

Media release

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0800 SORT MONEY provides free easy access to budget advice

New Zealanders now have easier access to free budget advice thanks to 0800 SORT MONEY (0800 767 866), a service provided by the Retirement Commission with the New Zealand Federation of Family Budgeting Services.

Retirement Commissioner Diana Crossan says a realistic budget is an important first step to getting money matters sorted.

"Many people struggle with setting a budget. That's why this service is so helpful - a budget helps people to get on top of their bills, see where they can save money and make decisions that will help them to get ahead."

Calls to 0800 SORT MONEY are answered by trained budget advisers from the New Zealand Federation of Family Budgeting Services. Callers requiring more help and information are encouraged to make an appointment with a budget adviser.

All callers receive a pack with tips on preparing a budget, a budget sheet and information about what to expect when meeting a budget adviser.

"Anyone who just wants help getting started or is struggling to make ends meet can call 0800 SORT MONEY," says Ms Crossan.

"Budget advice can have major benefits. It can help you better meet all your family's requirements and to see the areas where spending a little extra money could make a real difference. It can also help you see your way to putting money aside for emergencies and long term goals like a house, your children's education or retirement.

"Getting help can also take the worry out of meeting bill payments and debt repayments, and at the end of the day it can help you get ahead financially."

Family Budgeting Services are located throughout New Zealand. They provide a free, confidential and culturally-aware service.

0800 SORT MONEY is available Monday-Thursday 10am-8pm, Friday 10am-4pm, Saturday 10am-2pm.

People with internet access are also being encouraged to do the Sorted budget calculator on the Retirement Commission's free and independent website, sorted.org.nz.

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For more information, please contact:

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Sorted Budget Calculator
<http://www.sorted.org.nz/calculators/budget/>

Copies of the *Making a budget that works* leaflet are available for free, from <http://www.sorted.org.nz/home/sorted-sections/kiwisaver/for-employers/sorted-resources/order-kiwisaver-pamphlets-and-posters>.