

27 May 2022

s9(2)(a)



Thank you for your email of 28 April 2022 to Hon Dr Megan Woods, Minister of Housing, Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development, and the Tāmaki Regeneration Company. In your email you requested information on the criteria for being chosen to move into new built state homes.

Your email was transferred to Hon Poto Williams, Associate Minister of Housing (Public Housing). On 29 April 2022 the Associate Minister's Office telephoned you and you emailed a clarification of your request to them on the same day.

Your email has been transferred to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities and we have considered your information request under the Official Information Act 1982.

*I wanted to know how are tenants chosen to move in to new built state homes?
Their priority status.? How does the priority "grading" status work?*

For Kāinga Ora, placing people and families into homes is about matching them with the right house in the area they want to live. This includes ensuring the home has the right number of bedrooms, is close to essential services such as schools, and meets any disability needs if appropriate. The process is the same whether the home is existing or a new build. I have attached the Match to Suitable Home Policy (POL-354) for your information.

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is responsible for the Public Housing Register (the Register) and assessing the individual priority ratings. Once MSD has completed this process they advise Kāinga Ora, who then assesses available properties and match them accordingly.

Those assessed as having the greater need for housing will be prioritised higher. As people's needs change, their priority on the Register may change also. This means the length of time waiting for a house can vary significantly.

The Register consists of the Housing Register and the Transfer Register. The Housing Register records people who are not currently in public housing but who have been assessed as eligible for public housing. The Transfer Register represents people already in public housing who are eligible to be rehoused, generally due to a change in circumstances requiring a move to somewhere more appropriate to their needs. Household composition, housing circumstances and housing history is used to determine the housing need of a household.

These criteria are grouped into five categories: adequacy, suitability, affordability and accessibility. To qualify for public housing, a client must be assessed as having an 'at risk' (Priority A) or 'serious' (Priority B) housing need. Further information regarding the assessment of a client's housing need, housing need priority ratings and the calculation of overall priority ratings can be found on the Work and Income website [Social housing - Map \(workandincome.govt.nz\)](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/social-housing-map).

It is important that applicants information with MSD is always kept up-to-date, to ensure that the housing need has been correctly assessed. Applicants are always encouraged, if their circumstances have changed, or there are medical conditions in the household, or they would like to widen their preferred areas, to contact MSD.

Please note that Kāinga Ora proactively releases our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request may be published at <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/publications/official-information-requests/> with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rachel Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Kelly
Manager Government Relations

Policy: Match to a suitable home (POL-354)

Issue Date: 6 November 2021

Approved by: GM National Service

Owner: Practice and Customer Contact

Author: Operational Policy

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Purpose

1. This policy outlines the approach that Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities (Kāinga Ora) takes when matching an applicant or customer and their whānau to a suitable Kāinga Ora home.
2. For the purpose of this policy:
 - the term ‘applicant’ refers to a person on the Social Housing Register who may be considered for a Kāinga Ora home, but is not yet a Kāinga Ora customer.
 - a person is considered a customer once they have accepted an offer for an available Kāinga Ora property.

Background

3. One part of the objective of Kāinga Ora is to contribute to sustainable, inclusive and thriving communities that provide people with good quality, affordable housing choices that meet diverse needs.¹ As New Zealand’s largest public housing landlord, a key part of our role is providing rental housing principally to those most in need.²
4. Under our Customer Strategy, Kāinga Ora is committed to providing customers with a suitable home and the right support. The aim of matching a customer and their whānau to a suitable home, and providing the right level of tenancy management services, is to support customers to live well in their homes and sustain a tenancy for as long as they need.³
5. Living in a suitable home that meets the needs of a household is a foundation for achieving other forms of wellbeing. Research indicates that people who feel their housing is unsuitable are more likely to report lower levels of life satisfaction.⁴ The negative impacts of housing instability can also manifest across all four dimensions of wellbeing: taha tinana (physical), taha whānau (social), taha hinengaro (emotional) and taha wairua (spiritual).⁵

¹ Section 12, Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities Act 2019

² Section 13(1)(a) Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities Act 2019

³ Kāinga Ora Sustaining Tenancies Framework

⁴ Stats NZ (2020). Housing in Aotearoa: 2020. Retrieved from www.stats.govt.nz.

⁵ Durie, M. (1998). Whaioara: Māori health development. Oxford University Press.

