



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

**29 AUG 2016**

L.K. Barber

[fyi-request-3633-4b1022a1@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-3633-4b1022a1@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear L.K. Barber

On 28 June 2016, the Ministry received clarification of the information you requested, under the Official Information Act 1982 which we will respond to:

- *What is the policy and process involved when a widow came into apply for assistance? Are there any procedures that case managers followed to ensure that clients were informed of other services other agencies offered?*

Ministry staff including Case Managers at Work and Income sites, are required to adhere to the Social Security Act 1964 and Work and Income's Manual and Procedure guidelines to ensure full and correct assessments are undertaken to determine full and correct benefit entitlements.

The Manuals and Procedures guidelines hold all of the information that Case Managers must use to assess the client's needs and determine what support the client may qualify for.

The Social Security Act outlines information on the qualifications of a benefit, the obligations (if any are applicable), the conditions of the grant or additional assistance, the commencement date and the method of payment. The Manuals and Procedure guidelines available on the Ministry intranet to every staff member and is available on Work and Income's website at the following link: <http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/index.html>

The Manuals and Procedures guidelines ensure that all Case Managers are consistent in their application of the same processes and cover every aspect of the benefit or additional support a client may qualify for. When a Case Manager is aware of a service another agency provides that would aid their client, the Case Manager may provide that client with the additional information or make a referral to that agency.

This is not outlined in the Manuals and Procedures guidelines, however, Case Managers have access to the Family and Community Services directory where other agencies are listed. This directory is available on the Family Services website at: <https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory>

I hope you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10-152  
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Rachel Sutherland  
**General Manager, Ministerial and Executive Services**