



Office of Hon Paula Bennett

MP for Waitakere

Minister for Social Development and Employment

Minister for Disability Issues

Minister of Youth Affairs

12 FEB 2009



Thank you for your email of 1 February 2009 asking about this government's plans for the Domestic Purposes Benefit, in particular the introduction of work obligations and how they relate to those who home school their children.

This government believes that paid work is the route to independence and well-being for most people, and is the best way to reduce child poverty. Long-term welfare dependency locks people into a life of limited income and limited choices. Work is beneficial not only for the greater earning potential it provides, but also for the dignity, self-worth, and sense of belonging that is part of being in a workplace.

Sole parents will be required to spend at least 15 hours per week in employment, training, or job-seeking activities once their youngest dependent child is aged six or over. Work and Income already has the discretion to exempt parents from work obligations. For example if they are caring for a child with a physical or intellectual disability.

Much work still needs to be done around how the work obligations will be implemented. I have noted your views on home schooling and will consider whether or not an exemption should be applied.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely

Hon Paula Bennett
Minister for Social Development and Employment