6. Providing a suitable home from the first time a customer enters a Kāinga Ora home enables them to maintain stable housing and enhances their overall wellbeing. This contributes to wider societal benefits, particularly for tamariki, such as improved school attendance and rates of immunisation. This should also reduce the prevalence of customers transferring properties or exiting public housing and becoming homeless.
7. Under our Customer Strategy and Wellbeing Approach, Kāinga Ora is also committed to being whānau-centred and placing customers at the centre of our decision-making. This means that we will endeavour for every decision to be made with the customer's needs in mind.
8. Kāinga Ora houses customers who experience a variety of needs, including those with high and complex needs. While many customers and their whānau are relatively independent, some require additional support to live well in their homes, sustain successful tenancies and thrive in their community.

Responsibilities when allocating public housing

9. Management, prioritisation and allocation of public housing is a responsibility shared between the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and Kāinga Ora.^{6,7}
10. MSD is tasked with managing the Social Housing Register and is responsible for identifying an applicant's housing need, level of priority, and housing specification requirements.^{8,9}
11. An applicant's level of housing need is identified through undertaking a Housing Needs Assessment at the time of application. Applicants are prioritised as either 'Priority A' (severe housing need that must be addressed immediately) or 'Priority B' (serious housing need).¹⁰
12. Applicants identified as 'Priority A' are considered to be in the greatest need and are the highest priority on the Social Housing Register. Applicants are also given a 'needs score' out of 20 (20 being highest need) to allow for further prioritisation.
13. Existing Kāinga Ora customers might be placed on the Business Initiated Transfer (BIT) register where there is a business need to rehome a customer from their current Kāinga Ora property into another Kāinga Ora property.
14. Kāinga Ora is responsible for matching applicants from the Social Housing Register, and customers from the BIT register, to a suitable Kāinga Ora home. Kāinga Ora is required to allocate properties fairly, transparently and on the basis of need. This must be balanced with achieving a sustainable match (taking into account specific characteristics of the applicant and the neighbourhood).¹¹

⁶ Public and Community Housing Management Act 1992

⁷ Note, the shared responsibility between MSD and Kāinga Ora only applies to the social housing that Kāinga Ora administers

⁸ Section 2 Public and Community Housing Management (Appointment of Agency and Regulatory Authority) Order 2018

⁹ Section 101 Public and Community Housing Management Act 1992

¹⁰ Note, these priority categories are also referred to as a 'Needs Rating'

¹¹ Tenant Placement Principal, Schedule 6 [2.b], Open Term Services Agreement between Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Housing New Zealand Corporation and Housing New Zealand Limited 2019

Scope

15. This policy applies to the Coordinator Placement, Advisor Placement, and Advisor Customer Liaison (the 'Placement Team') when matching:

- an applicant from the Social Housing Register to a Kāinga Ora home; and/or
- existing customers who require a transfer to another Kāinga Ora home.¹²

Operating principles

16. The operating principles from the Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities Act 2019 that are most likely to be relevant to this policy are as follows:

- Supporting tenants to be well connected to their communities, to lead lives with dignity and the greatest degree of independence possible; and to sustain tenancies
- Working with community providers to support tenants and ensure those most in need are supported and housed
- Being a fair and reasonable landlord, treating tenants and their neighbours with respect, integrity, and honesty.

17. Other operating principles may apply to this policy as circumstances require. Any action taken to match an applicant or customer to a suitable home should be undertaken in line with these operating principles.

Policy

Our commitment to housing high priority applicants and customers

18. Kāinga Ora is responsible for ensuring that, where a property becomes available, a high priority applicant or customer takes up residence in the home.

Placement priority

19. The priority in which applicants and customers are matched to a Kāinga Ora home is determined by the principles as outlined in [Appendix 1: Principles for placement priority](#). A customer on the BIT register may take priority over an applicant on the Social Housing Register, in accordance with the placement priority principles.

Balancing priority and suitability for applicants and customers

20. When a property becomes available, a customer with a high priority BIT reason will be considered for the property first. A customer with a high priority BIT reason must be offered the property, unless the match is considered unsuitable.

¹² This may be through a Business Initiated Transfer or other transfer request

21. Where there are either no customers with a high priority BIT reason, or the available property is unsuitable for a customer with a high priority BIT reason, then a high priority applicant from a Social Housing Register shortlist will be considered for the available property.
22. The highest priority applicant from the shortlist must be offered the property, unless the match is considered unsuitable.¹³ This takes into account both the applicant's priority rating and the suitability of the property match.
23. Under our agreement with Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Kāinga Ora must be able to provide written records explaining why an applicant has been selected for a particular property.¹⁴ In doing so, we must demonstrate:
 - how we have met our obligation to allocate properties fairly, transparently and on the basis of need; and
 - how this decision has been balanced against achieving a sustainable housing match.

