supported by:

- a delegation document that explains who is responsible for what
- an organisational chart that shows clear reporting lines
- board meeting minutes that show the board makes decisions according to their agreed set of rules, for example, the agreed voting process
- regular management reporting that keeps the board informed.

Criteria 3

The organisation is governed and managed by people with appropriate skills, qualifications and personal attributes.

Guidance



Share with us

- How you consider what skills, qualifications and personal qualities you need to have in your governance and management team to meet the organisation's needs.

Criteria 4

The organisation has a process for identifying and managing perceived, actual or potential conflicts of interest, including between governance and management roles.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You have a conflict-of-interest policy that includes:
  - details of what could be a conflict of interest for members of governance and management
  - a process for declaring, managing and recording conflicts of interest.

Criteria 5

The organisation's management systems, policies and procedures are consistent with:

Criteria 5.1

Relevant legislation.

Guidance



Share with us

- ◯ How you apply relevant legislation in your management systems, policies and procedures.



Scenario

ABC Provider has a senior manager who checks for legal updates. They use trusted sources like New Zealand Legislation (Parliamentary Counsel Office), are registered for update notifications and subscribed to Employment New Zealand's newsletter from the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment.

The manager takes updates to the board and recommends the relevant policy be updated. The board decides any changes, and updates are made to the governance and management documents. This ensures the organisation's policies and procedures always meet current legal requirements.

Criteria 5.2

Its legal status, constitution, rules, charter, or Act of Parliament.

Guidance

Share with us

- How you consider your legal status, relevant laws and founding documents in your management systems, policies and procedures.

Note: The laws or founding documents your organisation must comply with:

- your constitution, rules, charter or deed
- the name of any private Acts of Parliament that were enacted to govern the formation and/or operation of your organisation. For example, the Anglican Church Trusts Act 1982, Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996, the St Mary's School (Wellington) Act 1987, or the Māori Trust Boards Act 1955.

Criteria 5.3

The aims, philosophy and scope of its activities.

Guidance

Share with us

- How your management systems, policies and procedures support your aims, philosophy and scope of activities.

Scenario

ABC Provider is a budgeting service that aims to help people become financially independent. The organisation decides to expand their services to include reintegration support for people leaving prison. To reflect this change, ABC Provider updates their mission statement to include helping people to become socially independent. They also update their policies and procedures to ensure they support this new service.

Criteria 5.4

Its management structure.

Guidance



Share with us

- If there have been changes to your management structure, explain how you updated your policies, procedures and systems to reflect and support these changes.

Criteria 5.5

Contractual obligations.

Guidance



Share with us

- How your governance and management systems help you meet the responsibilities in your contracts. For example, you could:
  - show how your systems are set up to capture monitoring data
  - explain how you ensure staff have the qualifications and skills needed to meet your service specifications
  - share that the number of staff employed meets your service specifications.



Note: We don't want to see your contracts. We want to know you understand your contractual obligations and that your policies and procedures reflect them.

Criteria 6

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

Guidance



Share with us

- How you manage the collection, storage and use of personal information to ensure your organisation meets relevant legal requirements.

Recommended resources:

Collecting personal information | Office of the Privacy Commissioner

Holding personal information | Office of the Privacy Commissioner

Using and disclosing personal information | Office of the Privacy Commissioner

Criteria 6.1

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

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ Your policies and procedures clearly explain:
  - what personal information is
  - how you collect it
  - the reason you collect it
  - how you make sure it is only used for the reasons it was collected, unless the law allows otherwise
  - who will have access to it
  - that people have the right to review and correct information held about them
  - how you store it securely
  - how long you will keep it, and how you safely dispose of it when it is no longer needed
  - how privacy concerns are handled, including how you report serious breaches to the Privacy Commissioner.
- ◯ Your paper-based and electronic records (such as staff and client files) are stored securely.

Note: A privacy breach is when personal information is accessed, shared, changed, lost, destroyed, or made unavailable without authorisation or by accident. If a privacy breach has caused, or is likely to cause serious harm to one or more individuals, it is a considered serious and must be reported to the Privacy Commissioner.

Recommended resources:

For organisations to report privacy breaches | Privacy Commissioner

Protecting customer and employee information | business.govt.nz

Criteria 6.2

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

Guidance

Share with us

- ◯ You have security measures that include:
  - digital security tools like firewalls, system updates and antivirus software
  - regularly reviewing passwords and system access
  - security to protect against theft or damage of devices
  - secure electronic waste disposal processes for devices.

Criteria 6.3

The organisation will ensure staff members understand privacy requirements.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have appointed one or more privacy officers.

Share with us

- ◯ How your privacy officer(s) understands and carries out their responsibilities under the Privacy Act 2020, including how they support your organisation to comply with its privacy obligations.

