



13 SEP 2018



Dear 

On 15 May 2018 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *How many people are receiving social housing who are not New Zealand citizens or permanent residents?*
- *Please supply the annual figures from 2007 to date, inclusive*
- *How many people are currently living in state houses who are not New Zealand citizens or permanent residents?*

I apologise for the delay in providing you with this response. As previously indicated, the information you are seeking is not a part of the Ministry's standard reporting. As such, more time was required to explore and produce relevant data to respond to your request.

Public housing are properties owned or leased by Housing New Zealand (HNZ) and registered Community Housing Providers (CHPs) that can be tenanted by people who are assessed as eligible by the Ministry.

Applicants must have a serious housing need as well as meeting a number of requirements to be eligible for public housing, such as, but not limited to:

- Being lawfully resident and ordinarily living in New Zealand with a period of prior residence in New Zealand
- Aged 16 years or older
- Have a low income and little or no cash assets

Further information about eligibility is available on the Ministry's Work and Income website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/index.html.

It is important to note that other members of a household do not need to meet the same criteria as long as they can show that they are either a dependent child, or have a specific and established on-going need to be a member of the household. For

example, a couple where one partner does not meet the residency criteria, or an elderly parent or grandparents or a carer or support person.

Further information about household composition can be found on the Work and Income website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/household-composition-01.html.

On the basis of the information currently known by the Ministry, the table below shows the number of adults (which includes main applicants, partners and additional occupants) in public housing tenancies, broken down by residency type, as at the end of March 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Residency Status	As at the end of March		
	2016	2017	2018
New Zealand citizen or permanent resident	78,530	88,843	94,177
Other eligible residency status	2,312	2,868	3,203
Does not qualify on residency grounds	520	611	709
Other/Unknown	6,224	8,250	8,309
Total	87,586	100,572	106,398

Notes:

- 'Other eligible residency status' includes people in receipt of Emergency Benefit because they are a spontaneous refugee or a protected person.
- 'Does not qualify on residency grounds' includes people with Work, Student or Visitor Visa, or no current permit. This also includes household members who have a specific and established ongoing need to be a member of the household such as elderly parents, grandparents and carers.
- 'Other/Unknown' includes records where residency information is not centrally recorded. This likely includes records migrated from Housing New Zealand and Ministry clients with long benefit duration and limited engagement, such as New Zealand Superannuation.
- Residency information wasn't centrally recorded prior to 2004 and is recorded at the time of first application. It may subsequently change over time, and may have yet to be updated.

It is also important to note that the Ministry confirms residency details when first determining eligibility. However, over time this may change and the Ministry may not necessarily be made aware of this, or the residency details may have yet to be updated.

In April 2014, the Ministry took over responsibility for managing public housing applications and the Social Housing Register from Housing New Zealand. In August 2015, the Ministry subsequently transitioned from using Housing New Zealand's IT system to that of its own. Housing New Zealand has been consulted regarding the earlier data and advise that in order to collect data regarding the residency status of applicants and tenants of public housing, Housing New Zealand would need to divert personnel from their core duties and allocate extra time to complete this task. The diversion of those resources would impair Housing New Zealand's ability to continue standard operations and would be an inefficient use of the Housing New Zealand's resources. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act, as substantial manual collation would be required. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

Consideration has been given as to whether this information could be provided given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. In either case, Housing New Zealand's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

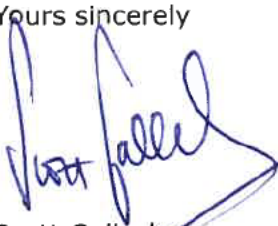
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response concerning the residency of people in public housing, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Gallacher', is written over a diagonal line that extends from the bottom left towards the top right of the page.

Scott Gallacher
Deputy Chief Executive Housing