Understanding the applicant or customer's needs

24. While MSD provides Kāinga Ora with information from an applicant's Housing Needs Assessment, there is further opportunity to identify whether a housing match is suitable.
25. To support our ability to make a suitable housing match, Kāinga Ora provides all applicants and customers with the opportunity to complete a Pre-housing Conversation. Completing a Pre-housing Conversation supports Kāinga Ora to further understand the housing needs of an applicant/customer and their whānau, and identify any support that might be needed to move, successfully settle in and live well in their new home.¹⁵
26. The Pre-housing Conversation is primarily guided by the information the applicant or customer wishes to share regarding their housing and personal support needs. It is not an opportunity to re-assess or verify the applicant or customer's eligibility for social housing. See the [CT-GDL-011 Guideline to Complete the Pre-housing Conversation](#) for further information on undertaking a Pre-housing Conversation. Refer also to the [SS-GDL-110 Staying Safe and Secure Guideline](#) when undertaking a Pre-housing Conversation.
27. As a Pre-housing Conversation may be undertaken before a match is confirmed or an offer is made, applicants or customers should not be made aware of the potential property during the Pre-housing Conversation.¹⁶ An applicant or customer is not made aware of a property match until an offer is presented.

¹³ Tenant Placement, Schedule 6 [1.c], Open Term Services Agreement between Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Housing New Zealand Corporation and Housing New Zealand Limited 2019

¹⁴ Tenant Placement Principal, Schedule 6 [2.b], Open Term Services Agreement between Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Housing New Zealand Corporation and Housing New Zealand Limited 2019

¹⁵ See the [Pre-housing Conversation Policy](#) for further information on what information may be collected during the Pre-housing Conversation, and how this information may be used.

¹⁶ This is because, if a Pre-housing Conversation takes place before a property is fully vacant, there is the potential for circumstances to change so that the property is no longer available. There may also be some privacy implications for the current tenant should we make applicants aware of a property before it is fully vacant.

28. The Pre-housing Conversation is not mandatory. Therefore, refusal to participate in a Pre-housing Conversation will not adversely impact on an applicant or customer's ability to be housed by Kāinga Ora. Refer to [CT-GDL-006 Guideline for matching applicants and customers to a home](#) for assistance when an applicant or customer chooses not to participate in a Pre-housing Conversation.

Determining an unsuitable match

29. There are two points where Kāinga Ora may determine that a property is unsuitable for an applicant or customer:
- a. A 'bypass' can be completed by the Placement Team after a shortlist has been received from MSD for an available property, and before an initial property match has been made.
 - b. A 'withdraw' can be completed by the Placement Team after a Pre-housing Conversation has been offered (and completed if accepted), and before an applicant or customer accepts or declines the available property.

Bypass

30. A bypass may occur under limited circumstances, and when the available property is unsuitable for an applicant based on its similarity to a property that was previously withdrawn or declined. This is to reduce the administrative burden on both the applicant and Kāinga Ora of proceeding further where the property is likely to be withdrawn or declined for substantially the same reason as it was previously withdrawn or declined.
31. The decision to bypass an applicant must be made according to the conditions outlined in [Appendix 2: Acceptable reasons to bypass an applicant](#). The Placement team must always record a reason for the bypass decision.
32. The Placement Team will draw on the following information to inform the decision to bypass an applicant:
- Information within Kotahi on reasons why the applicant was previously bypassed for, withdrawn from, or declined an available property
 - Information from a previous Pre-housing Conversation or previous recorded interactions with the applicant during the placement process
 - Information from the MSD Social Housing Register application.
33. A bypass can only be made where there is sufficient and current information available to determine whether the property is clearly unsuitable for the applicant. It is unlikely that there will be sufficient information available if it is the first time that an applicant is the highest priority for an available property. For example, the applicant may not have completed a Pre-housing Conversation. This requirement is to ensure that Kāinga Ora engages with the applicant to find out what a suitable match might look like.

34. If the Placement Team does not have sufficient or current information available, or is unsure whether there is sufficient or current information available, to make an informed decision, then the applicant cannot be bypassed and the match must proceed to the next stage.

Withdraw

35. A withdraw may occur where a property match is considered to be unsuitable after taking into account the needs of the applicant or customer and the details of the available property. A property match may be considered unsuitable on two grounds:

- a. the property is unsuitable taking into account the applicant or customer's **Housing specification needs**; or
- b. the property is unsuitable due to **Legal requirements**.

36. If neither of these grounds apply, a property must be offered to the applicant or customer. This provides the applicant or customer with the opportunity to view the property and determine whether the property match is right for them and their whānau.

