

MINISTER FOR VETERANS

Amendment to Veterans' Support Regulations 2014: Statements of Principles and Accepted Late-onset Conditions

April 2026

This paper seeks authorisation to submit the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026 to the Executive Council.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- March 2026 Cabinet Legislation Committee Minute of Decision: *Amendment to Veterans' Support Regulations 2014: Statements of Principles and Accepted Late-onset Conditions* [LEG-26-MIN-0035];
- The associated Cabinet Paper: *Amendment to Veterans' Support Regulations 2014: Statements of Principles and Accepted Late-onset Conditions*; and
- Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026 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.

Amendment to Veterans' Support Regulations 2014: Statements Of Principles and Accepted Late-onset Conditions

Portfolio **Veterans**

On 5 March 2026, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **noted** that in accordance with section 23 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014, the Minister for Veterans (the Minister) has approved the revocation and replacement of 24 Statements of Principles, and the introduction of two new Statements of Principles, relating to conditions that may be causally connected to a veteran's qualifying service;
- 2 **noted** that the Minister has approved revision of the names of four accepted late-onset conditions set out in Schedule 2A of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 in order to align them with the Statements of Principles from which they were derived;
- 3 **noted** that the above changes are not expected to affect the overall Crown liability relating to veteran entitlements;
- 4 **noted** that in 2016, Cabinet noted that any future revision to the Statements of Principle are expected to be routine in nature and authorised the Minister for Veterans to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office to effect changes to the Statements of Principles in Schedule 1 of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 without further reference to Cabinet [SOC-16-MIN-0018];
- 5 **noted** that the amendment of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 gives effect to the decisions in paragraphs 1 and 2 above;
- 6 **noted** that the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026 will come into force on 9 April 2026, thus complying with the 28-day rule;
- 7 **authorised** submission of the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026 [PCO 28763/4.0] to the Executive Council.

Sam Moffett
Committee Secretary

(see over for attendance)

Present:

Hon David Seymour
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Paul Goldsmith (Chair)
Hon Dr Shane Reti
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Chris Penk
Hon James Meager
Stuart Smith MP
Jamie Arbuckle MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Office of Hon Chris Bishop
Officials' Committee for LEG

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AMENDMENT TO VETERANS' SUPPORT REGULATIONS 2014: STATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLES AND ACCEPTED LATE-ONSET CONDITIONS

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to the amendment of Schedule 1 and Schedule 2A of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 (the Regulations).
- 2 Schedule 1 lists the Australian Statements of Principles that apply for the purposes of the Veterans' Support Act 2014 (the Act). Amendment is required to introduce two new Statements for Principles and to revoke 24 Statements of Principles, replacing them with 24 Statements of Principles.
- 3 Schedule 2A lists accepted-late onset conditions that apply for the Act. Change to the names of four conditions on the list is required in order to align them with the names listed in Schedule 1.

Background

- 4 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. 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.
- 5 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.
- 6 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.
- 7 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.

- 8 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.
- 9 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.
- 10 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.
- 11 I must approve changes to accepted late-onset conditions as these are specified in Regulations.

Proposed Regulatory Amendment to revise Statements of Principles and amend the names of four accepted late-onset conditions

- 12 In August 2025 and October 2025, Australia repealed and replaced 24 Statements of Principles, and introduced two new Statements of Principles. 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 introduction of the two new 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.
- 13 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; and in six cases a change to the name of the condition. *Barrett's oesophagus* has changed to *Barrett oesophagus*; *cholelithiasis* has changed to *gallstone disease (cholelithiasis)*; *hepatitis D* has changed to *hepatitis D infection*; *hookworm disease* has changed to *hookworm infection*; *Parkinson's disease and secondary parkinsonism* has changed to *Parkinson disease and Secondary Parkinsonism*; *umbilical hernia* has changed to *umbilical hernia, peri-umbilical hernia and para-umbilical hernia*.