Note: The Privacy Act 2020 requires organisations to have at least one privacy officer, who can be any member of staff.

Recommended resource:

Privacy Officers | Privacy Commissioner

Scenario

A client at ABC Provider told another client they had seen their personal file. They raised a concern with the privacy officer, who investigated and found the file had not been stored securely, allowing it to be accessed.

The privacy officer met with the client to explain what had happened and apologised. Together, they discussed the nature of the information seen and agreed it did not amount to a serious breach. The privacy officer decided the incident did not need to be reported to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, and it was logged internally.

Staff were reminded about the proper storage of paper files to prevent this from happening again. This showed ABC Provider took the concern seriously and acted to build trust and improve practice.

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Actual conflict of interest	A situation where personal interests interfere with professional responsibilities, e.g. a charity director is involved in deciding whether to award a contract to a company they own.
Constitution	A legal document that sets out the rules for how an organisation operates.
Cybersecurity	Measures used to protect digital systems, data and networks from cyber threats and unauthorised access.
Delegation	The authority to make decisions and take actions on behalf of the organisation.
Founding document	A document (such as a trust deed, constitution or charter) that sets out the legal and operational framework of an organisation.
Governance	The leadership and oversight of an organisation, ensuring it meets its overall direction, strategic objectives and purpose.
Kaitiakitanga	Māori word that refers to guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship, trustee and trust.
Legal status	The formal recognition of an organisation under the law, e.g. as a company, charity or incorporated society.
Management	The people responsible for running the organisation day to day. This includes managing staff, ensuring service delivery, and making sure the organisation is well run and meets its responsibilities.

Word/term	Explanation
New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)	A unique number that identifies your organisation on the New Zealand Business Register.
Personal information	Any information about a person that can identify them, e.g. name, address, phone number.
Perceived conflict of interest	A situation where others may believe a conflict exists, even if it does not. This can affect trust and credibility, e.g. an organisation's employee receives a gift from a contractor applying for a contract with that organisation.
Potential conflict of interest	A situation that could become a conflict in the future, e.g. an organisation's executive has a close relative working for a competitor.
Privacy breach	When personal information is accessed, shared, changed, lost, destroyed, or made unavailable without authorisation or by accident.
Private Acts of Parliament	A law that applies to a specific person or organisation, rather than the general public. Private Acts are designed to address the particular circumstances or needs of an individual or group.
Reporting lines	The structure that shows who reports to whom in an organisation.
Serious breach	A privacy breach that has caused, or is likely to cause, serious harm to one or more individuals. These must be reported to the Privacy Commissioner.
Succession plan	A plan for how an organisation will replace key people when they leave.



Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Social Sector Accreditation Standards
Level 2

Financial Management and Systems

The organisation is financially viable and manages its finances competently.



Why this standard matters

Strong financial systems and processes support provider accountability, mana, pono and tika. Clear and transparent financial practices build trust and confidence in your services.

Criteria 1

The organisation is financially viable.

Guidance

Show us

- ◯ You have signed and approved annual financial statements, prepared on the basis of your legal entity type, that confirm your organisation is solvent. These must be:
  - signed by the accounting professional who prepared them
  - signed and dated by a governance representative or a senior leader responsible for financial oversight (if there is no governance structure)
  - no more than 18 months old from the end of your last financial year.

Note: If you're a sole trader or small company that isn't required to prepare full financial statements under IRD rules, you can provide two consecutive years of IR10 Financial Statements Summaries filed with IRD instead.

Recommended resource:

Financial reporting requirements for companies | Inland Revenue

Show us

- ◯ You have a current financial year projected budget, prepared on the same basis as your financial statements, showing expected income and expenses.
- ◯ You have a 12-month cash flow projection (GST inclusive) showing how you'll cover your bills on time, including:
  - income and expenses
  - new asset purchases
  - financing obligations, e.g. hire purchases, loan repayments
  - tax payments
  - drawings (for companies)
  - projected closing cash position

Note: Please see the scenario at the end of this standard for a detailed cash flow example.

Note: Larger or higher-risk organisations may need to provide more detailed projected budgets and cash flow forecasts. For example, if you have different streams of income, rely on multiple funding sources or there is evidence that you may have financial challenges.

Recommended resources:

Budgeting and Financial Management Guide | Business.govt.nz

Cash Flow Forecasting Guide | Business.govt.nz

Cashflow template for providers | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Show us

- ◯ You have evidence that you are compliant with tax rules, for example, GST, PAYE, income tax and other tax obligations.

Criteria 2

The organisation has an effective financial management system appropriate to the size and complexity of the organisation.

