

TARGET

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Fewer people on the Jobseeker Support benefit

50,000 fewer people on the Jobseeker Support benefit.


LEAD MINISTER

Hon Louise Upston, Minister for Social Development and Employment

LEAD AGENCY

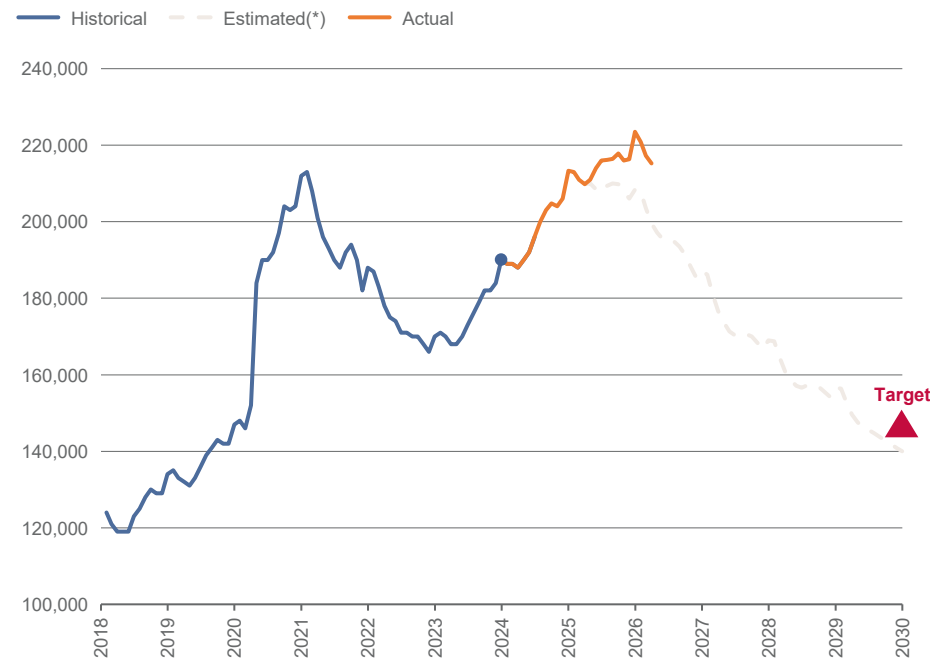
Ministry of Social Development, Secretary for Social Development, Debbie Power

TARGET DELIVERY PERFORMANCE - QUARTER ENDING MARCH 2026

Target	Baseline (December 2023)	Current (March 2026)	Status
50k reduction (140k people)	190,000	215,200	 At Risk

PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGET

Total number of people on the Jobseeker Support benefit



(*) Updated to take account of Budget Economic and Fiscal Update (BEFU) 2025 forecasts.

TARGET DELIVERY ACTIONS

The Government is committed to ensuring the welfare system is supporting people who can work into employment. Paid employment offers the best opportunity for people to achieve social and economic wellbeing.

There was a decrease of 8,300 people receiving Jobseeker Support since the last quarterly report. Typically, the number of people receiving Jobseeker Support decreases over the first quarter of each year. 1,400 more people on Jobseeker Support exited the benefit into work compared to the same period in the previous year.

Flows of people onto Jobseeker Support are expected to decrease when economic conditions improve, and as welfare system interventions are embedded in 2026, which is expected to reduce pressure on the welfare system.

The Government continues to advance a comprehensive package of reforms. Key actions include:

- **Resetting expectations and obligations of Jobseekers.** The Traffic Light System, introduced in August 2024 to reduce welfare dependency, is helping Jobseekers meet their obligations. The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is seeing around 98% of Jobseeker Support clients fulfilling their obligations, along with around a 6% drop in the number of sanctions issued between the March 2025 and March 2026 quarters.
- **Moving people into work.** MSD continues to work closely with employers to place Jobseekers into roles, focusing on large scale projects and filling jobs for sectors where Accredited Employer Work Visas (AEWV) are ending.
- **Increased activation of Case Management and client engagement.** 4,000 Jobseeker Support Health Condition or Disability (JS-HCD) clients are in employment case management, with the aim of graduated return to work. MSD continues to deliver its dedicated employment case management service for 70,000 clients in service at any point in time and its contracted services including Community Job Coaches.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

For the Ministry of Social Development's Income Support Reporting go to www.msd.govt.nz

For information on the Government Targets go to www.dpmc.govt.nz