Housing specification needs

37. Property suitability is predominantly determined according to the housing specification needs of the applicant or customer as stated on their Social Housing Register or BIT application. This might include the required number of bedrooms, the property location, any accessibility requirements, or other specifications of the property.

38. For a property to be considered unsuitable according to housing specification needs, the property must meet the criteria outlined in **Appendix 3: Acceptable reasons to withdraw a property match**

[Appendix 3: Acceptable reasons to withdraw a property match](#). The Placement Team should consult with the applicant or customer at every appropriate and available opportunity before making the decision to withdraw a property match.

39. It is not a requirement that a property match must be withdrawn if the criteria in Appendix 3 are met. The Placement Team, in consultation with the applicant or customer, may choose to proceed with the property match if the match is considered to be suitable.
40. If an offer is made to an applicant or customer, a withdraw may only be actioned with applicant/customer agreement, and where the criteria in [Appendix 3: Acceptable reasons to withdraw a property match](#) have been met.

Legal requirements

41. There are some circumstances where a property match must be withdrawn because the applicant or customer is subject to legal requirements regarding property placement. A property will be considered unsuitable according to legal requirements for situations such as where:
 - the placement would result in a violation of the applicant or customers' probation conditions; or
 - the placement would result in a violation of the requirements for placing child sex offenders¹⁷
 - the placement would result in an applicant/customer being in close proximity to a person protected from the applicant/customer by a restraining order or protection order.
42. Where a property match is considered to be unsuitable due to legal requirements, the Placement Team does not have discretion to determine whether to withdraw a property match. If the criteria outlined above are met, then the property match must be withdrawn.

Escalation pathway

43. Where agreement cannot be reached within the Placement Team about whether a property match is unsuitable, the matter may be escalated through the agreed escalation pathway. For further information on the escalation pathway, refer to [CT-GDL-006 Guideline for matching applicants and customers to a suitable home](#).

Manual match

44. There are some limited circumstances where Kāinga Ora may need to match an applicant to a property outside of the Placement Priority Order. When this is required, the applicant will be manually matched to the property.
45. A manual match can only occur when:
 - An applicant has been identified; and
 - A suitable property is available; and
 - MSD have given approval for the manual match.

¹⁷ refer to [CT-PRO-301 Monitor and Assess Child Sex Offender Placement](#)

46. A manual match may be initiated by either Kāinga Ora or MSD. If MSD is the initiator and requests that an applicant be matched urgently, Kāinga Ora will proceed with a manual match if a suitable property is available. If Kāinga Ora is the initiator, the delegated Manager Regional Placement is responsible for liaising with the Interagency Team who will contact MSD to request a manual match be approved. The delegated Manager Regional Placement has discretion to decide when a manual match will be put forward to MSD (via the Interagency Team). For more information, refer to CT-GDL-006 Guideline for matching applicants and customers to a suitable home.

Making an offer and viewing the property

47. Where a property match is considered suitable, the Placement Team will make an offer to the applicant or customer. When presenting an offer, the Placement team must clearly set out the reasonable timeframe that the applicant or customer must provide their response to the offer by.

48. Every applicant or customer that is offered a property will also be offered an opportunity to view the property. This is to support applicants and customers to make an informed decision about whether the property is suitable for them and their whānau. It is not necessary for an applicant or customer to view a property before responding to an offer if they are unable to, or choose not to, attend a viewing.

49. Refer to CT-GDL-006 Guideline for matching applicants and customers to a suitable home for information on health and safety considerations when undertaking a property viewing.

Accepting an offer

50. Applicants or customers who wish to accept an offer must do so within an agreed reasonable timeframe as set by Kāinga Ora. If Kāinga Ora does not hear back from the applicant or customer within the agreed timeframe, all reasonable efforts will be made to contact the applicant or customer to confirm their acceptance of the property. In the event Kāinga Ora is still unable to make contact, the offer will be treated as a decline.

Declining an offer

51. Should an applicant or customer decline an offer of a property, Kāinga Ora will notify MSD. Kāinga Ora is responsible for appropriately recording the reason/s why an applicant or customer has declined a property.

52. Following a declined offer, Kāinga Ora must discuss with the applicant whether they wish to be bypassed from similar available properties in the future based on the reason the applicant or customer gives for the decline of the current available property.

Definition of terms

Term	Definition
Applicant	A person who is eligible for social housing and is yet to be housed by a social housing provider (ie, an individual on the Social Housing Register).