Guidance



Show us

- You have financial policies and procedures that include:
  - financial controls and responsibilities, including how financial decisions are made, delegated and managed day to day
  - forward financial planning
  - how you ensure financial reporting is accurate, timely and shared with management and/or governance.



Show us

- How your day-to-day financial management practices align with your financial policies and procedures.



Scenario

ABC Provider keeps cash on its premises and has a petty cash policy that outlines who can access the cash, what it can be used for, approval requirements, record-keeping processes, and reconciliation requirements.

They must show us how this policy is being implemented in practice. For example, by providing evidence that the petty cash tin is kept locked and that access is restricted to authorised staff. They could also provide petty cash records showing when funds have been withdrawn, the purpose of the expenditure, supporting receipts, and evidence that transactions have been approved and reconciled in accordance with the policy.

Criteria 3

The organisation undertakes forward financial planning to show that it will remain financially viable.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You use your budget and cash flow forecast to plan ahead and help your organisation stay financially viable. This includes:
  - reviewing and updating them when things change
  - checking how your actual income and spending compare to your forecast
  - taking action when there are financial risks or shortfalls.



Note: This criteria is about how you use financial planning over time. The budget and cash flow documents themselves are covered in Criteria 1.

Criteria 4

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

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You have liability insurance and insurance for any properties, vehicles and assets you own.
- ◯ That for each type of insurance, you have a current insurance certificate or policy document (from your insurer) that includes:
  - the insurer's name
  - policy coverage details
  - expiry date.
- ◯ If your organisation decides not to have certain insurance coverage, show us your written rationale for this decision.



Note: Insurance policies must align with your organisation's specific needs and consider its size and complexity.



Recommended resource:

Commercial Insurance Overview | Insurance Council of New Zealand

Criteria 5

The organisation has arrangements for the regular independent audit, or in some cases review, of financial accounts.

Guidance

Show us

○ Financial statements are prepared on the reporting basis applicable to your legal entity and are independently audited (or in some cases reviewed).

If your organisation's income statement includes... in income from our partner agencies	You must provide...
Less than $100,000 per annum	Annual financial statements **Note:** No audit or review is required
$100,000 or more per annum	A full audit (or in some cases a review) including: • audited/reviewed annual financial statements • auditor's/reviewer's report and auditor's opinion • auditor's/reviewer's letter. **Note:** The auditor or reviewer must be independent from your organisation and from the person who prepared the financial statements.

Note: Partner agency funding excludes OSCAR subsidies and fees charged for services. Funding threshold is exclusive of GST.

Note: You can evidence the total amount of income received from partner agencies as part of your income statement by providing financial statements that clearly identify the income received from partner agencies, a separate support schedule, or a confirmation statement from the accounting professional who prepared your financial statements.

Note: An independent review may only be accepted where legislation expressly permits a review in place of an audit (for example, under the Charities Act 2005 reporting framework). In all other circumstances, an audit will be required.

Scenario

ABC Provider know that unexpected events can disrupt services and create financial risk. To protect their staff, clients and organisation they keep insurance policies up to date, including:

- liability insurance – to cover costs if someone makes a claim about their service or if an emergency disrupts delivery
- vehicle insurance – for their two vans used to transport clients
- property insurance – for their office and equipment, covering damage from fire, theft or natural disasters.

By keeping these insurances in place, the provider can manage risks, meet legal and contractual requirements, and continue delivering services even if something goes wrong.

Scenario: Preparing a projected cash flow

ABC Provider have a 31 March year-end. Their last year-end was 31 March 2025. As part of their forward planning, they prepare a projected cash flow for the year ended 31 March 2026. This helps them ensure they can pay all their bills on time and deal with any unforeseen circumstances. As at 31 March 2025, they have a starting cash balance of $75,000.

Because ABC Provider are registered for GST, their financial statements are prepared on a GST-exclusive basis, but the cash flow is prepared on a GST-inclusive basis. This is because transactions in and out of the bank account include GST that will be returned to Inland Revenue at a later date. ABC Provider use these financial statements as a guide to establish their regular costs, amounts due to them, bills to be paid, IRD liabilities and any other relevant information.

ABC Provider have a contract for $250,000 of government funding. This is the amount of the contract before GST is added. It is the only revenue ABC Provider will get for the March 2026 year. They will invoice the government agency every quarter and expect to be paid the month after each invoice is sent. The revenue amount they put in the cash flow is $62,500 plus GST each quarter when it is expected to be received. Because this is the only revenue stream, they need to manage their cash flow well.

In September 2025, ABC Provider are expecting to get a loan to buy a vehicle. This loan will be interest free and paid back within six months.

