



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

29 NOV 2019



Dear 

On 9 September 2019, you emailed and wrote a letter to the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- 1. I wish to request the following information from the past four years up to 9 September 2019 (i.e. 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 up to 9 September 2019). The number of persons presenting at MSD Offices nationally amount of social assistance, a breakdown is preferred as to the special assistance sought including requests for food, accommodation).*
- 2. How many of these requests were for the individuals presenting and how many were for wider family members who did not present?*
- 3. What were the combined national annual amount of special assistance provided, for each of the four years, and what were the average amounts provided per presenting person?*
- 4. How many of the above request were successful?*
- 5. A regional break down of these requests via region*
- 6. if not available can I please have the specific request for support coming from your Hastings and Napier Officers?*

On 15 September 2019, you clarified question three to be for figures around the amount and number of housing and food grants provided.

The Ministry works to ensure that everyone who approaches us receives the right help and support for their particular situation. There is a range of assistance available for people experiencing hardship; possible assistance may include offering food grants and/or Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs) depending on a person's situation. You can read more about the types of emergency assistance available to people at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/urgent-costs/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/urgent-costs/index.html).

In response to your first and second questions, the Ministry assists thousands of New Zealanders who present to Service Centres every day. People may come to Service Centres alone or with family and/or support people. In some cases, an appointment with a case manager may not be necessary to address a person's need, for example if they're more easily able to apply for assistance online or over the phone. Additionally, types of assistance requested by people may change through conversation with case managers, for example if there is a more appropriate type of support available to a client that they had not been aware of prior to an appointment.

Centres alone or with family and/or support people. In some cases, an appointment with a case manager may not be necessary to address a person's need, for example if they're more easily able to apply for assistance online or over the phone. Additionally, types of assistance requested by people may change through conversation with case managers, for example if there is a more appropriate type of support available to a client that they had not been aware of prior to an appointment.

I am therefore unable to provide the number of people presenting at Service centres, and the number of requests for individuals or their family members because the Ministry does not record this information.

In order to meet the intent of your request, please find enclosed Table One, showing the number of appointments attended during the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019.

The Ministry is unable to provide figures regarding the number of people who presented at Service Centres as not all people coming to the site will be necessarily recorded. However, please find enclosed a table of scheduled appointments. I am unable to provide the information you have requested under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as the information is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

With regards to questions three to five, the Ministry administers a variety of different assistance types, including Main Benefits, Hardship Assistance and Supplementary Assistance. National and regional breakdowns of different types of assistance are published quarterly on the Ministry's website: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/index.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/index.html).

You have requested a breakdown of special assistance sought including requests for food and accommodation. Please find enclosed six tables providing information about Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs). Special Needs Grants for food, and Housing Support Products:

- Table Two provides the number of granted EH SNGs, declines and amount granted during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2019 broken down by financial year.
- Table Three provides the number of granted Special Needs Grants for food and declines and amount granted during the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019 broken down by financial year.
- Table Four provides the number of Housing Support Products (HSP) declined during the period 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2019 by type.
- Tables Five (a) and (b) provide the number of Housing Support Product (HSP) grants, amount granted and average amount granted during the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2019, broken down by region.

In order to protect client privacy, values five and less are suppressed and 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 and public interest in the information.

Please note that before the December 2016 quarter, 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 hardship payments from other types of assistance granted under the 'other emergency grants' category before the September 2016 quarter 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 between July 2016 to December 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.

In response to question six, I trust that the information above provides a sufficient response.