	For the purpose of this policy, the term ‘applicant’ is used to refer to a person who may be considered for a Kāinga Ora property, but is not yet a Kāinga Ora customer.
Business Initiated Transfer	Where Kāinga Ora requires a customer to move out of the property they are currently renting for business reasons, they are placed on the Kāinga Ora Business Initiated Transfer (BIT) Register.
Bypass	A system response in Kotahi where, if the available Kāinga Ora property is unsuitable for the highest priority applicant, the next highest priority applicant may be considered for the available property instead.
Customer	A person who is a tenant of a Kāinga Ora property and anyone living at the property with the tenant’s permission. For the purpose of this policy, a person is considered a customer once they have accepted an offer for an available Kāinga Ora property.
Housing Needs Assessment	Assessment undertaken by MSD to assess an applicant’s level of housing need.
MSD Social Housing Register	Register held by MSD that prioritises applicants who have been assessed as eligible for social housing. Kāinga Ora pulls a shortlist from the Register when a Kāinga Ora property becomes available.
MSD Transfer Register	Register held by MSD which operates in the same way as the Social Housing Register, except that an applicant will have a TR (transfer register) next to the application number, rather than a HR (housing register). The MSD Transfer Register is used for existing customers who require a move, but where none of the BIT reasons apply. In these circumstances, customers are referred to MSD.
Placement Priority	This determines the priority in which applicants or customers may be matched to available properties.
Pre-housing Conversation	Conversation between applicants/customers and Kāinga Ora to inform a suitable match decision. This is a voluntary conversation that is focussed on an applicant/customer’s housing and wellbeing needs.
Shortlist	List of applicants on the MSD Social Housing Register who have been matched to a Kāinga Ora property by Kotahi.
Waitlist	List of applicants on the MSD Social Housing Register. This list is refreshed and updated on a regular basis.
Withdraw	An offer status in Kotahi. Where a property match is not suitable for an applicant or customer, they may be withdrawn so that the match does

	not proceed. Applicants who are withdrawn will remain on the MSD waitlist.
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Related policies, procedures, legislation and documents

53. This document should be read in conjunction with the following policies, processes and guidance:

- CT-GDL-006 Guideline for matching applicants and customers to a home
- CT-PRO-001 Match applicants and customers to a suitable home
- CT-728 Manage tenant transfer
- CT-GDL-011 Guideline to complete the Pre-housing conversation
- Sustaining Tenancies Framework
- Framework for supporting public housing customers to access social support services
- Pre-housing Conversation policy
- SS-GDL-110 Staying Safe and Secure

54. Relevant legislation:

- Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities Act 2019
- Public and Community Housing Management Act 1992
- Open Term Services Agreement between Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Housing New Zealand Corporation and Housing New Zealand Limited 2019
- Ministerial Direction on Eligibility for Social Housing 2014
- Treaty of Waitangi
- Residential Tenancies Act 1986
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Privacy Act 2020

55. Relevant strategies and frameworks:

- Customer Strategy
- Kāinga Ora Strategy
- The Māori Strategy
- Wellbeing Approach
- Community Strategy

Review

56. This policy will be reviewed on an as needed basis.

Document control

Date	Reviewed/Modified by	Comments/Descriptions of changes
Nov 2021	Alice Palmer – Senior Policy Advisor	Drafted

Appendix 1: Principles for placement priority

A Business Initiated Transfer (BIT) must be given priority over a MSD Housing Register applicant where the BIT is considered high priority.

Priority is determined by applying the following principles:

1. **Safety and security** – we will prioritise the health and wellbeing of customers and their whānau, where a property poses a significant risk or is causing detrimental effects to a customer’s health or wellbeing.
2. **Legal obligations** – we will prioritise transfers where it is required to meet legal obligations such as where the lease has expired or the customer is required to move residence because of a court order.
3. **Enabling housing for future customers** – we will prioritise transfers where a customer is required to move from their current property in order to allow for a redevelopment or other asset related matter to take place.
4. **Empowering customers to maintain connections to their communities** – we will give customers choice where we can and help make their house a home by enabling them to maintain connections to their communities.

In order to be considered a high-priority BIT, consideration must be given to whether the BIT is necessary to ensure one of the principles outlined above is met. Applicants on the Social Housing Register will be given priority over other (non-high priority) BIT customers.

