

Westport Flood Assistance Information



Local Assistance

The Community Hub

175 Palmerston Street, Westport
Phone 0800 768 348



WESTPORT FLOOD RECOVERY
Community Hub

Kawatiri Waipuke te whakaora ake Hapori Pokapū

The Community Hub is free one-stop-shop for flood affected residents. Community Hub staff can assist residents and their set of unique needs that have arisen because of the flooding. The Community Hub works with relevant agencies, providing a single point of assistance and vital connections to information on temporary accommodation, financial assistance, insurance and legal advice, wellness and psychosocial support, and community events and initiatives.

If you are feeling a little isolated or overwhelmed and just want to call in and have a cuppa and a chat our Community Hub team are a friendly and welcoming bunch!

Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4pm

Saturday 12 noon to 2pm

Community Connectors

We know asking for help is hard, but Community Connectors are here to support you. They will help you access information and services across multiple agencies in your flood recovery journey.

Community Connectors provide an individualised, relationship-based service that supports you and your whanau. A Community Connector will help you to navigate through terminology and processes you don't understand or are struggling to deal with. Individuals, families, elderly and those with high health needs – mental or physical – will benefit from someone walking alongside to clarify matters and support them in their decision making.

Head into the Community Hub and staff there can connect you to a local Community Connector.

Mayoral Relief Fund

The Buller Mayoral Relief Fund is making grants to individuals, families and organisations affected by the floods. Pick up an application form from the Community Hub or the Council office or download the Mayoral Relief Fund application form via Council's website. Staff at the Community Hub can help you fill in the form if you need assistance.



Frequently Asked Questions

I've been staying in some temporary accommodation and for now I'm fine. What about in 3-6 months' time?

Register your situation with Temporary Accommodation Service (TAS). TAS provides support to help anyone displaced by natural disasters by helping to find suitable temporary accommodation while their home is repaired or rebuilt.

Temporary Accommodation differs from 'shelter' and 'emergency accommodation' which is provided for a short time. Temporary Accommodation is used for short to medium term. If you expect your situation to change in the future, register your needs with TAS now.

I am staying with friends and family and can stay as long as I need to. Do I still need to register with TAS?

All residents who have a red or yellow stickered home need to register with TAS.

Even if you think you won't need assistance with temporary accommodation, it is important to register with TAS, just in case the need arises. There is the real possibility that some home rebuilds will take longer than homeowners may anticipate. Staying with friends or family for extended periods of time can become challenging, especially if timeframes continue to be moved out.

I am living with my family and friends and it is becoming difficult for us all, is there anyone who can help?

Yes, register with TAS. If you are displaced from your home due to the floods, get in touch and register your situation with them. By having your information now, they can have a better understanding of the needs of our community for the future.

I've been put into temporary accommodation and my needs have changed. Is there anywhere else I can go?

If you're registered with TAS let your matching and placement coordinator know your situation has changed. They will work with you to find a solution.

My insurance money is going to run out eventually, what will I do after that?

Register with TAS. They have a skilled team who can help with accommodation needs, however, there is generally a cost. If you are uninsured, or your insurance policy doesn't cover temporary accommodation, you may be eligible for financial assistance. TAS coordinators can direct you to agencies providing financial assistance for the event that has damaged your home.

Someone I care about is struggling, where can they get support?

Pop along to the Community Hub if you want to talk to someone, they can also refer you on to other support services. You can free call or text 1737 if you want to get in touch with a qualified counsellor/peer support person.

My children are not coping, where can families get support?

Get in touch with your children's school for some helpful resources. Plunket has a free phone to call also – 0800 933 922. There are some great online resources/activities for children at kidshealth.govt.co.nz. Keep an eye out in the community for upcoming events that could help alleviate that stress.

Are there free GP visits now? How can I access this?

Yes. If you are a registered patient of Coast Medical or Buller Health who has been affected by the floods, there are free GP and nurse visits until early November.

I just want to talk to someone, where can I go?

To the Community Hub! They invite anyone to come and have a cuppa and a chat. They can also connect you to a Community Connector who can walk alongside you and connect you to other support services.

I'm having trouble understanding my insurance, who can help?

Head to your insurance provider. They'll be happy to explain your insurance and help you lodge claims. Or go to the Community Hub and they can connect you with Residential Advisory Service (RAS) who will be able to help you.

I'm having issues with my insurance company, what can I do?

