

Registration update

We continued to receive a constant flow of applications from charitable organisations over the past month. As at 18 April, 172 charities were successfully registered and a further 500 completed applications had been received.

A quick analysis of the sectors of operation among registered charities shows the majority work in education, training and research (96 charities), followed closely by health (55 charities) and social services (53 charities). The largest group of beneficiaries from these services are children/young people (88 charities) and the general public (73 charities).

Search the Charities Register on our website www.charities.govt.nz for more information about charities registered under the Charities Act.

Exactly what do we mean by “advocacy”?

The Commission’s approach to advocacy and registration is set out in a new fact sheet on the topic. [Fact Sheet 19: “Advocacy” and the Charities Act](#) tackles the big questions, including:

- “Is advocacy charitable or non-charitable?”
- “Will advocacy stop our organisation from qualifying to register?”
- “How will the Commission assess advocacy activities?”

This fact sheet is available on our [website](#), or call our free information line **0508 242 748** to request a copy by post.

Iwi/Māori organisations and the Charities Act

The Charities Act has some implications for Māori, in particular:

- organisations that provide benefits to a group with common ancestry, such as hapu or iwi, may be considered charitable
- marae may be accepted as having a charitable purpose if the marae is physically

located on land that is a Māori reservation and other requirements are met.

Read our new [Fact Sheet 13: Iwi/Māori organisations and the Charities Act](#) for more information relating to marae and charitable purpose, trusts under Te Ture Whenua Māori Act and the Māori Trust Boards Act 1955. Please call us on **0508 242 748** to request a copy to be posted to you if you don’t have Internet access.

Charitable purpose and sport

The Commission is currently considering its approach to applications for registration under the Charities Act from amateur sporting bodies. A paper setting out our view of the law of charitable purpose as it applies to amateur sporting bodies will be released at the end of May. If you would like to receive a copy of this paper when it becomes available, please send your contact details, outlining your request, to info@charities.govt.nz or call us on freephone **0508 242 748**. We’ll also post it on our website.

A new face in our management team

We welcomed Sandra Bennett to the Charities Commission recently as Communications and Education Manager.

Sandra has a strong background in senior communications roles in both the private and public sector. With a keen interest in social marketing, Sandra says that “working for the Charities Commission is a great opportunity, and I’m looking forward to working in this sector.”

Sandra joins us from Inland Revenue where she was Communications Manager for a programme that focused on educating industry groups in the cash economy about their tax and social policy responsibilities.

Sandra has also worked for AXA and Telecom as a Communications Manager.

Your questions

Q: When will I be notified about the outcome of our application?

A: Once we receive everything we require (e.g. a completed application form, all officer certification forms and a copy of your rules), it will currently take about 30 working days (6 weeks) to process your application. This is a guide only and can vary according to the complexity of an application, whether or not we need to contact you for more information, and the volume of applications we are managing at the time.

If your application is successful, a registration certificate is sent to your charity's address for service and relevant details are published on the Charities Register. If we need more information to consider your application, we will write to you (see "Letters from the Commission" below). If we find something that might result in us declining your application, we will send a formal notice, explaining our reasons and giving you the opportunity to have your say on the matter.

Q: Can we fast-track our application?

A: No. We cannot "fast-track" any applications because doing so would compromise the integrity of our process and outcomes, which are critical to promoting public confidence in the charitable sector. Applications are allocated to registration analysts for consideration in order of the date they become complete. As a matter of fairness and impartiality, each application must go through the same standard process and be subject to the same consideration.

Letters from the Commission

We may need to write to you if we don't have enough information to register your organisation under the Charities Act. Here's an insight into the types of letters we send to applicants and why.

1. *Letters indicating the application is incomplete*
We cannot consider an application for registration until it is complete. The most common reason for sending these letters is incorrectly completed Officer Certification Forms (Form 2). Frequent errors include

leaving the certification box blank on page 2, sending us just one page of the form instead of two, and a discrepancy between the number of Officer Certification Forms provided and the number of officers specified in the rules. These letters are sent for some 9% of applications and 8% relate to Form 2.

2. *Letters that relate to section 18(3)(a) of the Charities Act, asking for detail relating to your activities*

Some organisations' rules have object or purpose clauses that are very high level and all encompassing. While it is clear that the organisation has a charitable purpose, it is not clear how their activities might benefit the public. To date, we have sent these letters, which seek more information about activities, to about 4% of applicants.

3. *Letters entitled "Notice that your charitable purpose/name/officers may lead to a decline of your application for registration"*

These letters indicate that we have fully considered an application, but there is insufficient evidence in the material supplied to approve registration. Such letters are rare and normally relate to an organisation's charitable purpose. Receiving one of these letters does not necessarily mean that your application will be declined. Applicants are provided with a reasonable amount of time (usually 20 working days) to make a submission to the Commission.

Guidance material

Our registration information packs contain all the relevant fact sheets and forms to consider and begin an application.

There are special information packs for **group registration** under the Charities Act, if you would like to consider this option for your organisation.

Download your registration information pack at www.charities.govt.nz (follow the link from our homepage) or call our free information line **0508 242 748** to request a copy by post.