

UPDATE



THE ROLE OF BOOKKEEPERS WITH THE RSP

The Institute of Certified NZ Bookkeepers (ICNZB) has received clarification from Inland Revenue regarding the ability for Registered Bookkeepers to apply for the Resurgence Support Payments on behalf of their clients

Bookkeepers role within myIR for the RSP application process

Inland Revenue (IR) have come back to us following our request for clarification on the role of Bookkeepers in the application process for [Resurgence Support Payments](#) (RSP) on behalf of clients. As we know, Tax Agents are able to apply but not Registered Bookkeepers. This led to some confusion in the lead-up to the release of the RSP, so we are happy to now have clarification.

The response from IR mentions the reason for this difference between Bookkeeper Agents and Tax Agents is due to the limitations of how each party is defined in the [Tax Administration Act 1994](#) (TAA):

"A decision to allow tax agents (as defined in legislation, Section 124C TAA 1994) to apply for RSP on behalf of their clients, so long as they hold the correct authority to do so, was made by the Commissioner and reported to the Minister earlier this year. At this time, other intermediary types were considered, however, as none are specifically defined in legislation and therefore there is nothing that differentiates bookkeepers from "representatives" (Section 124D TAA 1994), this was not recommended due to the risks posed."

"The ability of bookkeepers to apply for RSP on behalf of their clients is part of a broader issue regarding the role of bookkeepers in the tax system. We encourage you to raise these issues with the Inland Revenue policy team in your meeting tomorrow."

While this means there's no quick-fix solution to the issues currently faced around the RSP application process, it clarifies for us where the barriers are and gives us a pathway to advocate on behalf of Bookkeepers for a more inclusive role in the tax system.





As bookkeepers we can still support our clients to make their applications, collating the supporting information and advising them on the application process. In this way we can work to enable our clients to submit the applications themselves and retain the required supporting evidence.

ICNZB to continue our advocacy

The clear reasoning outlined above feeds into the current advocacy work that ICNZB is doing on behalf of the entire bookkeeping industry. The association has for many years pushed for Bookkeepers to be recognised alongside other third-parties as a part of the TAA updates and overall business transformation process at IR. This advocacy was successful and was a great achievement that has allowed Bookkeepers to now be registered with IR.

In the coming months, we will be advocating for increased recognition of the bookkeeping industry and the work that Bookkeepers do as the silent engine room of businesses across New Zealand.

We'll be working to see what options there are available for Bookkeepers to be better recognised and advocating for inclusion of these options in future updates to the tax system.

Many of the issues with the RSP and the wider role of Bookkeepers in the tax system were raised by ICNZB in the meeting we held with their policy team on the 27th August. This meeting saw some positive feedback on the role of bookkeepers in the future of the tax system and will hopefully support our overall advocacy, increased knowledge of bookkeepers with IR and support for our proposals for improvements within the tax system.

What can you do as a bookkeeper to help?

Register. If you meet the eligibility criteria, register as a Bookkeeper with IR. Registration gives you more control over the relationship and tax type links you have with your clients as well as greater reporting and insights than those available to Nominated Persons. This also is an invaluable sign to IR about the scale of our industry, the type of work we do and the support we offer to businesses of all sizes nationwide.

We know that the current eligibility criteria is a bit out of sync with our industry. This is because we are group along with large entities such as payroll intermediaries. This is something that we are working on with IR but as the criteria are legislated in the TAA, it is not a quick or simple thing to adjust.

ICNZB are dedicated to supporting our members, the bookkeeping industry as a whole and the businesses our members support nationwide. We're all in this together.

Join us to help drive the industry forward

If you are not yet a member, join ICNZB to help us advocate on your behalf for the recognition and support you deserve. Just one of the many benefits of membership is the ability to feed your issues or challenges directly to our team and enable us to advocate on your behalf to government. To find out more about joining, [click here](#).