Residential Advisory Service (RAS) is a free service for property owners facing challenges with homes being rebuilt or repaired following a natural disaster. There's access to skilled brokers, legal and technical expertise as well as help working with insurers to progress your claim.

I don't have insurance, or I'm underinsured, where can I go for help?

MSD can offer some financial advice around your house and contents. Residential Advisory Service (RAS) may also be able to assist for those houses that have been underinsured. Community Connectors or staff at the Community Hub can help connect you to organisations providing donated goods.

I have been offered a full and final cash payout from my insurance company. What should I do?

It is vital to seek qualified independent advice if you are offered a payout. Contact the Community Hub who will be able to put you in touch with Residential Advisory Service (RAS).

Support Agency Details

Temporary Accommodation Service (TAS)

Phone 0508 754 163, 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday

Or register online at <https://tas.mbie.govt.nz/west-coast-flooding/>

The Temporary Accommodation Service assists households affected by a natural disaster to find safe, secure and accessible temporary accommodation while their home is repaired or rebuilt.

Residential Advisory Service (RAS)

Phone 0800 777 299

Email info@advisory.org.nz

www.advisory.org.nz

RAS is a free, independent and easy to use service for residential property owners who are facing challenges in getting their home repaired or rebuilt after it has been damaged in a natural disaster. RAS gives you access to a skilled broker, legal and technical expertise, and helps you work with your private insurer to progress your claim.

Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

www.workandincome.govt.nz

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) helps New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent. We work to provide employment, income support and superannuation services. There is a range of ongoing and one-off financial assistance with different conditions and requirements that people need to meet first.

The Service Centre is located at 212 Palmerston Street, Westport. If you have any queries or would like to chat with a Case Manager around what assistance we could possibly provide, please phone 0800 559 009 to make an appointment.

There's also more information on MSD's website where you can find out what you may be eligible for.

West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB)

All people enrolled at both Buller Medical Centre and Coast Medical in Westport who have been directly affected by the recent flood event have zero fees for GP and Nurse Practitioner appointments until early November this year.



For free health advice after hours, enrolled patients can call their GP practice and follow the instructions on the answerphone – for Buller Medical Centre ring (03) 788 9277 and for Coast Medical ring (03) 789 5000

For health advice at any time:

- For wellbeing support you can talk to a counsellor free of charge, call or text 1737 any time of the day or night
- Call Healthline on 0800 611 116 – calls are answered 24/7. If you need to be seen, they will tell you what to do and where to go
- Buller Pharmacy at 168 Palmerston Street Westport is open for over the counter medications and health advice
- The Alcohol Drug Helpline offers support to anyone concerned about their own or someone else's drug or alcohol use 0800 787 797
- Talk confidentially about a meth or P – 0800 METH HELP 0800 6384 4357
- For pregnancy support and advice over the phone, please call your LMC/midwife
- If you have questions about your young child or baby's health phone Plunketline on 0800 933 922 to speak to a Plunket nurse

- For Māori whanau, message, phone or email rehia.mcdonald@teha.nz, 021 028 3484 at Te Hā O Kawatiri if you need support.
- Contact Poutini Waiora – a kaupapa Māori health and social service provider that delivers holistic care to whanau across Te Tai O Poutini. Freephone 0800 333 170, press 3 for Kawatiri.

Buller District Council Information

Alternative rates options

We as a community are facing many challenges after the flooding event together and we are here to support you. We know that flood affected residents and business owners are worried about their finances and this financial year's first-rate instalment is due on the 28 August 2021.



While Council cannot make changes to the rates this financial year, Council is looking at alternative payment arrangements that might help you. If you can pay your next instalment, we ask you to do so. If you cannot, or can only afford to partially pay your rates, we have some suggestions for you:

- Set up a direct debit to spread your payment equally over the instalment period or beyond.
- Consider increasing the frequency of an existing direct debit to make smaller, more regular, payments.
- Reduce the amount of your direct debit temporarily until your situation improves.
- Defer the payment of the next instalment without penalty, then pay two instalments together next time. This requires some certainty that you will be able to pay a higher amount in November.
- Depending on your household income, you may be eligible to receive up to \$665 off your rates account through the Rates Rebate Scheme contact Council for help to determine if you are eligible.
- Apply for a rates payment extension

Council is offering an extension of time for the rates that are due on 28 August 2021. All eligible ratepayers will have up to six months to pay this instalment.

Talk to the rates team during usual business hours by phoning 03 788 9608 or 0800 807 239. Email info@bdc.govt.nz.