Continues over the page

ABC Provider have gathered the following additional information from their financial statements and bank accounts:

- cleaning – rubbish collection and cleaning costs are paid for in the following month
- direct costs to deliver the contract, for example, food, purchases and resources are paid for as required
- insurance – public liability, material damage, motor vehicle and business interruption insurance are paid once a year in June
- motor vehicle expenses – fuel, repairs and road user charges are paid the following month
- power – monthly power is paid the following month
- printing, postage and stationery – general printing, photocopier charges, toner, paper etc are paid the following month
- rent – rent of the premises is paid for a month in advance
- salaries and wages – payroll costs – net salaries are paid monthly with PAYE and KiwiSaver paid to IRD the following month
- subscriptions – accounting software, website fees, professional fees are paid a month in advance
- telephone and internet – internet and all phone charges are paid the following month
- outstanding accounts receivable of $3,000 as at 31 March 2025 is expected to be received in April
- GST return of $6,000 due in April 2025
- PAYE for March salary payments of $2,000 due in April 2025
- outstanding supplier payments of $1,380 due in April 2025.

A cash flow statement includes:

- all expected receipts and payments
- opening cash position
- a total column
- a projected closing cash position.

The projected cash flow shows that for the year ended 31 March 2026, ABC Provider anticipate a positive cash balance of $124,318, which means they can pay their bills on time. They can now compare their actual bank balances each month to their cash flow and adjust for any new circumstances.

Recommended resource:

Cashflow template for providers | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Accounting professional	A person or organisation that provides accounting, bookkeeping, financial reporting, taxation, review, or audit services. This includes, but is not limited to, accountants (internal or external), bookkeepers, tax or financial. service providers (e.g. Hnry, Beany, or SBA), independent reviewers, independent auditors, and treasurers of clubs or small charities.
Audit	A detailed financial review by an independent auditor to check if financial records are accurate and comply with accounting standards.
Auditor/ independent auditor	An independent registered professional who audits financial statements and provides an opinion on whether they comply with accounting standards and fairly represent an organisation's financial position. The auditor must not be the same person that prepares your financial statements.
Auditor's letter	A document from an auditor outlining key findings, concerns or recommendations from an audit.
Auditor's opinion	A statement from an independent auditor that gives their assessment of an organisation's financial health.
Budget forecast	A financial management tool that allows a business to plan, identify potential problems and areas of potential growth, and make informed decisions by tracking actual results against budget.
Cash flow forecast	A financial tool that estimates the amount of money that will be received and paid out over a future period.
Central government funding	Money received from government agencies for services. This does not include local government funding, GST, OSCAR subsidies or fees charged for services.
Closing cash position	The projected amount of cash available at the end of the forecast period, after taking into account all expected cash received and cash paid out.
Drawings	Money taken out of a business by the owner for personal use. This usually applies to sole traders or partnerships who are not paid wages or a salary.
Financial controls	Processes and rules that help prevent fraud, manage financial risks and ensure money is handled correctly.
Financially viable	The ability of an organisation to continue operating by meeting its financial commitments and maintaining financial stability.

Word/term	Explanation
Full audit	A detailed financial review where an independent auditor examines financial records and provides an opinion on their accuracy.
Governance representative	A person responsible for overseeing an organisation, such as a director, chairperson or trustee.
Income statement	Depending on the basis of financial statement preparation this may be called profit and loss account, statement of financial performance, statement of income and expenses or similar.
Legal entity type	The legal status of the organisation e.g. company, charity or incorporated society. Financial statements will be prepared on the reporting basis applicable to the legal entity type.
Liabilities	Money that an organisation owes, such as debts, unpaid invoices or financial obligations.
Local government funding	Money received from regional, city and district councils.
Mana	Māori word that refers to an organisation's credibility, reputation and reliability.
Pono	Māori word that refers to valid, honest, genuine and true.
Projected budget	A financial plan that estimates income and expenses over a future period, typically 12 months.
Review/independent review	An independent review of financial statements, performed by an independent reviewer, that provides limited assurance. Less detailed than a full audit.
Reviewer/ independent reviewer	A registered Chartered Accountant, auditor, or other appropriately authorised professional who is eligible to perform financial statement review engagements.
Solvent	The ability of an organisation to pay its debts when they are due and continue operating without financial trouble.
Tika	Māori word that refers to being correct, true, right and just.



Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Social Sector Accreditation Standards
Level 2

Resolution of Complaints Related to Service Provision

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



Why this standard matters

People using your service have the right to speak up when something isn't working for them. They need to know their concerns will be heard, taken seriously, and resolved fairly, safely and with manaaki.

A clear complaints process gives you the chance to learn and improve your service.

Criteria 1

The organisation has a process for receiving, considering, and resolving complaints that is soundly based in law and is consistent with the principles of natural justice, and ensures the support and safety of the complainant throughout the process.

