

Consultation - Proposed practitioner fees 2026/2027 - Medical Laboratory Science

October 2025

Executive summary

Te Kaunihera Pūtaiao Hauora O Aotearoa | The Medical Sciences Council (the Council), as a responsible authority under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (2003), charges fees for services provided to practitioners. The Council also has the ability to impose a levy to pay for disciplinary matters.

In response to increasing costs faced by the Council it is proposing to increase most fees for the 2026/2027 financial year.

- a. An increase is proposed for most fees, including those paid for a practising certificate. For medical laboratory science practitioners, the proposal means that the cost of a practising certificate would increase from the current **\$372.90 to \$400.00** (inclusive of GST).
- b. The proposal means the disciplinary levy would remain at **\$57.50** (inclusive of GST).

Practitioners are invited to give feedback about the proposal which the Council will consider before making a decision. Practitioners will be advised of the outcome of this consultation and any changes to fees will be published in the New Zealand Gazette.

Background

Te Kaunihera Pūtaiao Hauora O Aotearoa | The Medical Sciences Council (the Council), is responsible for making sure health practitioners are competent and safe to practise. As part of this role, the Council sets fees for the services it provides to practitioners. It can also charge an extra fee (called a levy) to cover costs related to disciplinary actions. Right now, the Council is planning to raise these fees and is asking for feedback from registered practitioners and stakeholders before making a final decision.

What the Council does

What the Medical Sciences Council Does

The Council's responsibilities are set out in the [Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003](#) (the Act). Its work is split into two main areas:

- **Strategic work** – long-term planning and improvements
- **Business-as-usual** – day-to-day operations

The Council's strategic work is guided by its strategic plan, which is available on its website. From 2023 to 2026, the Council is focusing on three key areas:

1. **Improving how regulations are aligned**
2. **Fulfilling its role as a Treaty of Waitangi partner**
3. **Developing a better approach to using data**

Between 2023 and 2025, the Council has made progress in all these areas. This includes:

- Progressing work on the scope of practice and competence standards for medical laboratory science
- Creating a Māori practitioner advisory committee
- Replacing its practitioner database system.

Business as-usual-activities

Alongside its long-term planning, the Council also carries out its regular, day-to-day work.

This includes:

- Processing applications for registration and applications for practising certificates
- Running recertification and audit processes
- Managing issues related to a practitioner's competence, health, or conduct

It's hard to know in advance how many of these cases will come up each year, so the Council needs to make sure it has enough funding to handle them properly.

How the Council is funded

The Council gets its income from fees paid by practitioners, mostly when practising certificates are issued each year around February and March. The Council does **not** receive any funding from the Government.

The Council understands that practitioners face financial pressures, and it works to balance those concerns with the need to maintain and improve its services.

To plan for the future, the Council received independent financial advice in 2022. That advice showed that fee increases were necessary to keep the Council running effectively. Even after a fee increase in 2024–2025, another increase is still needed to stay financially stable.

You can find the Council's audited financial statements in its [annual reports](#) and on the [Charities website](#).

The Council also has a [reserves policy](#), which helps guide decisions about how much money it should keep in reserve. These reserves help ensure the Council can continue operating and cover costs for disciplinary cases, including those referred to a Professional Conduct Committee or the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal. The reserves policy is available on the Council's website.

Proposed fee changes for 2026/2027

The Council is proposing to increase most medical laboratory science practitioner fees for the 2026-2027 practising year. The proposed fee increases are necessary for the Council to meet the ongoing costs of delivering its regulatory functions and responsibilities. For most practitioners the main change would be the annual practising certificate (APC) fee.

- a. The proposal means the APC fee would increase from the current **\$372.90 to \$400.00** (inclusive of GST).
- b. The proposal means the disciplinary levy would remain at **\$57.50** (inclusive of GST).

A table of proposed fees is included in Appendix A.

Frequently asked questions

What do the fees cover?

The fees collected by the Council help pay for its day-to-day operations and long-term projects. Fees are set to cover the actual cost of providing services, so those who benefit from the services help pay for them.

The Council provides services both to individual practitioners and to the wider practitioner community.

What will the increased fees be used for?

The Council is proposing to raise fees so it can cover all the costs of running its services and meeting its legal responsibilities under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

The extra funding will also support the Council's strategic goals, including:

- Upgrading its information systems to improve efficiency and protect data
- Work to help address long standing issues of health inequality.

What is a disciplinary levy used for?

This is a single fee used to cover the costs when a practitioner is referred to a disciplinary process, such as a Professional Conduct Committee or the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal. When this happens, the profession must pay for it - not the individual practitioner involved. The money from this levy can only be used for disciplinary matters.

Each year, the Council must pay a set fee to the Tribunal based on the number of practitioners, even if no cases are referred. There's also an additional fee to support education for Tribunal members who work in specific professions.

