



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

27 NOV 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

On 26 September 2019, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *How much money has been spent on emergency housing in Southland for each year since January 1, 2013 to date?*
- *what parts of the region the housing is?*
- *what kind of housing was provided i.e. houses, motels?*

On 1 July 2016, the Ministry introduced an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) which is paid directly to the accommodation provider. This grant is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. Assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights but can be extended dependant on individual circumstances. In most cases, the grant does not need to be repaid.

The emergency housing available varies in type and location to reflect the needs of clients. You can read more about the emergency housing available through Work and Income at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html).

You will find enclosed two tables which provide the following information:

- Table One which shows the number of EH SNGs in Southland between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2019 broken down by the office where the EH SNG was granted.
- Table Two which shows the number of EH SNGs in Southland between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2019 broken down by accommodation type.

In order to protect client privacy, values under five are suppressed and are represented by 'S'. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in the information.

Before October 2016, emergency housing-related grants were coded in the Ministry's IT system as 'other emergency grants' which included hardship grants for various other emergency reasons. The Ministry cannot disaggregate emergency housing

emergency grants' category before October 2016 as it is recorded in notes on individual case files.

In order to provide you with this information Ministry staff would need to manually review thousands of files. As such, your request for information about the number of referrals prior to October 2016 is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry'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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response, 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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bridget Saunders', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bridget Saunders  
**Manager, Issue Resolution, Service Delivery**

**Table One: The number of EH SNGs in Southland between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2019 broken down by the office where the EH SNG was granted**

Period	Type of accommodation									
	Motel / Hotel			Hostel			Holiday park / Camp ground			
	Number of grants	Number of clients	Total value of grants	Number of grants	Number of clients	Total value of grants	Number of grants	Number of clients	Number of clients	Total value of grants
1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017	140	48	\$101,916.00	9	8	\$2,553.00	66	34		\$36,481.00
1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018	250	87	\$154,997.50	54	39	\$21,661.00	82	43		\$51,894.00
1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019	667	198	\$448,303.32	54	41	\$21,617.50	190	72		\$119,780.00

**Table Two: The number of EH SNGs in Southland between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2019 broken down by accommodation type**

Period	Site of grant					
	Gore			Invercargill		
	Number of grants	Number of clients	Total value of grants	Number of grants	Number of clients	Total value of grants
1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017	90	17	\$63,927.00	116	58	\$72,988.00
1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018	27	14	\$20,771.00	351	110	\$204,534.50
1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019	127	40	\$92,108.00	764	214	\$480,602.82

**Notes on Tables One and Two:**

- Southland is defined as grants made by staff in the Gore and Invercargill sites.
- The amount granted may be more than the amount spent.
- These tables represent a count of grants not individuals as the same person can have more than one Emergency Housing Grant. In some occasions the number of grants may count one client multiple times.
- In certain circumstances low numbers can potentially lead to individuals being identified. Due to these privacy concerns, numbers for some categories of clients have been suppressed or aggregated. 'S' represents a value that has been suppressed to protect the privacy of natural persons.
- Emergency Housing Grants have only existed to be reported on from October 2016.