



Media Release | For immediate release – 6 May 2025 Proposed Changes will halt the Social Service Workers Pay Equity Claim

Te Pai Ora SSPA, the national organisation representing community-based social service providers, is raising serious concerns about sweeping changes to the Equal Pay Act announced by the Government today. The amendments threaten to halt progress on the Social Service Workers Pay Equity Claim — one of 33 claims now at risk — and could undermine years of work to achieve fair pay for kaimahi across the sector.

The proposed amendments will end the progress of the claim – a long-standing issue for many in the sector. Te Pai Ora SSPA has been acting as sector coordinator and representative.

The Social Service Workers Pay Equity claim covers around 1200 workers from eight representative provider organisations, this is estimated to be about 10% of the overall social sector workforce. 70% of the kaimahi who will be impacted by today’s decision are female.

“Our sector is already under immense pressure, with many providers facing funding cuts and reductions to critical services to children and whānau,” says Belinda Himiona, Chief Executive of Te Pai Ora SSPA.

“These proposed changes to the Equal Pay Act add another layer of uncertainty and concern. Our kaimahi work tirelessly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and whānau, and it is important that their efforts are recognised and fairly compensated.”

The Social Services Workers Pay Equity Claim covers a range of roles including Youth Workers, Family Support Workers, Financial Mentors, Foodbank Co-ordinators, Therapists, as well as a wide range of roles providing support for front-line services.

“The claim has already faced delays and complications due to policy changes by the government last year. Today’s announcement introduces new barriers,” says Himiona.

In response, Te Pai Ora SSPA has been forced to pause further work on the claim while seeking clarity of the full implications of the changes.

Te Pai Ora SSPA is concerned that the Government intends to amend the Equal Pay Act under urgency, limiting opportunities for submissions and public consultation. The organisation strongly believes that any changes to the Act must be made with the full picture and an understanding of the impacts from the sector and those directly affected.

“The Social Service Workers claim covers a wide range of critical roles that provide essential services to children and families across Aotearoa New Zealand,” says Himiona.

ENDS

Belinda Himiona is available for interviews upon request: ceo@sspa.org.nz | 021 0230 1029



Editor's Notes:

ABOUT SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS TE PAI ORA O AOTEAROA | www.sspa.org.nz

Te Pai Ora SSPA is a membership-based organisation, representing more than 230 non-profit, community-based social service organisations from around Aotearoa New Zealand. Our member organisations are diverse, including small rural organisations, Iwi and kaupapa Māori service providers, Pacific providers, and large national children's organisations. Our member organisations provide life-changing and often life-saving services and support in their communities.

Te Pai Ora SSPA's full members are funded by government to deliver social services in our communities every day, with a predominant focus on children, rangatahi, families and whānau. Our affiliate members are organisations that deliver social services for these people, and organisations and individuals working in areas aligned to the interests of children, young people, whānau or communities.

Te Pai Ora SSPA's vision is that Aotearoa New Zealand's community-based social services are sustainable, making a positive impact every day in our communities and hāpori, supporting children, young people and whānau to thrive now and into the future. Te Pai Ora SSPA works to strengthen Aotearoa New Zealand's social sector through advocacy and engagement, learning and development, relationships and sector leadership.