Principle	Includes (but is not limited to):
Safety and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where rheumatic fever has been identified and the applicant/customer and their whānau need to be urgently placed in a suitable Kāinga Ora property, or moved to an alternative Kāinga Ora property. • the property is uninhabitable due to damage by fire or flood, structural damage, or due to meth contamination • where there is significant overcrowding (characterised as requiring 2 bedrooms or more) • Modification moves such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where a customer no longer requires the modifications that are in their current property and is required to move in order to free up a modified home for another customer - where a customer requires modifications that are not possible in their current property. <p>Note: <i>The previous procedure for Special Event BITs is now captured under this guiding principle.</i> <i>Where a property is uninhabitable to the point where a customer cannot return to that property, Kāinga Ora will seek to re-house the customer as a BIT</i></p>

	<i>move if another property is available within 10 days. If another property will not be available until after 10 days or longer, then the customer will require a MSD transfer application.</i>
Legal obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a customer's current property is part of a Home Lease Programme (HLP) and a lease expiry notice has been given that requires Kāinga Ora to release the property back to the owner. This is a legal requirement that Kāinga Ora must abide by.
Enabling housing for future customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a customer is required to move from their current property so that redevelopment or other asset related matters can take place (For example, customers are required to vacate to permit works for earthquake strengthening). This may include modification moves which did not fall under the safety and security principle.
Empowering customers to maintain connections to their communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a customer has previously been moved due to a redevelopment and they have accepted the option to be re-housed in the same community as the original property that they were moved from (for redevelopment). Meth rehousing - This is for previous customers who were impacted by the Kāinga Ora zero-tolerance policy relating to meth use prior to 2018. Where the zero-tolerance policy resulted in a previous customer's tenancy being terminated, Kāinga Ora has sought to remedy these past terminations by offering to house these previous customers into available Kāinga Ora properties. This only applies to eligible applicants who were impacted prior to 2018, and is only triggered once an eligible applicant contacts Kāinga Ora and declares that they were impacted by the zero-tolerance policy relating to meth use.

Other reasons that would not meet the threshold for a high-priority include:

- where a BIT is approved to resolve a community issue, provided all other avenues to resolve the issue have been exhausted (**ASB**)
- where a customer is transferred to another property so that the current property is better utilised (**underutilisation**)
- where overcrowding, characterised as a need for one additional bedroom, has been identified (**overcrowded**)

Appendix 2: Acceptable reasons to bypass an applicant

The below table outlines guidance on when a bypass is an acceptable course of action.

Bypass reason in Kotahi	Guidance on when this reason may be used to bypass an applicant
Previously bypassed a similar property	<p>An applicant may be bypassed based on the recorded reason for the most recent previous bypass, withdraw, or decline of an available property.</p> <p>However, the following conditions apply before an applicant may be bypassed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the specifications of the available property are approximately the same as the property specifications of the previously bypassed/withdrawn/declined property; and • it has been less than three months since the most recent bypass/withdraw/decline; and • a discussion between Kāinga Ora and the applicant has occurred relating to why the property specifications are not suitable for the applicant. <p>An applicant cannot be bypassed if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it has been three months or greater since they were last bypassed/withdrawn/declined. The property match process should proceed as the applicant’s personal circumstances may have changed, and they may choose to accept the available property. • there are no clear signs that Kāinga Ora has spoken to the applicant before, or about the reasons why a property is unsuitable for them. This means that there is unlikely to be sufficient, recent information available to determine suitability. The property match should proceed so that Kāinga Ora can engage with the applicant to understand their housing needs, or consider if the reasons for the previous bypass/withdraw/decline are still valid.
Unsuitable match for area/ neighbourhood	An applicant may no longer be bypassed according to this pre-existing option in Kotahi – all bypass decisions must meet the criteria as stated under <i>‘Previously bypassed a similar property’</i> above.

Appendix 3: Acceptable reasons to withdraw a property match

The below table outlines the different reasons for withdrawing a property match, including guidance on when a property match is, and is not, an acceptable course of action.

The Placement Team has discretion to determine whether the below criteria are reasonably met for each withdrawal reason. However, the Placement Team should look to consult with the applicant or customer before making the decision to withdraw a property match at every appropriate and available opportunity.

