

7 September 2023



Kia ora 

Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-027135

Thank you for your email of 17 August 2023, asking for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

- *Can an individual opt out of ACC's ISSC Service?*
- *Is the ISSC a fundamental requirement for a Claimant under the AC Act 2001?*
- *Can we have any and all paperwork available pertaining to helping us understand if and how a person could, if they so chose to, opt out of the ISSC Service?*
- *If a person did opt out of the service, how would ACC's NGCM system show that the policies and procedures that govern the ISSC Service would not apply to this individual, or more importantly should not be utilised upon this person?*

Our interpretation

We have interpreted the term 'opting out' as referring to a client exiting the ISSC service specifically and this response is based on that understanding. If you are interested in further information, or information pertaining to a particular circumstance, please let us know.

ACC launched Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims (ISSC) in November 2014

Section 21 of the Accident Compensation Act 2001 (the AC Act) refers to cover for a mental injury from offences listed in Schedule 3 of the AC Act; these refer mainly to sexual abuse. Section 21 claims are known as sensitive claims. ISSC was established to allow people to access immediate, up-front support for these types of claims. This support is a requirement under the AC Act.

The ISSC service acknowledged that there will be clients who decide not to proceed with an assessment for a mental injury diagnosis and allows for immediate short-term support for those clients (referred to as pre-cover support). If longer term treatment is required, a formal diagnosis of a mental injury linked to the sexual assault or abuse (supported assessment) is required.

Where a client chooses not to undergo a supported assessment for cover, and only accesses the pre-cover supports, the claim is noted as withdrawn in ACC's claims management system and recorded as declined. However, survivors can return to the ISSC for further support at any time that feels right to them and proceed through to a supported assessment.

The supported assessment was designed to ensure that clients are supported through the assessment process by providing: flexible timeframes (allowing the assessment to be completed over a number of sessions); pre and post-assessment support; the option to involve their regular therapist or a support person in assessment sessions and, the opportunity to review and amend the assessment findings before they are sent to ACC.

Further information about exiting ISSC can be found on:

- page 78 of: www.acc.co.nz/assets/contracts/issc-operational-guidelines-december-2022.pdf; and
- Page 23 of: www.acc.co.nz/assets/contracts/issc-schedule.pdf.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public

ACC has decided to publish a copy of this response on ACC's website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available www.acc.co.nz/resources/#/category/12.

If you have any questions about this response, please get in touch

You can email me at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz.

Ngā mihi



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Government Engagement