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Cyclone Gabrielle: Temporary housing service kicks in for thousands with homes ruined by cyclone in regions



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PM Chris Hipkins talks to Hawke's Bay Today Editor Chris Hyde after a Cyclone Gabrielle media conference at HB Showgrounds, Hastings. Video/Warren Buckland ...

A Government service to find alternative housing for the thousands facing a long wait for their own homes to be repaired after Cyclone Gabrielle has kicked in from Northland to Hawkes Bay this morning.

Housing Minister Megan Woods said the Temporary Accommodation Service - which houses people while their own homes are rebuilt - could now be on offer for those in Northland, Gisborne, Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay, Waikato and the Tararua District.

It was already activated in Auckland after the pre-cyclone flooding, and Woods said it was estimated that about 1200 to 1800 households in Auckland alone would need temporary accommodation while their own homes are repaired or rebuilt.

Numbers across the other regions could be well in excess of that - last week it was estimated about 10,000 had been displaced by the cyclone, although for some it would be short term while others would continue to choose to stay with family or friends.

People can register on the TAS website [here](#) or by calling 0508 754 163.

Woods said it might take some time for the service to be able to offer everyone a place because of the magnitude of the disaster.

"The severity and close timing of these weather events means that TAS is having to stand-up its largest and fastest responses to date," Woods said.

"TAS has been scaling up, preparing and planning to meet this response but with a natural disaster of this magnitude affecting so many households and so much infrastructure, this may take time."

She said the options for accommodation included hotels, motels, motor lodges, and portable accommodation, as happened following the Christchurch and Kaikoura earthquakes, the West Coast flooding in July 2021 and Nelson/Marlborough floods of August last year.

The accommodation usually comes at a cost to those requiring it, which could be covered by insurance where a policy provides for it.

The accommodation service is operated by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and is activated after a natural disaster and alternative accommodation for people while their homes are rebuilt or repaired.

5th The Tas national manager, Al Bruce, told the *Herald* it had started preparing for the "unprecedented" event by scoping vacant housing and other accommodation - from rentals to baches, motels and Airbnbs.