Guidance



Show us

◯ You have a written complaints process that:

- is easy for clients to find and follow
- includes how to make a complaint and what your organisation will do to address it
- includes timeframes
- describes how complaints will be recorded
- ensures everyone involved is kept safe through the process
- enables clients to choose what will help them feel safe through the process
- invites clients to involve whānau, a support person or an independent advocate
- describes who is responsible for managing a complaint
- describes how conflicts of interest are managed
- explains how clients appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint
- includes information about other complaint pathways available to clients, where appropriate. For example Te Kāhui Kāhu, any of your funding agencies, and other relevant organisations.



Recommended resources:

For guidance on setting timeframes for your complaints policy, refer to the Timeframes for responding to complaints | Health and Disability Commissioner

Information about how to make a complaint to Te Kāhui Kāhu is available at Complaints | Te Kāhui Kāhu

Criteria 2

The organisation ensures its clients and staff are aware of the complaints process.

Guidance



Share with us

- ◯ How you tell clients and staff about your complaints process.

Criteria 3

The organisation seeks to resolve complaints effectively, and makes improvements to the service as a result.

Criteria 3.1

The organisation must record the application of the complaints process and the resolution achieved.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You keep records that include:
  - the date the complaint was received, acknowledged and resolved
  - what the complaint was about, when it happened and who was involved
  - all communication with the person who made the complaint and anyone else involved
  - any interviews or meeting notes
  - any external advice received
  - the outcome of each complaint, including the reasons for any decisions.
- ◯ If a complaint relates to an allegation of abuse by any member of your organisation, that you:
  - reported the complaint to relevant organisations to investigate
  - took action to keep people safe while completing an investigation
  - checked whether similar complaints about the staff member had been made before, or if past records showed a pattern
  - took appropriate professional disciplinary action, if relevant.

Note: Complaints that relate to abuse should be reported to relevant organisations, e.g. NZ Police, Oranga Tamariki or any professional registration body such as the Social Workers Registration Board.

Criteria 3.2

The organisation will provide evidence it has made appropriate improvements based on the analysis of complaints received.

Guidance

Share with us

- How you review your complaints to identify any patterns or repeated issues.

Show us

- You have:
  - taken action to improve your service, where needed. For example, updating policies, procedures or staff training
  - taken steps to keep people safe from future harm, when a complaint involved abuse by a staff member.

Scenario

When welcoming clients to the service, ABC kaimahi explain the complaints process, including timeframes, and provide them with a copy of relevant policies. All kaimahi are trained to follow the process and understand their roles and responsibilities.

When a complaint is made, ABC Provider makes sure everyone involved is kept safe and lets the complainant decide what will help them to feel safe while the complaint is being resolved.

Clear information is provided about the investigation process and confidentiality of information. Support services are offered to everyone involved.

Clear records are kept of how complaints are considered and resolved, and a complaints register is held with key information that is securely stored.

If the complaint involves serious harm or abuse, ABC Provider take immediate action, including notifying the right agencies, checking past records and taking action to stop it happening again.

ABC Provider's leadership team regularly reviews the complaints register, looks for patterns and makes appropriate changes to improve the service.

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Abuse	Any behaviour that causes harm or distress to another person. This can be physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect. It includes threats, intimidation and controlling behaviour, and may be repeated or one-off.
Allegation	A statement, made with or without giving proof, that someone has done something wrong or illegal.
Appeal	The process of asking for a decision to be reviewed if the person who makes a complaint is not satisfied with the outcome.
Complainant	The person who has made a complaint.
Independent advocate	A person who is not part of your organisation who helps or speaks up for the person who made a complaint.
Kaimahi	Māori word that refers to a worker or employee.
Manaaki	Māori word that refers to support, taking care of, giving hospitality to, protecting, looking out for, showing respect, generosity and care for others.
Natural justice	The principles of treating people fairly and following a process that ensures people are heard and decisions are unbiased.
Professional disciplinary action	Steps taken to address staff misconduct, such as warnings or other actions.
Whānau	Māori word that refers to family, extended family, friends and connections who support one another.



Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Social Sector Accreditation Standards
Level 2

Quality Improvement

The organisation aims for excellence and manages the quality and risk of services.



Why this standard matters

Clear processes to review your performance, policies and practices strengthen tikanga tūraru and ensure that risks are well managed.

Criteria 1

The organisation regularly monitors:

Criteria 1.1

The organisation's individual policies and procedures.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You regularly review and update your policies and procedures by providing either:
  - a review schedule that shows when policies have been, or will be reviewed
  - copies of your latest policies and procedures that show when they have been or will be reviewed.



