

# Guidance on the new pay spine for social work in community and iwi organisations

As a result of the social work pay equity settlement extension, there's a new pay system.

## The new pay system:

- introduces equitable rates of pay for social work roles funded by government contracts
- provides different rates for roles that are registered and those that are not registered
- provides workers with step-based pay progression – this means workers progress through 1 step each year as a minimum.
- cannot and will not reduce anyone's pay or terms and condition of employment.

## Understanding the pay spine

- Different categories of work start and finish at different points on the pay spine.
- Salaries for each category do overlap at some points. This overlap recognises overlapping levels of skills, responsibility and effort within the categories at certain points.
- Each step represents a year of experience.
- Employees progress through (move up) one step each year as a minimum.
- No employee can start below the first step within the band for their category.

## Translation

Employees are translated from their current salary to their place on the pay spine based on:

- their category of work, and
- their years of relevant experience in that category

## The Pay spine

Step	Salary	
Step 1	\$58,964.33	<b>Category 3</b> Non-registered professionals undertaking work substantially similar to social work
Step 2	\$63,500.52	
Step 3	\$68,037.77	
Step 4	\$74,839.35	
Step 5	\$77,107.21	
Step 6	\$81,642.92	<b>Category 4</b> Registered social workers/professionals leading practice
Step 7	\$86,178.64	
Step 8	\$90,713.36	
Step 9	\$95,250.08	
Step 10	\$102,000.00	
Step 11	\$104,321.51	
Step 12	\$108,857.23	
Step 13	\$113,392.90	
Step 14	\$117,928.60	
Step 15	\$122,464.30	

**Start here** →

**Category 1**  
Registered or registerable social workers in frontline practice

and

**Category 2**  
Registered professionals in social work roles

→ **Finish here**

← **Start here**

← **Finish here**

## How do I find my new salary?

1. Find the starting step for the category of work you are in. For example: if you are a registered social worker (category 1) the starting step is step 3.
2. Count up from the starting step the number of years 'relevant experience' you have (including the first step for your category).

For example: if you are a registered social worker and you have five years' experience you start at step 3 and count up five steps (including step 3). Your new place on the pay spine is step 7, \$86,178.64.

Please note:

- each step = 1 year of experience
- Always count the first step for your category as year 1 of experience and count up from there.

## What does 'relevant experience' mean?

- Relevant experience includes employment (part-time or full-time) in any role that fits within a worker's current category of work.
- Relevant experience is not limited to a current role or organisation.
- Relevant experience spans different job titles, roles and places of employment but MUST fit within the worker's current category.
- You cannot count previous years of experience if they are in a different category of work. For example: a registered social worker (category 1) would not count years of experience in a previous category 3 role where they were being overseen by other social workers and required a higher level of oversight.

## The Pay spine

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**Category 1**  
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# Translation examples

Disclaimer: these are not actual people or organisations



## Jen – Category 4 : Practice Lead

Jen is a registered social worker and a team leader at Wellington Family Help Trust. Jen provides day to day oversight for a team of 6 registered social workers and falls into Category 4.

- **Jen has been in her current role for 4 years.**
- **Jen’s current salary is \$92,000 p/a.**

### Work History

- Social work service manager at Capital and Coast DHB – 5 years
- Social worker at Capital and Coast DHB - 10 years
- Key worker at Pōneke Stopping Homelessness Trust - 4 years
- Office administrator at Smith Street Primary School – 7 years

### Translation

Jen has a total of **9 years relevant experience** in category 4. This is made up of 4 years in her current role and 5 years at Capital and Coast DHB in another practice lead (category 4) role.

**Jen’s new position on the pay spine is: Step 15 - \$122,464.38 p/a**



## Sam - Category 1: Registered Social Worker

Sam is a registered social worker and works at Nelson Stopping Violence. In her current role, Sam works alongside two other social workers providing support to whānau experiencing family harm.

- **Sam has been in her current role for 2 years.**
- **Sam’s current salary is \$61,000 p/a.**

### Work History

- Key worker at Gore Housing Trust – 1 year
- Youth Worker at Ngā Rangatahi ō Maruawai - 4 years
- Disability Support Worker at Enabled Invercargill – 1 year

### Translation

Sam has a total of 3 years relevant experience in Category 1. This is made up of 2 years in her current role and 1 year at Gore Housing Trust in another social work practice (category 1) role.

**Sam’s new position on the pay spine is: Step 5 - \$77,107.21 p/a**

## Translation examples

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### Anahera - Category 2: Registered Nurse

undertaking  
social work

Anahera is a registered nurse working at the Taranaki Youth House in a social work role. Anahera works alongside registered social workers to deliver support to rangatahi engaged in the youth justice system.

- **Anahera has been in her current role for 2 years.**
- **Anahera's current salary is \$69,700 p/a.**

#### Work History

- General practice nurse at The Hauora Clinic – 4 years
- Emergency department nurse at Taranaki Regional Hospital - 2 years

#### Translation

Anahera has a total of **2 years relevant experience** in category 2. Anahera's previous experience is not considered 'relevant' in the context of the social work pay equity extension because in her previous roles she was not undertaking social work.

**Anahera's new position on the pay spine is: Step 4 - \$74,839.35 p/a**



### Manaia - Category 3: Kaimahi

Manaia is Kaimahi at the Central City Shelter working alongside other kaimahi and social workers to support people experiencing homelessness.

- **Manaia has been in his current role for 5 years.**
- **Manaia's current salary is \$57,550 p/a.**

#### Work History

- Community work supervisor at Corrections – 1 year
- Kaimahi at Whangarei Community Housing Collective – 6 years

#### Translation

Manaia has a total of **11 years relevant experience** in Category 3. This is made up of the 5 years in his current role and the 6 years as Kaimahi at the Whangarei Community Housing Collective.

Manaia's experience as a community work supervisor is not considered relevant experience because this role does not meet the criteria for category 3.

**Manaia's new position on the pay spine is: Step 5 - \$77,107.21 p/a**

(This is the top step for category 3. Manaia's employer may wish to provide additional pay increases over time, but this is not compulsory.)