

Tauranga City Council 0800 Emergency Management Support Line Call Handling Guidelines

Purpose of the 0800 TCC HELP Number (0800 822 4357):

- Activated during emergencies or disasters to support people impacted in Tauranga.
- Functions as a triage point to:
 - Gather initial details from callers.
 - Prioritize callbacks based on urgency.
 - Determine whether welfare support is needed or if the caller should be referred elsewhere.
- Needs Assessors from the Emergency Operations Centre Welfare team conduct follow-ups through callbacks to thoroughly assess and address welfare needs.

Call Handling Procedure

Step 1: Opening the Call and confirming the caller has a welfare-related need.

- Greet the caller:
 - *"Thank you for calling our Emergency Support line. My name is [Name]. May I start by getting your name, please?"*
- Acknowledge the event and offer help:
 - *"We're here to help if you're in Tauranga and have been impacted by the [name of emergency event]. Is that what you're calling about, or is there something else I can assist you with?"*

Step 2: Caller information

A. Contact details:

- Collect the caller's details for follow-up by a Needs Assessor:
 - Name.
 - Contact phone number
 - Alternative Contact phone number(s).
 - Email address.
 - Address (provide information in notes if the person has evacuated and located at another address).



B. Priority callback requirements:

- Ask: *“Are there any issues with your phone that might affect our ability to call you back?”*
 - Priority callback needed within 1-2 hours due to potential loss of communication [✓]
Yes (Provide further information in notes).
 - Support with translation required – [✓] Yes
 - Language _____ (Indicate in notes if there are any issues with identifying the language for a callback).
 - Support with a communication disability required – e.g. deaf/hard of hearing. – [✓] Yes

Step 3: Identifying Urgent Welfare Needs

- Ask: *“Do you need help right away or is your situation less urgent?”*
- Flag the case as a priority in CCM fields and include brief notes if any of the following apply:
 - Displaced/evacuated and needs immediate transport to an Emergency Assistance Centre/alternative accommodation.
 - Displaced/evacuated with mobility/disability needs requiring special accommodation.
 - Medical needs/medication requiring response within 12 hours.
 - Caller displays very high stress or anxiety levels.
 - Isolated without essential supplies (food/water expected to run out in 12-24 hours).
 - Other urgent issues (specify): _____.

Step 4: Closing the Call

- Reassure the caller and confirm next steps - ensure the caller clearly understands they will receive a callback as soon as possible. The EOC Welfare Team can update Contact Centre Staff on anticipated callback times:
 - *“Thank you for reaching out today, and I appreciate your patience. We want to ensure we fully understand your situation, so a trained assessor will call you back as soon as possible. They will discuss your needs in detail and connect you to the appropriate support. In the meantime, if you have any further questions, please don’t hesitate to get in touch again.”*



Medical Emergencies:

- Immediate medical emergencies: advise the caller to hang up and dial 111.
- Medical help needed within one to four hours: also advise the caller to dial 111.
- If the caller cannot reach emergency services for their urgent medical need, the EOC Welfare Team may be able to connect them to help. Notify an EOC welfare team staff member directly, either in person or by calling **s 7(2)(a) - Privacy** and provide the relevant details.

General Questions about the Emergency Event (e.g., road closures, service availability):

- Respond using the FAQ fact sheet provided by the Emergency Operations Centre.
- Direct callers with internet access to the TCC website for additional information.

Non-Welfare Council-Related Queries (e.g., water, roading, rubbish):

- Respond to the caller and refer them to the appropriate team.

Troubleshooting Caller Concerns**Q: "Why can't you help me now?"**

- *"We're receiving many calls, so our team is focused on answering them quickly. A trained Needs Assessor will speak with you soon to better understand your situation."*

Q: "Why does someone else need to call me back?"

- *"We want to fully understand your needs so we can connect you to the right support. A trained Needs Assessor will have a detailed conversation with you shortly."*



Welfare needs assessment covers the following areas:

- Disability support needs
- Clothing, linen, food, fuel, household products, personal sanitary and sanitation items/needs, cooking equipment.
- Services such as electrician/plumber - help with making contact with service provider)
- Emergency accommodation
- Ongoing temporary accommodation
- Animal welfare- sourcing emergency accommodation for pets, vets, supplies, pet food.
- Talking to someone about what has happened – psychosocial support
- Health assistance – prescriptions, mobility assistance, linking to medical support
- Financial assistance – no access to cash/needing financial support
- Requiring help with an affected business
- Primary Industry assistance – agriculture, horticulture, forestry
- Non-domestic animal assistance – e.g. stock