Share with us

- ◯ How you have ensured your policies and procedures are easy to understand, tailored to the needs of your organisation and the services you provide.
- ◯ How you make policies and procedures available to staff, clients and their support networks when they ask for them.



Note: You only need to make policies and procedures available that are relevant to clients. Internal or sensitive documents (such as HR or financial policies) do not need to be shared.

Criteria 1.2

Its systems as a whole.

Guidance

Share with us

- How you make sure your systems are regularly monitored.

Note: Systems refer to the structured procedures, processes, tools and technologies that an organisation uses to operate effectively and achieve its goals. This can include, but is not limited to, workflow processes, record-keeping methods and IT platforms.

Criteria 1.3

The performance of the organisation.

Guidance

Share with us

- How you monitor the performance of your organisation. This could include any of the following:
  - key performance measures you track
  - how you review performance results
  - the tools or systems you use to monitor performance.

Criteria 1.4

Client outcomes.

Share with us

- How you regularly monitor client outcomes. For example:
  - what you measure
  - why you measure it
  - how you measure it
  - the tools or methods you use.

Criteria 2

The organisation uses a process to analyse monitoring and performance data for the purpose of improvement.

Guidance

Important: In Criteria 1, you shared with us how you monitor your policies, systems, performance and client outcomes. This criteria is about what happens next; the steps you take to understand the information you collect.

Share with us

- How you analyse the information you collect, and how you use it to improve your organisation and the services you provide.

Criteria 3

The organisation makes appropriate improvements, including risk mitigation, based on the analysis of this monitoring.

Guidance

Show us

- Examples of improvements you have made after monitoring and analysing your performance.
- Any risks you identified that needed to be reduced or managed.

Scenario

ABC Provider are a small community organisation that regularly review feedback, performance data and policies to identify areas for improvement. Here are some examples of what they found out in recent reviews, and how they responded.

- Client feedback from a youth programme showed some participants find the sessions too long. ABC Provider notice this has come up more than once, so they test shorter sessions with more interactive activities.
- At a staff hui, team members said they're unsure what to do if they're running late or need to cancel a shift. ABC Provider realise the rostering procedures aren't clear, so they update them and share the new version on the staff noticeboard and shared drive.
- ABC Provider have expanded their services but haven't updated their intake policy to include the new options. They spot this during a review and update the policy to make sure it reflects the new services.

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Analysis	Looking at information you've collected to understand what it's telling you – for example, finding patterns, problems or areas to improve.
Client outcomes	The changes that happen for clients because of your services, e.g. improvements in wellbeing, skills or independence.
Monitoring	Regularly checking or reviewing something like services, systems or outcomes, to see how well they're working.
Performance	How your organisation is meeting its goals, delivering services and supporting clients.
Risk mitigation	The steps you take to reduce the likelihood or impact of something going wrong.
Staff	Anyone who works in your organisation, including paid employees, governance members (like board or committee members), contractors and volunteers.
Tikanga tūraru	A Māori term that refers to risk practice/s.