- 14 None of the new or 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.
- 15 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.
- 16 The list of accepted late-onset conditions first came into force in December 2015. They are derived from the Statements of Principles. The Statements of Principles for *cholelithiasis*; *hepatitis D*; *hookworm disease*; and *Parkinson's disease and secondary parkinsonism* have been renamed *gallstone disease (cholelithiasis)*; *hepatitis D infection*; *hookworm infection*; and *Parkinson disease and Secondary Parkinsonism* respectively. Consequential amendment is needed in the list of accepted late-onset conditions.
- 17 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. The condition (*occipital neuralgia*) covered by the two new Statements of Principles proposed for adoption in New Zealand is not recommended for addition to the list.

Timing and 28-day rule

- 18 It is intended that the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026 will come into force on 9 April 2026, thus complying with the 28-day rule.

Compliance

- 19 The proposed amendment to the Regulations to replace Schedule 1 complies with each of the following:
- 19.1 the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi;
 - 19.2 the rights and freedoms contained in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 or the Human Rights Act 1993;
 - 19.3 the principles and guidelines set out in the Privacy Act 2020;
 - 19.4 the relevant international standards and obligations; and
 - 19.5 the Legislation Design and Advisory Committee Guidelines (2021) which are maintained by the Legislation Design and Advisory Committee.
- 20 In accordance with section 23 of the Act, before reaching my decision that 24 Statements of Principles should be revoked and replaced, and two newly introduced Statements of Principles adopted, I received reports from Veterans' Affairs and independent advice from the Veterans' Health Advisory Panel. Both recommended the adoption of the proposed changes.

- 21 I also received a report from Veterans' Affairs as to consideration of one condition (*occipital neuralgia*) for addition to the Schedule 2A list of accepted late-onset conditions. It did not recommend the addition of this condition.

Regulations Review Committee

- 22 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

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

Financial Implications

- 24 The changes to the Statements of Principles, and addition of two Statements of Principles for *occipital neuralgia*, are not expected to affect the overall Crown liability relating to veteran entitlements.

Impact Analysis

- 25 The Regulatory Impact Analysis Team at the Treasury determined that the regulatory proposals in these papers 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

- 26 Veterans' Affairs will publish the changes on its website.

Proactive Release

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

Consultation

- 28 The Treasury was consulted in the course of developing the policy and the amended Schedules 1 and 2A 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, and the introduction of two new Statements of Principles, relating to conditions that may be causally connected to a veteran's qualifying service.
- 2 **Note** that I have approved revision of the names of four accepted late-onset conditions set out in Schedule 2A of the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014

in order to align them with the Statements of Principles from which they were derived.

- 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 and 2 above.
- 6 **Agree** that the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026 will come into force on 9 April 2026, thus complying with the 28-day rule.
- 7 **Authorise** the submission to the Executive Council of the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026.

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.

**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
alcohol use disorder	85/2025 Replacing 48/2017	86/2025 Replacing 49/2017
ascariasis	65/2025 Replacing 9/2017	66/2025 Replacing 10/2017
Barrett oesophagus	93/2025 Replacing 67/2016 Name has changed from Barrett's oesophagus	94/2025 Replacing 68/2016 Name has changed from Barrett's oesophagus
cardiac myxoma	83/2025 Replacing 32/2017	84/2025 Replacing 33/2017
fibromuscular dysplasia	81/2025 Replacing 79/2016	82/2025 Replacing 80/2016
gallstone disease (cholelithiasis)	69/2025 Replacing 51/2016 Name has changed from cholelithiasis	70/2025 Replacing 52/2016 Name has changed from cholelithiasis
hepatitis D infection	71/2025 Replacing 11/2017 Name has changed from hepatitis D	72/2025 Replacing 12/2017 Name has changed from hepatitis D

Condition	Statement of Principles Number	
	Reasonable Hypothesis	Balance of Probabilities
hookworm infection	67/2025 Replacing 7/2017 Name has changed from hookworm disease	68/2025 Replacing 8/2017 Name has changed from hookworm disease
incisional hernia	89/2025 Replacing 73/2016	90/2025 Replacing 74/2016
occipital neuralgia	73/2025 NEW SOP	74/2025 NEW SOP
optochiasmatic arachnoiditis	95/2025 Replacing 57/2016	96/2025 Replacing 58/2016
Parkinson disease and Secondary Parkinsonism	87/2025 Replacing 55/2016 Name has changed from Parkinson's disease and secondary parkinsonism	88/2025 Replacing 56/2016 Name has changed from Parkinson's disease and secondary parkinsonism
umbilical hernia, peri-umbilical hernia and para-umbilical hernia	91/2025 Replacing 93/2016 Name has changed from umbilical hernia	92/2025 Replacing 94/2016 Name has changed from umbilical hernia

Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026

Order in Council

At Wellington this day of 2026

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.

