



Registering as a union

Under the Employment Relations Act 2000 (ERA), any group of employees can set up and register as a union. To be a union, a group of employees must first become an incorporated society (under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 (ISA)) and then register as a union under the ERA.

To achieve both these things, the union:

- must have at least 15 members (ISA)
- be independent of employers (ERA)
- have a set of union rules that comply with both the ISA and the ERA.

Before applying to incorporate as an incorporated society and register as a union, please ensure that you:

1. Understand the requirements of the ISA and have read the Registrar's information on starting an incorporated society:
 - [View the ISA online at the New Zealand Legislation website](#)
 - [Read the Registrar's information on starting an incorporated society](#)
2. Understand the union registration provisions in the ERA:
 - [View the ERA online at the New Zealand Legislation website](#)
 - [Read the section 'What the Employment Relations Act requires'.](#)
3. Inform yourself about how to create a set of union rules.
 - [Read our hints on creating union rules provides information on union rules to assist compliance with both Acts.](#)
 - [You could also search the incorporated societies register and look at an existing union's rules.](#)

IMPORTANT| If you are unsure of the requirements for incorporating as a society and registering as a union, we recommend you seek independent legal advice.

Next

- [How to register as a union](#)