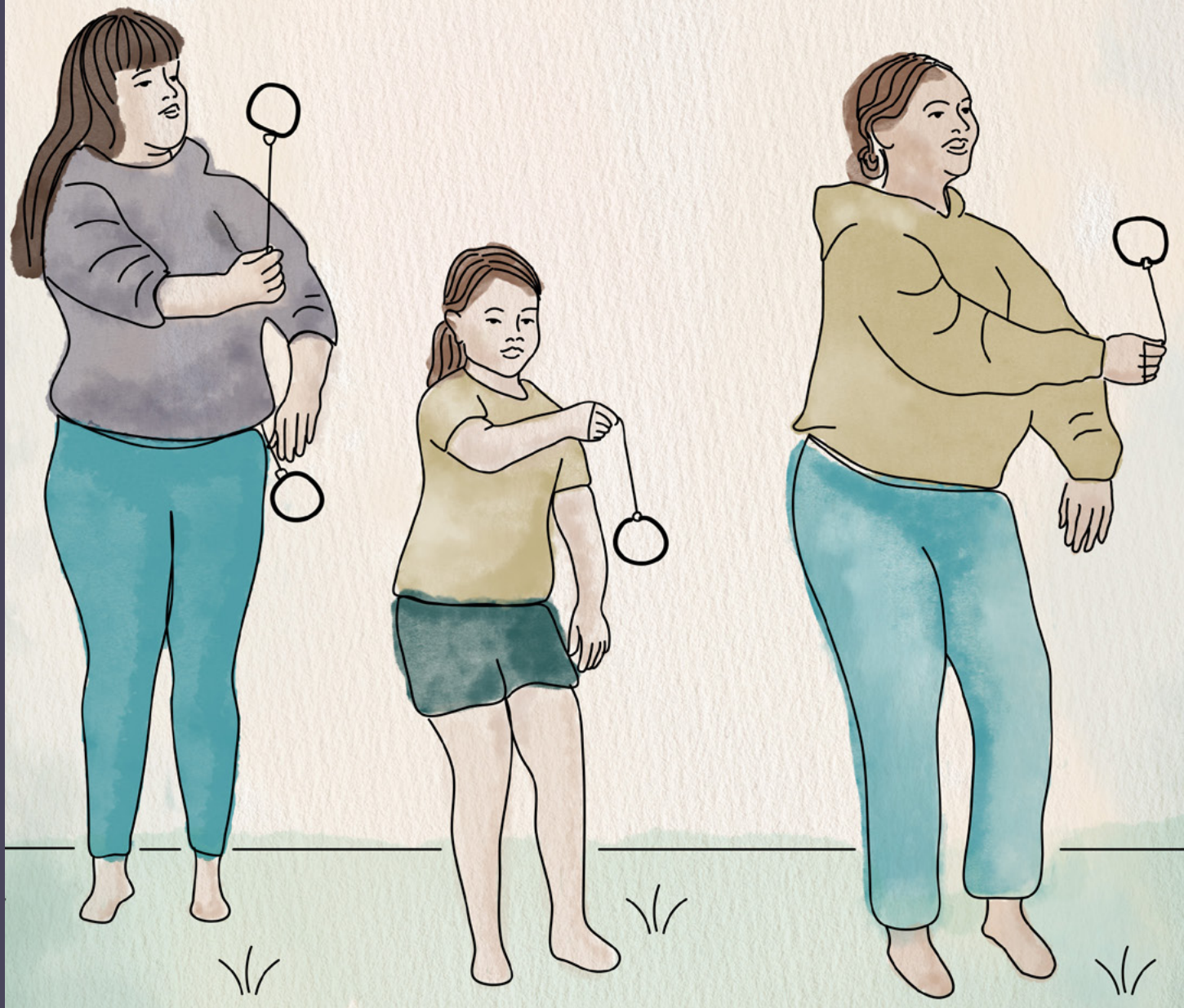
Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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Social Sector Accreditation Standards
Level 2

Client Services and Programmes

The organisation provides client services and/or programmes that meet clients' assessed needs, reflect desired outcomes and goals, and are planned, co-ordinated and reviewed.



Why this standard matters

People using your service should determine their own whāinga, helping them to live the lives they choose. They should trust that the service you provide is tailored to their needs and supports their goals.

An agreed plan should be a living document that begins from intake and assessment, is regularly reviewed to ensure progress is being made, and is completed to allow for a safe and thoughtful transition out of the service.

Criteria 1

The organisation collects appropriate information and ensures the needs of the client match the criteria for service.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You have policies and procedures that include:
  - how referrals are received, accepted or declined
  - how clients give informed consent before they start using your service
  - how you monitor your waitlist (if applicable) and prioritise people on it
  - how clients are matched with the most appropriate service or staff.
- ◯ Your client records include:
  - your client's name and contact information
  - their ethnicity, iwi affiliation and hapū, if known
  - their needs and/or reason for seeking support.

Criteria 2

The organisation completes a comprehensive and timely assessment.

Guidance



Share with us

- How you make sure that clients are assessed within a timeframe that reflects the urgency of their needs.



Show us

- Your client records include:
  - an assessment of needs, issues and support required
  - a completed risk assessment if a client presents with risk factors
  - the urgency of support required
  - records of meetings with whānau, professionals or other agencies.

Criteria 2.1

The organisation ensures it has necessary consents.

Guidance



Show us

- Your client records include documented consent from the client, or for children under 16 their parent/guardian to:
  - participate in services
  - be transported, if needed
  - receive medication or medical help, if needed
  - allow the organisation to share client information with other named organisations, when necessary.

Share with us

- ◯ If your service does not require parent or guardian consent for children under 16, how you check that the child understands the nature of the service and what it might mean for them.
- ◯ How you make clients aware of:
  - their right to make a complaint and how to do this
  - who can access their personal information and how it will be used
  - their right to access and correct personal information
  - their right to an advocate or support person of their choice.

Important: If a person is in the custody or guardianship of Oranga Tamariki and is:

- under 16 years you must get consent for the services they receive. This must come from Oranga Tamariki, or a caregiver/whānau member who has permission from Oranga Tamariki to consent on their behalf.
- over 16 years you should inform Oranga Tamariki if the service could impact their wellbeing or care plan.

Note: Consent must be documented. This can be written or electronic. For people over 16, consent can also be in a clearly recorded verbal agreement.