Contents

	Page
1 Title	2
2 Commencement	2
3 Principal regulations	2
4 Schedule 1 amended	2
5 Schedule 2A amended	2
Schedule 1	3
Schedule 1 amended	
Schedule 2	5
Schedule 2A amended	

Regulations

1 Title

These regulations are the Veterans' Support Amendment Regulations 2026.

2 Commencement

These regulations come into force on 9 April 2026.

3 Principal regulations

These regulations amend the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014.

4 Schedule 1 amended

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

5 Schedule 2A amended

Amend Schedule 2A as set out in Schedule 2 of these regulations.

Schedule 1
Schedule 1 amended

r 4

In the item relating to alcohol use disorder,—

- (a) replace “48/2017” with “85/2025”;
- (b) replace “49/2017” with “86/2025”.

In the item relating to ascariasis,—

- (a) replace “9/2017” with “65/2025”;
- (b) replace “10/2017” with “66/2025”.

Replace the item relating to Barrett’s oesophagus with:

Barrett oesophagus	93/2025	94/2025
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In the item relating to cardiac myxoma,—

- (a) replace “32/2017” with “83/2025”;
- (b) replace “33/2017” with “84/2025”.

In the item relating to fibromuscular dysplasia,—

- (a) replace “79/2016” with “81/2025”;
- (b) replace “80/2016” with “82/2025”.

Revoke the item relating to cholelithiasis.

After the item relating to frostbite, insert:

gallstone disease (cholelithiasis)	69/2025	70/2025
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Replace the item relating to hepatitis D with:

hepatitis D infection	71/2025	72/2025
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Replace the item relating to hookworm disease with:

hookworm infection	67/2025	68/2025
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In the item relating to incisional hernia,—

- (a) replace “73/2016” with “89/2025”;
- (b) replace “74/2016” with “90/2025”.

After the item relating to obstructive and reflux nephropathy, insert:

occipital neuralgia	73/2025	74/2025
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In the item relating to optochiasmatic arachnoiditis,—

- (a) replace “57/2016” with “95/2025”;
- (b) replace “58/2016” with “96/2025”.

Replace the item relating to Parkinson’s disease and secondary parkinsonism with:

Parkinson disease and Secondary Parkinsonism	87/2025	88/2025
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Replace the item relating to umbilical hernia with:

umbilical hernia, peri-umbilical hernia and para-umbilical hernia	91/2025	92/2025
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Schedule 2

Schedule 2A amended

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Revoke the item relating to cholelithiasis.

After the item relating to fibrosing interstitial lung disease, insert:

gallstone disease (cholelithiasis)

Replace the item relating to hepatitis D with:

hepatitis D infection

Replace the item relating to hookworm disease with:

hookworm infection

Replace the item relating to Parkinson's disease and secondary parkinsonism with:

Parkinson disease and Secondary Parkinsonism

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 9 April 2026, amend the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014 (the **principal regulations**).

Regulation 4 and Schedule 1 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 **Act**). The amendments—

- insert the name of 1 new condition (occipital neuralgia) and references to the statements related to that condition;
- update the names and references to statements of 6 conditions (Barrett's oesophagus, cholelithiasis, hepatitis D, hookworm disease, Parkinson's disease and secondary parkinsonism, and umbilical hernia) to reflect the updated statements;
- replace the references to statements of 6 conditions with updated references (alcohol use disorder, ascariasis, cardiac myxoma, fibromuscular dysplasia, incisional hernia, and optochiasmatic arachnoiditis).

Regulation 5 and Schedule 2 amend Schedule 2A of the principal regulations, which lists accepted late-onset conditions for the purposes of the definition of accepted late-onset condition in section 7 of the Act. The amendments update the names of 4 conditions (cholelithiasis, hepatitis D, hookworm disease, and Parkinson's disease and secondary parkinsonism) to reflect the updated statements.

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 statements, 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 New Zealand Defence Force.

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