

MINISTER FOR VETERANS

Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025

December 2025

This paper seeks agreement to submit the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025 to Executive Council.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- September 2025 Cabinet Legislation Committee Minute of Decision: *Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025* [LEG-25-MIN-0189];
- The associated Cabinet Paper: *Amendment to Veterans' Support Regulations 2014: Statements of Principles*;
- Annex A to the Cabinet Paper: *List of Statements of Principles for Possible Application in New Zealand by Amendment of Schedule 1 of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014*; and
- Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025 Order in Council.

This pack has been released on the New Zealand Defence Force website, available at:

www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/search-our-libraries/documents/?document-type=Official+information&sort=relevance.

No information has been withheld.



Cabinet Legislation Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025

Portfolio **Veterans**

On 18 September 2025, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **noted** that in accordance with section 23 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014, the Minister for Veterans approved the revocation and replacement of 24 Statements of Principles relating to conditions that may be causally connected to a veteran's qualifying service, and the revocation without replacement of two new Statements of Principles;
- 2 **noted** that no change to the list of accepted late-onset conditions at Schedule 2A of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 is needed;
- 3 **noted** that the changes are not expected to affect the overall Crown liability relating to veteran entitlements;
- 4 **noted** that in 2016, a previous government authorised the Minister for Veterans to instruct the Parliamentary Counsel Office to amend Schedule 1 of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 to effect revisions to the Statements of Principles without further reference to Cabinet [CAB-16-MIN-0131];
- 5 **noted** that the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025 (the Regulations) give effect to the decisions referred to in paragraph 1 above;
- 6 **noted** that the Regulations will come into force on 23 October 2025, thus complying with the 28-day rule;
- 7 **authorised** the submission to the Executive Council of the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025 [PCO 28287/10.0].

Tom Kelly
Committee Secretary

Attendance: (See over)

Present:

Hon David Seymour
Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Judith Collins KC
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Shane Jones
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Nicole McKee
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Chris Penk
Hon James Meager
Stuart Smith, MP
Todd Stephenson, MP
Jamie Arbuckle, MP

Officials present from:

Officials Committee for LEG
Office of the Leader of the House

Proactively Released by the Minister for Veterans

AMENDMENT TO VETERANS' SUPPORT REGULATIONS 2014: STATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLES

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to an amendment of Schedule 1 of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 to update the Statements of Principles that are used to determine if a medical condition is linked to military service.

Executive Summary

- 2 In deciding claims for entitlements under the Veterans' Support Act 2014 (the Act), Veterans' Affairs must assess whether a veteran's medical condition is linked to qualifying service.
- 3 Statements of Principles are one of the mechanisms under the Act for establishing this causal link. They have been specifically developed for the most commonly claimed conditions that are service-related.
- 4 The Statements of Principles are determined by the Australian Government Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) and are regularly reviewed and amended. New Statements of Principles are introduced based on medical-scientific evidence linking the condition to service.
- 5 A Veterans' Affairs representative (medical practitioner) attends the RMA meetings as an "attending expert". The representative provides input into the RMA's assessment of the medical-scientific evidence and on the proposed revisions to the Statements of Principles and introduction of any new Statements of Principles.
- 6 New Zealand adopted the Statements of Principles under Schedule 1 of the Regulations. In accordance with section 23 of the Act, I must decide if the Australian revocations and replacements of Statements of Principles, and any new Statements of Principles if there are any, should apply in New Zealand based upon advice from Veterans' Affairs and the independent Veterans' Health Advisory Panel.
- 7 Cabinet previously authorised [CAB-16-MIN-0131] that the Minister for Veterans will issue instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office to draft amendments to Schedule 1 of the Regulations to effect revisions to the Statements of Principles, without further reference to the then Cabinet Social Policy Committee, unless a significant issue relating to the Statements of Principles revisions arises.
- 8 Accepted late-onset conditions are another mechanism under the Act for establishing a link between a veteran's service and their illness or injury. This mechanism is applied only to veterans whose qualifying operational service took

place after 1 April 1974 (Scheme Two). Its purpose was to ensure that families of veterans whose death was the result of a late-onset malignancy or other physical illness, or a mental disorder, receive entitlements under the Act. It was deemed that if accepted late-onset conditions were not defined, the family of a veteran whose death was caused by an event that occurred during qualifying operational service ten or more years prior to the onset of illness may not be covered as causality would be difficult to establish over this time period.