Withdrawal reason in Kotahi	Guidance on when this reason may be used to withdraw a property match
Created in error	Use where a match or offer has been created in error. This might include where an error is made while making a manual match.
Unable to contact applicant	Use when a match has been made to an applicant or customer, but Kāinga Ora cannot successfully make contact with the applicant or customer to provide them with an offer. A withdraw cannot be made unless Kāinga Ora has attempted to contact the applicant or customer at least three times using different methods of communication (call, text, email etc). If contact is unsuccessful, the match may be withdrawn using this reason.
MSD declined match	Use where a system notification (b2b) is received from MSD indicating that the applicant is no longer available to match to a property as the applicant is currently under offer for a property with another social housing provider. This withdrawal reason applies to the following b2b notification: MSDD
Not on MSD waitlist	Use where a system notification (b2b) is received from MSD indicating that the applicant has been removed from the Social Housing Register. This happens when MSD become aware of a change in the applicant's circumstances that impact on their housing application. This withdrawal reason applies to the following b2b notification: MSDN
Property offered to BIT applicant with higher need	Use where a customer with a high priority Business Initiated Transfer (BIT) reason has been offered the available property instead of the Social Housing Register applicant. The current Placement Priority Order in Appendix 1 : outlines what BIT reasons are considered high priority for placement compared to applicants from the Social Housing Register.
Customer no longer requires housing	Use when an applicant, before receiving an offer, informs the Placement Team that they no longer require a Kāinga Ora property. This might occur when:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the applicant has acquired private accommodation; or • the applicant chooses to remain in their current accommodation. <p><i>Note that if an applicant informs Kāinga Ora that they no longer require a Kāinga Ora property after receiving an offer for an available property, this should be recorded as a decline not a withdraw.</i></p>
Applicant temporarily unable to accept the offer	<p>Use when an applicant is physically or otherwise unable to accept an offer due to a temporary change in circumstances. The property may be held for the applicant on a case by case basis, for a reasonable amount of time, depending on the time frame of the temporary circumstance. In these circumstances, Kāinga Ora must consult with the applicant or customer as appropriate.</p> <p>For example, this withdrawal reason might be used when an applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is hospitalised and is expected to be in the hospital for an undetermined amount of time • has custody/remand issues in the process of resolution where the time frame for resolution is undetermined • has sustained an injury or undergone surgery which has resulted in a temporary mobility challenge, and where the property contains stairs etc, and the expected recovery timeframe is undetermined • is required to give 28 days’ notice for their current private rental property and this is unable to be negotiated • is intending to move cities/regions to where the available property is located, but there is a delay in the applicant’s ability to move, or the move has not yet been organised.
Incorrect property description	<p>Use when the property is unsuitable for the applicant or customer due to the property details on Kotahi being inaccurate or unspecific. An applicant or customer may have been matched to a property based on the available data, but it is identified throughout the viewing process that the property data is not accurate. This has resulted in the property not meeting the applicant or customer’s housing specification needs. In these circumstances, during the property viewing, Kāinga Ora must consult with the applicant or customer before deciding to withdraw.</p> <p>This might occur when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kotahi has noted that a property has been modified, but upon viewing the property, it is apparent that the modification is not sufficient for the applicant/customer. For example, a property may only have handrails installed in the bathroom, however the applicant/customer requires wheelchair accessibility throughout. • there is limited or missing information about the accessibility of the property on Kotahi. For example, when an applicant/customer requires a flat access property due to old age or mobility challenges,

	<p>but the property has a steep driveway which makes the property difficult to access.</p> <p><i>Note that if this withdrawal reason is used, then the Placement Team must make a request for the property details to be updated on the system.</i></p>
Property no longer available	<p>Use where a property has been vandalised, significantly damaged, or additional work has been identified which means that the property is no longer available, or that there will be substantial delays before the property is ready to let. There must be consideration of the duration of any delays, and whether the applicant or customer would like to wait for the work to be completed before the property can be withdrawn.</p> <p>For example, this withdrawal reason might be used when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a significant maintenance issue that has not yet been entered into the system (eg, discovery of structural damage) • a health and safety issue has been discovered on inspection of a property (eg, discovery of black mould) • methamphetamine contamination has become evident • the property has been significantly damaged due to fire, flood etc.

