

Enabling Good Lives: Information for Regional Leadership Groups

The Minister for Disability Issues, Hon Louise Upston, has announced significant changes to disability support services. These changes will not come into effect until next year. More information, including a printable factsheet which relates to how these changes will impact people who get services via NASCs is available on the DSS website.

Assessment and Allocation Changes

All NASCs around the country will start doing their assessments the same way. This is to support a fairer and more consistent approach. The support needs of whānau and carers will be considered as part of the assessment when their needs are relevant to the care of the disabled person.

Flexible Funding Changes

For people who receive flexible funding through a NASC, the changes will be:

- Purchasing guidelines, including the March 2024 amendments, will be removed from next year.
- There will be a list of prohibited items, such as alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and illegal activities.
- Some sensitive items will require pre-approval, such as overseas travel.
- Disabled people will get a budget so they know how much they can spend.
 - People already using flexible funding will be allocated a budget, based on how much flexible funding they have spent in the past.
 - People who are new to the system will be given a budget following an assessment.
 - People must stay within budget and their spending must align with their personal plan. There will be no additional funding if people use their budget early.
- There will be tiered guidance and oversight to help people manage their flexible funding budget.

What This Means for Enabling Good Lives Sites

At this stage, no changes have been confirmed for EGL sites. In keeping with community leadership our intention is for the regional leadership groups to work with their communities about what adopting the required changes (and removing the

purchase rules) could mean. It will be up to each community to advise on the option that the local site will take.

The exception is Enabling Good Lives Christchurch. This is because NASC allocation of 90%+ of the budgets, and Hosting for all of the budgets, is already subject to the changes, and therefore the purchasing rules will be removed for people supported through this site.

What would the changes be for EGL Waikato and Mana Whaikaha?

Most of the requirements for removing the Purchase Guidelines are met by systems already in place for EGL Waikato and Mana Whaikaha. Some changes to EGL operations will be required, should the community choose to move to the new approach. These are described in 'Table 1. Overview of potential EGL Changes' at the end of this document.

Please be assured that any changes to practice will be made whilst maintaining the integrity of the Enabling Good Lives approach, vision and principles.

The proposed changes are intended to maximise the level of choice and control available to disabled people whilst maintaining trust and confidence in a sustainable disability support system.

Next Steps

Regional Leadership Group members will work with the community to make an informed community decision, on whether to:

- a) Adopt the changes and remove the purchase rules.
- b) Retain the current processes and continue to operate under the purchase rules put in place March 2024.

The local EGL site Director will be able to provide more detailed information on what the changes will mean for the experience of disabled people and families.

The community's decision should be communicated, via the Regional Leadership Group, to Rachael Burt - Group Manager Enabling Good Lives, by 12 September 2025.

Table 1. Overview of potential EGL changes

Topic:	What would need to change?
Person-Centred Assessment Process & Development of a Personal Plan	Additional questions may be added to the person directed, whole-of-life planning process already in place in the sites, in order to inform a new funding allocation tool.
Consistent allocations and limits on package sizes	A new funding allocation tool will be adopted that reflects the same calibration settings as the national tool, (with an adjustment to reflect the various sources of funding that contribute to a personal budget) will be utilised. This will replace the current Funding Allocation Tools that are being used in EGL Waikato and Mana Whaikaha. The newly calibrated tool may mean that at the next reassessment, there are changes to some people's allocations. The Indicative Range identified through the tool must be stayed within, unless there is reason to believe does not reflect disability related challenges, or one-off Early Investment funds are used.
Standard packages of supports	Standardised packages of supports will be offered to families to consider, alongside more flexible options. Connectors will ensure options are provided in a way that is simple and easy

	to understand for whānau.
Aligning budgets to previous spends	Allocations that have previously been underspent, will reduce on 1 April 2026. All Enabling Good Lives kaimahi are familiar with and confident in using a mana enhancing approach to supporting whānau with reprioritisation and planning as budgets change. The cut-off period on which previous spend is based will be June 2025 - this includes pre-March 2024 spending.
Tiered Management arrangements	There will be no further funding for people who spend more than their budget unless there are exceptional circumstances. Tailored levels of support for people to manage personal budgets will be provided. Highest tiers will include greater support (e.g. planning support, host and agent support, and more regular check-ins or pre-approval of spending). Lower tiers will include less support and will focus on managing employer obligations, or budget and planning support only. This may result in some options (e.g. Direct Funding) not being available to people if there are concerns, which can't be addressed, about how this funding is being managed
Feedback loops on the use of funding	A feedback loop will be formalised and strengthened across the sites that

	ensures future allocations reflect the outcomes achieved with previous allocations and that the level of support provided for budget management continues to be appropriate.
Purchasing guidelines removed from 1 April 2026	From 1 April 2026 flexible budgets will be reallocated based on previous spend (June 2023 - June 2025). This may mean a reduction in funding for some people. The purchasing rules, including March 2024 amendments, will no longer apply. Monitoring arrangements will be strengthened to ensure that existing and newly developed funding plans are the basis of what funding is used for