



Office of Hon Paula Bennett

MP for Waitakere

Minister for Social Development and Employment

Minister of Youth Affairs

07 SEP 2010

Tarnya Burge
tarnya@slingshot.co.nz

Dear Mrs Burge

Thank you for your email of 10 August 2010 to Hon Judith Collins regarding exemptions for home schooling parents on the Domestic Purpose Benefit. Minister Collins has forwarded your email to me for reply, as the matters you raise fall within my portfolio responsibilities.

I wrote to you and the Executive Committee of the National Council of Home Educators New Zealand, of which you are a member, on 20 May 2010. In this letter I explained that final details around the Future Focus benefit reforms were being worked through, including exemptions from meeting work obligations for sole parents receiving DPB.

This work has now been completed. There are exemptions from meeting work obligations for people who home school a dependent child, and this has been extended to include DPB sole parents.

However, the criteria for the exemption have been considerably tightened. It is no longer sufficient to just have an exemption certificate from the Ministry of Education. A parent also needs to have a very good reason for home schooling their children.

Parents on the DPB who home school their children need to make contact with their case manager and talk through their particular situation. Anyone who is home schooling at the moment and has an exemption certificate from the Ministry of Education will be able to continue to home school until the end of the 2010 school year based on current criteria.

You and your children have certainly been through a sad, and, I imagine, stressful time with the death of your husband this year. I commend you for managing a home business, as well as home schooling three of your children.

The Government believes that paid employment is the most effective route to independence and well-being. It is also the best way to reduce the risk of family poverty.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely

Hon Paula Bennett
Ministry for Social Development and Employment