- 9 The original list of accepted late-onset conditions was based on identifying which conditions were covered by Statements of Principles and then, of those, which had one or more late-onset causative factors.
- 10 I must approve changes to accepted late-onset conditions as these are specified in Regulations.

Proposed Regulatory Amendment to revise Statements of Principles

- 11 In April and June 2025, Australia repealed and replaced 24 Statements of Principles, and revoked two Statements of Principles without replacement. I have decided, on the basis of advice from Veterans' Affairs and the Veterans' Health Advisory Panel, that the changes to the 24 Statements of Principles and the revocation without replacement of two Statements of Principles are based upon sound medical-scientific evidence; that they can be linked to a veteran's qualifying service; and that they are suitable for use in New Zealand. The Statements of Principles in question are listed in Annex A.
- 12 The replacement Statements of Principles have undergone revisions, additions and deletions of definitions and of causative factors linking a veteran's injury, illness or death to their qualifying service. None of the replacement Statements of Principles will make it significantly harder or easier to link a veteran's condition to service, or are likely to result in significantly higher numbers of successful or failed claims.
- 13 The revocations of the two Statements of Principles for *presbyopia* are recommended for application in New Zealand as the medical-scientific evidence is deemed insufficient to determine factors that might be related to service.
- 14 Changes to a Statement of Principles through amendment, revocation (repeal) or new introduction will not impact on any entitlement or service that has previously been granted under the Act.
- 15 Accepted late-onset conditions are derived from the Statements of Principles. The list of these conditions first came into force in December 2015. Since January 2023, Veterans' Affairs has regularly audited new Statements of Principles adopted or scheduled for adoption in New Zealand. The purpose is to assess whether any of the conditions covered meet the criteria set out in section 7 of the Act for the list of accepted late-onset conditions.
- 16 No change to the list of accepted late-onset conditions is currently required.

Timing and 28-day Rule

- 17 It is intended that the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025 will come into force on 23 October 2025, thus complying with the 28-day rule.

Compliance

- 18 The proposed amendment to the Regulations to replace Schedule 1 complies with each of the following:
- 18.1 the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi;
 - 18.2 the rights and freedoms contained in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 or the Human Rights Act 1993;
 - 18.3 the principles and guidelines set out in the Privacy Act 2020;
 - 18.4 the relevant international standards and obligations; and
 - 18.5 the Legislation Design and Advisory Committee Guidelines (2021) which are maintained by the Legislation Design and Advisory Committee.
- 19 In accordance with section 23 of the Act, before reaching my decision that 24 Statements of Principles should be repealed and replaced, and two Statements of Principles revoked without replacement, I received reports from Veterans' Affairs and independent advice from the Veterans' Health Advisory Panel. Both recommended the adoption of the proposed changes.

Regulations Review Committee

- 20 There are no grounds for the Regulations Review Committee to draw this regulation amendment to the attention of the House under Standing Order 327.

Certification by Parliamentary Counsel

- 21 The Amendment Regulations have been certified by the Parliamentary Counsel Office as being in order for submission to Cabinet.

Financial Implications

- 22 The changes to the Statements of Principles, and the revocation of two Statements of Principles for *presbyopia*, are not expected to affect the overall Crown liability relating to veteran entitlements.

Impact Analysis

- 23 The Ministry for Regulation has determined that the regulatory proposals in this paper are exempt from the requirement to provide a Regulatory Impact Statement on the basis that they have no, or minor, impacts on businesses, individuals or not-for-profit entities.