The Council is proposing **no change** to the disciplinary levy, so it would stay at **\$57.50 (including GST)**.

Why don't individual practitioners who are being investigated pay for disciplinary procedures?

If a practitioner is referred to the Tribunal and the charges are proven, the Council may be able to recover some of the costs as part of the penalty. However, before charges are laid, a lot of work needs to happen—starting with an investigation to decide whether there's a case to answer.

All of this early work must be paid for by the Council.

What does the Council do to minimise costs?

The Council regularly reviews how it operates to make sure it's getting the best value for money. It follows good practice guidelines from the Office of the Auditor-General and Treasury.

One key way the Council keeps fees lower than other similar regulatory bodies is by sharing services with the Medical Radiation Technologists Board. This partnership means:

- Staff resources are used more efficiently
- Office space is shared
- Both organisations use the same IT systems

This helps reduce costs while still delivering quality services.

Why does the Council have reserve funds?

Having a healthy level of financial reserves is essential for the Council to stay financially stable. Under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, the Council must fund its work through fees - it does not receive any money from the Government.

This means the Council relies entirely on practitioner fees to operate. You can find more information about how reserves are managed in the Council's reserves policy, available on the consultation page.

Are there any developmental initiatives the Council needs to fund?

The Council has several important projects planned for 2026–2027, many of which have already been mentioned in this document. These include:

- Supporting national efforts to improve health equity and provide culturally safe healthcare
- Strengthening its relationships and communication with stakeholders.

These initiatives are part of the Council's commitment to making meaningful and lasting improvements in the health system.

Are there any IT projects that the Council needs to fund?

Like any organisation, the Council needs to invest in its technology and data security. It recently completed a project to review how it manages information and the systems it uses.

To do its job properly and protect practitioner data, the Council must have strong and efficient IT systems. In 2026–2027, it will review its website and IT support services to make sure they work well for practitioners and are easy for both practitioners and the public to use.

Feedback and submissions

The consultation document will be sent to all registered and practising medical laboratory science practitioners. It will also be sent to a number of key stakeholder organisations and will be available on the Council's website.

The Council encourages all practitioners and interested organisations to share their views and make submissions.

Before making any final decisions about the proposed fee changes, the Council will carefully review all feedback and submissions. If a decision is made to change the fees, practitioners will be informed, and a public notice will be published in the *New Zealand Gazette*.

Please note: because this is a public consultation, the Council may publish responses on its website. If you submit feedback as an individual, your personal and contact details will be removed before publication. You can view the survey questions below in Appendix B.

Submissions must be received by **11.59pm, Wednesday 3 December 2025**.

Submissions can be made by completing the survey found [here](#).

If you have any questions, please email mscconsultations@medsci.co.nz with subject line **MLS Fees Consultation**.

Ngā mihi

Dr Susan Calvert

Chief Executive

Appendix A

Schedule of proposed fees

Medical Laboratory Science Practitioners			
Fee type	Current (GST inclusive)	Proposed (GST exclusive)	Proposed (GST inclusive)
Registration Fee			
Registration fee (Aotearoa New Zealand graduate)	503.80	\$471.30	\$542.00
Registration fee (internationally qualified)	788.69	\$737.39	\$848.00
Additional scope	143.00	\$133.91	\$154.00
Annual Practising Certificate (APC)			
Renewal of APC received by 31 March	372.90	\$347.83	\$400.00
Renewal of APC received after 7 April	522.49	\$488.70	\$562.00
Application for an initial or Return to Work APC	372.90	\$462.61	\$532.00
Application for a first practising certificate for an Aotearoa New Zealand graduate between 1 December and 31 March each year.	214.50	\$231.30	\$266.00
Supply of Documents			
Registration certification/re-issue of registration certificate	83.59	\$78.26	\$90.00
Letter of good standing	83.59	\$78.26	\$90.00
Restoration to the register	83.59	\$78.26	\$90.00
Online Examination Fee	3394.59	\$3,173.04	\$3,649.00
Disciplinary levy	57.50	\$50.00	\$57.50

Appendix B

For your information – the consultation survey includes the following questions:

1. Your name:
2. What scope of practice are you registered in?
 - a. Medical Laboratory Pre-Analytical Technician (MLPAT)
 - b. Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT)
 - c. Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS)
 - d. I am not a registered medical laboratory science practitioner
3. Are you completing this survey as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?
 - a. If you are completing this survey on behalf of an organisation, please name the organisation.
4. The Council is proposing to increase most practitioner and applicant fees for the 2026/2027 practising year. After reading the consultation document do you agree or disagree with this proposal?
5. What matters do you think the Council should consider when reviewing fees?
6. Is there anything in the consultation document that you would like further clarification on?