

Support our call to Auckland Council to

CONTINUE FUNDING AUCKLAND CABs

Auckland Council is proposing to substantially reduce or completely cut funding to Auckland CABs. This would result in the closure of the CAB in Auckland and loss of this essential service to communities across Tāmaki Makaurau. We are taking action to stop this happening.

WHAT WE WANT

We are asking the Mayor and all Auckland Councillors to drop this proposal and ensure continued funding for Auckland CABs. Citizens Advice Bureau provides critical social infrastructure through its accessible, confidential, free service of information and advice. It is highly valued by Aucklanders and its services are needed now more than ever.

WHY AUCKLAND COUNCIL SHOULD FUND CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

It's consistent with Auckland Council's role in promoting community well-being



CAB is a community service that is run and delivered by volunteers from the Auckland community. The Local Government Act places responsibility on Auckland Council for social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of local communities. This has been reflected in the Council's *Thriving Communities Strategy - Ngā Hapori Momoho 2022-2032*. Funding the CAB is an effective way for Council to meet its goals. The CAB has a key role to play in ensuring people are connected to the information, advice, support and services they need to navigate life's problems and challenges - which, for many, are increasing and becoming more complex.

CAB meets community needs that Auckland Council and others cannot

As a free, independent service with 32 sites across Auckland, CAB is able to reach populations that other agencies struggle to connect with. The service is accessible – face-to-face, by phone and online. Help is not time limited, which allows volunteers to provide a level of empathy, impartiality and anonymity that can be hard to find elsewhere. As a universal service, there are no barriers for people seeking help. CAB is often a first port of call and is also where Council and others send people when they don't have answers or time to help.

Auckland CABs are lean and cost-effective with a high return on investment

Auckland CABs receive around \$2m in Council funding p.a. This funding provides the staff support, overhead costs, and local infrastructure to support 900 highly-trained volunteers to deliver the CAB service to the public. Last year Auckland CABs helped over 163,000 people. CAB provides a significant return on investment for its funding, eg, ImpactLab measured the social good of assistance provided by CAB North Shore for clients with relationship issues. It found that it delivered measurable social good, equating to \$13.20 for every \$1 spent on the service. Annually, \$2m funding gives a potential return of \$26.4m.

Central government funding supports all Auckland CABs through its funding of CABNZ, the national body of CAB. Central government funding enables the underlying infrastructure, including the IT system, intranet and knowledge base, that all volunteers in Auckland use to deliver the CAB service. These are significant essential costs that Auckland Council does not have to cover.

ABOUT AUCKLAND CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

- Auckland CAB is an essential service and has been in operation in Auckland for over 50 years. Staffed by over 900 fully-trained volunteers, the 32 CAB sites across Auckland provide free help to anyone to navigate their issues and problems and understand their options.
- This includes help with housing and tenancy, relationship issues, neighbour disputes, employment and small business matters, consumer protection, immigration, income support and access to food assistance, as well as local issues like rubbish and recycling services, rates, local body elections, parking, water, sewerage, noise and nuisance, and more.
- Last year, Auckland CABs helped 163,186 clients to understand their rights and responsibilities, connect with services and support.
- Auckland CABs meet the needs of a diverse range of people. Clients span age groups and ethnicities. 53% of Auckland CAB clients are non-NZ European.
- Auckland CABs are agile and responsive in times of emergency and crisis. Assistance provided during the recent severe weather has included access to emergency accommodation, food relief, Civil Defence support payments, and advice about damage to property, blocked drains, trees, tenancy rights, and insurance.
- We also provide a significant place of community connection, belonging and contribution for our substantial workforce of volunteers who share their skills, time and aroha with Auckland.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

“ *This is a valuable essential service which must be retained particularly at this time when many people need a helping hand up from a free confidential service.* ”

“ *I have used CAB frequently for years. Their services are legendary. Their information invaluable.* ”

“ *I've lost count how many times Citizens Advice Bureau has helped me!* ”

“ *A lifeline of multi-talented lived skills and experience in the wider communities they serve. Pragmatic approach to ensuring clients get the best of their talents in navigating everyday life events.* ”

“ *The very real needs met by CABs won't simply go away if their funding disappears.* ”

**SAVE
AUCKLAND
CABS**



HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Sign the petition <https://our.actionstation.org.nz/petitions/save-auckland-cabs> or in person at your local CAB.
- Make a submission to Auckland Council when the consultation document comes out – scheduled for release on 28 February - <https://akhaveyoursay.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/hub-page/annual-budget-2023-2024>