<p>Property not suitable for applicant</p>	<p>Note: This withdrawal reason refers to whether a property is unsuitable according to the physical aspects of the property – this includes house size, section size, accessibility components, property type (house, apartment etc), or other property specifications. In these circumstances, Kāinga Ora must consult with the applicant or customer as appropriate and where possible before deciding to withdraw.</p> <p>This withdrawal reason may be used to withdraw a property match where the available property:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would likely endanger the health and safety of the applicant/customer or their whānau. For example, consider if there is a significant safety risk to any children or whānau members with special needs; consider the implications for applicants/customers or whānau who are elderly or have a relevant health condition (not recorded as disability). • does not reasonably allow for the applicant/customer to have pets. For example, the property does not have adequate outdoor space to accommodate the type and number of pets, in accordance with the Kāinga Ora POL-306 Policy for Pets. • is considered unsuitable for cultural reasons, such as a property without multiple bathrooms or separate kitchen and living spaces. Where an available property may not meet cultural requirements, the property match should be withdrawn only with the applicant/customer’s agreement. Otherwise, the property match should proceed to offer so that the applicant or customer can determine if the property is unsuitable by accepting or declining. <p>Note that there are some circumstances related to physical property suitability where withdrawing a property match is not an acceptable course of action.</p> <p>This withdrawal reason cannot be used where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other Kāinga Ora policies or programmes are in place to mitigate the potential risk to health and safety of applicants/customers or their whānau. For example, a property match cannot be withdrawn based on a whānau with small children being matched to a property without fencing, having a shared driveway, or being too close to a main road. This is because Kāinga Ora have a Driveway Safety Programme in place. • other Kāinga Ora policies outline how to manage customer property requests. For example, where simple, straightforward accessibility requirements can be reasonably accommodated for in accordance with the Kāinga Ora Accessibility Policy, such as the installation of a hand rail in the shower.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional information learned about an applicant/customer or their whānau changes their property specification needs/eligibility. For example, a property match cannot be withdrawn if the Placement Team discovers that the applicant/customer now requires an additional bedroom. Kāinga Ora must first confirm eligibility with MSD before considering whether to decline and refer back to MSD, or withdraw the property match.
Mismatch with neighbourhood	<p>Note: this withdrawal reason refers to whether a property is unsuitable according to the neighbourhood and relational aspects of the immediate community – such as the location of the property and interactions with neighbours.</p> <p>This withdrawal reason may be used to withdraw a property match where there is good and justifiable evidence of compelling and sensitive issues that would make the neighbourhood clearly unsuitable for the applicant/customer or their whānau. This means that proceeding with the match is likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • result in significant stress to the applicant/customer or whānau member • result in a significant risk to the health and safety of neighbours of the available property • cause significant ongoing tenancy management problems/difficulties. <p>In these circumstances, Kāinga Ora must consult with the applicant or customer as appropriate and where possible before deciding to withdraw.</p>

	<p>Examples of situations where ‘neighbourhood mismatch’ may be used to withdraw a match:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an applicant or customer has known, clear and current affiliations with a gang (eg, is an active member of a gang) and the placement would result in the applicant/customer being located on the same street or immediate area where members of a rival gang are also located. Such a placement is unlikely to be a sustainable one for the gang member being placed, and in addition, might place them at risk of harm. If this placement is likely to result in harm to the applicant/customer, other violence, or significant community disruption, then the property match may be withdrawn. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Note that it is not acceptable to withdraw a property match based on an applicant having known, clear and current gang affiliations alone. An applicant/customer may be affiliated with a gang in any way they choose without this affiliation affecting their ability to be housed by Kāinga Ora. The decision to withdraw must be related to proximity to a rival gang and the resulting likelihood of harm/violence or community disruption.</i> • an applicant/whānau member has been a recent victim of family violence, and the available property is in an area close to the abuser • an applicant/whānau member presents with exceptionally challenging behaviours (unsafe, physically aggressive or abusive) that present as a significant safety risk to Kāinga Ora staff and/or neighbours. <p>There must be a good and justifiable reason to withdraw a property match based on neighbourhood mismatch. This withdrawal reason cannot be used where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • withdrawing the property match does not align with the Kāinga Ora Sustaining Tenancies Framework. This might apply to situations where there are existing Kāinga Ora policies that outline the approach to provide support that addresses the applicant/customer’s needs. For example, a property match cannot be withdrawn based on past complex or disruptive behaviours, mental health or addiction challenges, known poor credit history, or a previous eviction or termination from a Kāinga Ora home. The <u>Sustaining Tenancies Framework</u> outlines our approach to supporting and managing customers with complex behaviours and needs. • an applicant or customer requires wrap-around support to live well, but does not have that support in place prior to placement. The <u>Framework for public housing customers to access social support</u>
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	<p><u>services</u> outlines the role of Kāinga Ora in connecting customers to appropriate support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an applicant or customer would be predominantly impacted by a perceived issue or risk, but where this is not a strong enough reason to justify not offering an applicant a house. In these scenarios, applicants and customers should be involved in the decision-making process, rather than Kāinga Ora making a business decision based on a perceived issue without consultation. For example, a property match should not be withdrawn based on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the applicant or customer with a young family placed in an area occupied by older tenants (where this is not an elderly person's home)- the location of the available property not matching the exact neighbourhood that the applicant/customer has indicated would meet their need
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Appendix 4: Overview of match process

The below diagram depicts a high-level overview of the match process and how key aspects of this policy fit into the match process. For further details and guidance at each step of the below process, refer to [CT-PRO-001 Match applicants and customers to a suitable home](#) and [CT-GDL-006 Guideline for matching applicants and customers to a home](#).