Publicity

24 Veterans' Affairs will publish the changes on its website.

Proactive Release

25 I intend to release this paper in full apart from any legally privileged material.

Consultation

26 The Treasury was consulted in the course of developing the policy and the amended Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

Recommendations

I recommend that the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **Note** that in accordance with section 23 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014 I have approved the revocation and replacement of 24 Statements of Principles relating to conditions that may be causally connected to a veteran's qualifying service, and the revocation without replacement of two new Statements of Principles.
- 2 **Note** that no change to the list of accepted late-onset conditions at Schedule 2A of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 is needed.
- 3 **Note** that the proposed changes are not expected to affect the overall Crown liability relating to veteran entitlements.
- 4 **Note** that Cabinet authorised [CAB-16-MIN-0131] the Minister for Veterans to instruct the Parliamentary Counsel Office to amend Schedule 1 of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 to effect revisions to the Statements of Principles without further reference to the then Cabinet Social Policy Committee.
- 5 **Note** that the proposed amendment of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 gives effect to the decisions referred to in recommendation 1 above.
- 6 **Agree** that the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025 will come into force on 23 October 2025, thus complying with the 28-day rule.
- 7 **Authorise** the submission to the Executive Council of the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Chris Penk
Minister for Veterans

Annex

- A. List of Statements of Principles for Possible Application in New Zealand by amendment of Schedule 1 of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014.

ANNEX A

LIST OF STATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLES FOR POSSIBLE APPLICATION IN NEW ZEALAND BY AMENDMENT OF SCHEDULE 1 OF THE VETERANS' SUPPORT REGULATIONS 2014

Note: Each condition has two Statements of Principles. The Reasonable Hypothesis version of the Statement of Principles is applied when the veteran's condition is presumed to have arisen due to qualifying operational service. The Balance of Probabilities version of the Statement of Principles is applied when the veteran's condition is presumed to have arisen due to qualifying routine service.

Condition	Statement of Principles Number	
	Reasonable Hypothesis	Balance of Probabilities
adjustment disorder	58/2025 Replacing 23/2016	59/2025 Replacing 24/2016
analgesic nephropathy	43/2025 Replacing 77/2016	44/2025 Replacing 78/2016
benign neoplasm of the eye and adnexa	62/2025 Replacing 41/2016	63/2025 Replacing 42/2016
cervical dystonia (spasmodic torticollis)	41/2025 Replacing 63/2016 Name has changed from spasmodic torticollis	42/2025 Replacing 64/2016 Name has changed from spasmodic torticollis
cut, stab, abrasion and laceration	37/2025 Replacing 53/2016	38/2025 Replacing 54/2016
discoid lupus erythematosus	49/2025 Replacing 126/2015	50/2025 Replacing 127/2015
diverticular disease of the colon	51/2025 Replacing 15/2016	52/2025 Replacing 16/2016
presbyopia	Revoked without replacement	Revoked without replacement
sarcoidosis	60/2025 Replacing 59/2016	61/2025 Replacing 60/2016

Condition	Statement of Principles Number	
	Reasonable Hypothesis	Balance of Probabilities
Scheuermann's disease (kyphosis)	45/2025 Replacing 75/2016 Name has changed from Scheuermann's disease	46/2025 Replacing 76/2016 Name has changed from Scheuermann's disease
spondylolisthesis and spondylolysis	56/2025 Replacing 24/2017	57/2025 Replacing 25/2017
suicide and attempted suicide	39/2025 Replacing 65/2016	40/2025 Replacing 66/2016
systemic lupus erythematosus	47/2025 Replacing 21/2016	48/2025 Replacing 22/2016

Veterans’ Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025

Order in Council

At Wellington this day of 2025

Present:
in Council

These regulations are made under section 265 of the Veterans’ Support Act 2014—

- (a) on the advice and with the consent of the Executive Council; and
- (b) on the recommendation of the Minister for Veterans made in accordance with section 23 of that Act.

