

# How the pandemic has been approached in New Zealand

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## Wage and leave payments (subsidies)

- Wage Subsidy (and later Extension)
  - For businesses with reduced revenue, to be paid to staff, very little admin
  - Paid at \$350 part-time and \$585.80 full-time – same as paid parental leave
- Leave Support Scheme
  - For business to pay staff who can't work from home or can't go to work due to health guidelines

## COVID-19 Income Relief Payment

- For those who lost their job (including self-employed) from 1 March 2020 to 30 October 2020 due to COVID-19
- More generous eligibility rules than Jobseeker Support (standard benefit)
  - Partners can earn up to NZD \$2,000 gross per week > \$90 per week
- Payment rate significantly higher
  - NZD \$490 full-time, \$250 part-time (not taxed) > NZD \$250 (after tax)

# Childcare

- No additional childcare support was offered\*
- Other than for children of essential service workers during the lockdown (Alert Level 4) period when in-home care was funded by Government

\*NZ has a partial subsidy for 3-5 year olds in ECE but there is no support for 0-2 year olds

# COVID-19 responses

## Analysis

- Some support for those in paid work
- More generous than usual support for those who lose their jobs
- No support for those in unpaid work or those facing increased childcare responsibilities (predominately women)

## Parental leave and COVID-19

- Temporary change made to allow return to work without losing remaining leave entitlement
- One temporary return to work only
- Not considered to be 'on parental leave' at that time, parental leave is 'paused'
- Still only one transfer of leave, so cannot switch between parents/carers

## Other parental leave changes

- From 1 July 2020, parental leave is now available for 26 weeks
- This was an election promise from 2017 and the staggered increase to 26 weeks over the last few years was implemented as part of their '100 day plan'