Criteria 3

The organisation develops timely, effective plans for all client services and programmes.

Guidance

Important: Whether Criteria 3 to 3.6 apply depends on the type of service you provide, e.g. they may not apply if you have clients attending short-term programmes or receiving temporary support.

Show us

- ◯ You have policies and procedures to ensure that the planning of client services and programmes is timely and effective.
- ◯ If your service uses client plans, your client records must include plans that are developed with the client within a prompt timeframe that meets their needs.

Criteria 3.1

Plans meet the needs of the client and the objectives of the service or programme.

Guidance



Share with us

- How your client plans meet their needs and the goals of your service or programme.

Criteria 3.2

Plans identify and mitigate safety risks to clients and others.

Guidance



Show us

- Plans that have identified a safety risk, and where you have recorded the actions you will take to reduce that risk.

Criteria 3.3

Where appropriate, plans include client's family and others.

Guidance



Show us

- Your client plans include:
  - family/whānau input, where relevant
  - referrals to iwi, marae, Pacific or other cultural services, when requested.

Criteria 3.4

The plan clearly states the client's goals, and services used to help the client achieve their goals.

Guidance



Show us

- Your client plans include:
  - client goals
  - actions, services or support to help clients achieve them.

Criteria 3.5

Plans are adequately resourced.

Guidance



Share with us

- How you help clients achieve their plans.



Note: This might include access to transport, whānau support, internet, kai, social worker support or connections to other social services, depending on the client's needs and the services you provide.

Criteria 3.6

The organisation completes regular, formal, recorded reviews of progress against the plan and outcomes achieved.

Guidance



Show us

- Your client plans include:
  - regular progress reviews and updates made to support your client's best interests
  - ongoing assessments of your client's needs and any risks.

Criteria 4

Conclusion of services to clients is planned and prepared for.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You have policies and procedures that include:
  - how the conclusion of services is planned and discussed with a client
  - how you record whether a client has completed their plan
  - how decisions to exit a client from the service are made and recorded
  - how information about other services is provided to clients, whānau and support people (if applicable).
- ◯ Your closed client records include:
  - service conclusion notes
  - referrals to other providers (if applicable).

Criteria 4.1

Safety risk of clients transitioning from the service are considered and managed.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ Your closed client records include how safety risks are considered and managed as part of the transition.

Criteria 5

The organisation ensures that client files and programme records are sufficient and document each stage of service provision.

Guidance



Show us

- ◯ You have policies and procedures that ensure client records:
  - are written promptly after any client-related event or conversation
  - are clear, factual and detailed
  - show who wrote them and when.
- ◯ Your client records include:
  - communication with a client or about them, e.g. phone calls, emails, face-to-face discussions
  - any incidents involving them, including safety concerns, abuse or behavioural events
  - any decisions that affect them, e.g. changes to their plan, referrals or ending support.



Scenario

ABC Provider are clear about the way they welcome new clients, and how they talk with them about what they need. If the service involves collecting or sharing personal information, they get the client's consent before moving forward.

Staff work with each client and their whānau to make a plan that includes their goals. The team regularly check these plans to make sure clients are getting the right support, staying safe and being connected to other services if needed.

ABC Provider regularly talk with clients to review how the service is working and to make sure it still meets clients' needs. They also ask for feedback to keep improving their services.

ABC Provider keeps a record of each client's journey that shows what support they have received, when and from whom. The team meets often to talk about each client's progress, any safety concerns, and to discuss any proposed changes to their plan. This ensures clients continue to get the right support.

Words and terms you need to know

The following words and terms are used throughout this standard. We've explained them here to help make their meaning clear.

Word/term	Explanation
Client-centred goals	Goals made in collaboration with the client that are focused on their needs.
Client plan	A written plan outlining the client's needs, goals, support and any referrals.
Comprehensive client assessment	A process to understand a client's situation, needs and risks, used to develop their plan.
Conclusion	The client no longer needs support or has completed the service or programme.
Consent forms	Documents signed by a client (or their guardian) that give permission for specific actions, such as receiving services, sharing information or being transported.
Referral	The process of submitting an application or directing a client to another service or organisation for assistance. This can include initial referrals, where clients are directed to new services, as well as subsequent referrals which provide additional support as needed.
Risk assessment	A process to identify the likelihood of a client being harmed, harming themselves or harming others.
Safety plan	A written plan containing coping mechanisms and sources of support for people who have been assessed as at risk of harm.
Whāinga	Māori word that refers to pursuit, goal, objective, purpose.
Whānau	Māori word that refers to family, extended family, friends and connections.



Note: Some of the explanations above are not exact definitions but aim to describe the meaning of the words and terms as they are used in this standard.

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