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Regulations

- 1 Title
- These regulations are the Veterans’ Support Amendment Regulations (No 3) 2025.

2 Commencement

These regulations come into force on 23 October 2025.

3 Principal regulations

These regulations amend the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014.

4 Schedule 1 amended

Amend Schedule 1 as set out in the Schedule of these regulations.

Schedule Schedule 1 amended

r 4

In the item relating to adjustment disorder,—

- (a) replace “23/2016” with “58/2025”; and
- (b) replace “24/2016” with “59/2025”.

In the item relating to analgesic nephropathy,—

- (a) replace “77/2016” with “43/2025”; and
- (b) replace “78/2016” with “44/2025”.

In the item relating to benign neoplasm of the eye and adnexa,—

- (a) replace “41/2016” with “62/2025”; and
- (b) replace “42/2016” with “63/2025”.

After the item relating to cerebrovascular accident (stroke), insert:

cervical dystonia (spasmodic torticollis)	41/2025	42/2025
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In the item relating to cut, stab, abrasion and laceration,—

- (a) replace “53/2016” with “37/2025”; and
- (b) replace “54/2016” with “38/2025”.

In the item relating to discoid lupus erythematosus,—

- (a) replace “126/2015” with “49/2025”; and
- (b) replace “127/2015” with “50/2025”.

In the item relating to diverticular disease of the colon,—

- (a) replace “15/2016” with “51/2025”; and
- (b) replace “16/2016” with “52/2025”.

Revoke the item relating to presbyopia.

In the item relating to sarcoidosis,—

- (a) replace “59/2016” with “60/2025”; and
- (b) replace “60/2016” with “61/2025”.

Replace the item relating to Scheuermann’s disease with:

Scheuermann’s disease (kyphosis)	45/2025	46/2025
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Revoke the item relating to spasmodic torticollis.

In the item relating to spondylolisthesis and spondylolysis,—

- (a) replace “24/2017” with “56/2025”; and
- (b) replace “25/2017” with “57/2025”.

In the item relating to suicide and attempted suicide,—

- (a) replace “65/2016” with “39/2025”; and

(b) replace “66/2016” with “40/2025”.

In the item relating to systemic lupus erythematosus,—

(a) replace “21/2016” with “47/2025”; and

(b) replace “22/2016” with “48/2025”.

Clerk of the Executive Council.

Explanatory note

This note is not part of the regulations but is intended to indicate their general effect.

These regulations, which come into force on 23 October 2025, amend the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 (the **principal regulations**).

Regulation 4 and the *Schedule* amend Schedule 1 of the principal regulations, which lists the Australian statements of principles (the **statements**) that apply to specific medical conditions for the purposes of the Veterans' Support Act 2014. The amendments—

- insert new names and references to statements of 2 conditions (cervical dystonia (spasmodic torticollis) and Scheuermann's disease (kyphosis)), to replace the names and references to statements of 2 conditions (spasmodic torticollis and Scheuermann's disease):
- replace references to statements of the following conditions with updated references:
 - adjustment disorder:
 - analgesic nephropathy:
 - benign neoplasm of the eye and adnexa:
 - cut, stab, abrasion and laceration:
 - discoid lupus erythematosus:
 - diverticular disease of the colon:
 - sarcoidosis:
 - spondylolisthesis and spondylolysis:
 - suicide and attempted suicide:
 - systemic lupus erythematosus:
- revoke the item relating to the condition presbyopia.

The statements are legislative instruments determined by the Australian Repatriation Medical Authority under an Australian Act of Parliament, the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986. Further information about the statements, as well as a link to the state-

ments, can be found at <https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/for-clients/how-we-make-decisions/conditions-we-cover/statements-of-principles/>

Issued under the authority of the Legislation Act 2019.

Date of notification in *Gazette*:

These regulations are administered by the Ministry of Defence.

Proactively Released by the Minister for Veterans