

Veterans' Independence Programme

- From 13 March 2024, we are suspending the Veterans' Independence Programme (VIP) for new clients without a service-related condition. The suspension will last for one year (until March 2025).
- There will be no change to the availability and delivery of VIP services to veterans who have a service-related injury or illness from their qualifying service that we have accepted.
- Any veteran who already has VIP services in place will continue to receive them under their existing conditions.
- This suspension only affects VIP services. All other entitlements, claims, and support are available as usual.

Suspension of VIP services to new clients without a service-related health condition

All new and in-progress applications for any of the VIP services will not proceed.

There will be no change to the delivery of these services for veterans who already have these services in place. If a veteran has a case manager and is receiving a VIP service or services, those will remain in place.

If a veteran who currently receives a VIP service applies for another service, their new application will be declined.

Qualifying service explained (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/qualifying-service/>)

Why we are suspending VIP services

The Veterans' Support Act 2014 requires us to support veterans with qualifying service who have a health condition as a result of their service. The quantity and complexity of those veterans' claims have been increasing, and some veterans are having to wait for a year or more before their applications can be processed.

We understand that the suspension of these home support services is disappointing, but it allows us to direct resources to veterans with a service-related health condition.

The suspension will be in place for a year. After that time it will be reviewed. If resourcing allows, we may be able to offer it again.

You can contact us if you would like to discuss this further.

Contact us (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/contact-us/>)

If you think that you might have a service-related health condition, discuss this with your GP. If they agree, please make a claim. If accepted, a case manager can arrange VIP services for you.

Other support agencies and organisations

Other organisations may be able to provide home support services.

Seniorline

Seniorline is an organisation that helps people navigate the public health system and other Government support agencies.

Visit the Seniorline website (<https://www.seniorline.org.nz>) 

You can contact them:

- by phone at 0800 725 463 (tel:0800725463) between 8:00am and 4:00pm
- by email at seniorline@adhb.govt.nz (mailto:seniorline@adhb.govt.nz)

RNZRSA

The RNZRSA District Support Managers can also provide assistance.

Contact an RNZRSA District Support Manager (<https://www.rsa.org.nz/get-support/support-for-veterans/district-support-managers>) 

More information

Are you doing this to cut costs or save money?

No, that's not the reason. No jobs are being cut.

We have to redistribute our resources to focus on supporting veterans with an illness or injury related to their service. This is what we're required by law to do.

Over the last few years, we've been receiving a lot more claims from veterans with service-related health conditions, and their claims are getting more complex. Some of them are having to wait for a year or more before their applications can be processed and they can start getting the treatment and rehabilitation that they need.

What does 'Suspending VIP services' mean?

No new VIP services will be set up for veterans who don't have a health condition which we have accepted as being related to their service — "an accepted condition".

The only exceptions will be those who have already applied to us and who are aged over 90 or have a terminal condition. This is being done as a transitional measure.

The suspension will begin on 13 March 2024 and be in place for 1 year (until March 2025).

If a veteran (without an accepted condition) has VIP services currently, this will continue. However, if they apply for additional services, we won't be able to offer them.

If you've made an application for VIP services to us, and we haven't yet accepted it, that application will lapse.

However, if we're able to resume the service next year, you can re-apply then.

Why have VIP services been suspended?

Suspending this service lets us focus our resources on helping veterans with a health condition, illness, or injury related to their service.

I already have these services in place, does this mean that my services will stop?

No, if services are already in place, these will continue.

I have already been waiting for 6 months. Will my application still be processed?

No. Unfortunately, all pending claims will be suspended.

However, if you think you may have a health condition related to your service, we recommend you talk to your GP. You may be able to make a claim to us for that condition, and if it's accepted, you will be allocated a case manager. They will be able to put VIP services in place for you.

Why are they suspended for 1 year? What happens after that? Will my current claim be processed and prioritized, or will I need to reapply?

We're suspending the service so we can focus resources on helping veterans who have an illness or injury that is related to their service.

If we are in a position to offer the programme again, you will need to re-apply. Please keep an eye on our website, and look at our e-newsletters for any updates.

Last Modified: 14 March 2024