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 regarding benefit sanctions in households with children, 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



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

**Table One: Number of appointments attended during the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019**

Region	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
<b>Northland</b>	105,139	94,630	80,566	92,079
<b>Auckland Metro</b>	648,448	611,564	637,902	685,413
<b>Waikato</b>	192,779	170,152	145,719	155,330
<b>Taranaki</b>	88,128	97,131	87,350	85,196
<b>Bay of Plenty</b>	204,460	179,410	159,193	130,412
<b>East Coast</b>	109,129	100,582	96,384	82,241
<b>Central</b>	120,202	116,512	113,997	109,858
<b>Wellington</b>	163,607	133,609	125,057	131,048
<b>Nelson</b>	69,951	67,403	59,548	64,311
<b>Canterbury</b>	117,659	123,026	114,112	126,701
<b>Southern</b>	100,849	86,174	60,703	75,958
<b>Other</b>	875	351	8	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,921,226</b>	<b>1,780,544</b>	<b>1,680,539</b>	<b>1,738,550</b>

**Notes on Table One:**

- This includes clients of all ages and benefit types.
- Table One is a count of appointments attended this is not a count of clients.
- Clients may have attended more than one appointment in a period.
- Clients may have more than one application in a period or appointment.
- The "Other" region includes grants made through contact centres, MyMSD and centralised processing units.

**Table Two: The number of EH SNGs, declines and amount granted during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2019 broken down by financial year.**

Financial year	Regions	Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants			
		Number Declines	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted
2016/17	Northland	11	1,397	\$1,117,792.93	\$800.14
	Auckland Metro	252	13,260	\$15,722,634.41	\$1,185.72
	Waikato	57	2,952	\$3,487,137.01	\$1,181.28
	Taranaki	16	266	\$112,385.80	\$422.50
	Bay of Plenty	45	1,195	\$1,011,952.65	\$846.82
	East Coast	33	2,654	\$2,286,726.31	\$861.62
	Central	30	1,813	\$1,238,151.96	\$682.93
	Wellington	63	1,417	\$1,123,568.07	\$792.92
	Nelson	18	1,552	\$1,244,446.80	\$801.83
	Canterbury	72	1,289	\$717,363.59	\$556.53
	Southern	12	475	\$291,156.32	\$612.96
Other	43	1,254	\$827,244.93	\$659.68	
2017/18	Northland	5	1,282	\$889,590.13	\$693.91
	Auckland Metro	360	14,463	\$19,109,390.79	\$1,321.26
	Waikato	156	1,107	\$1,182,094.85	\$1,067.84
	Taranaki	14	320	\$166,187.37	\$519.34
	Bay of Plenty	76	2,001	\$1,672,462.57	\$835.81
	East Coast	24	2,826	\$2,727,488.83	\$965.14
	Central	37	1,654	\$1,123,185.66	\$679.07
	Wellington	116	2,282	\$2,076,145.66	\$909.79
	Nelson	19	1,184	\$930,177.52	\$785.62
	Canterbury	40	1,399	\$703,833.78	\$503.10
	Southern	19	781	\$504,894.06	\$646.47
Other	18	1,415	\$1,435,621.00	\$1,014.57	
2018/19	Northland	10	1,069	\$691,431.27	\$646.80
	Auckland Metro	232	26,788	\$41,625,129.87	\$1,553.87
	Waikato	76	8,124	\$13,505,154.38	\$1,662.38
	Taranaki	8	845	\$572,335.00	\$677.32
	Bay of Plenty	178	10,039	\$11,445,849.34	\$1,140.14
	East Coast	17	4,461	\$5,361,288.42	\$1,201.81
	Central	30	3,244	\$2,918,561.57	\$899.68
	Wellington	101	5,938	\$8,059,754.22	\$1,357.32
	Nelson	5	1,836	\$1,483,209.13	\$807.85
	Canterbury	88	3,934	\$2,647,210.60	\$672.91
	Southern	26	1,324	\$931,162.92	\$703.30
Other	10	2,929	\$3,603,223.27	\$1,230.19	

**Notes on Table Two:**

- This includes clients of all ages and benefit types.
- The amount granted may be more than the amount spent.
- Table Two is a count of grants and declines this is not a count of clients.
- Clients may have more than one application in a period.
- The "Other" region includes grants made through contact centres, MyMSD and centralised processing units.
- Emergency Housing grants are only reported from 1 October 2016.

**Table Three: The number of Special Needs Grants for food and declines and amount granted during the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019 broken down by financial year.**

Financial year	Regions	Special Needs Grants for food			
		Number of Declines	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted
2015/16	Northland	401	22,473	\$2,551,384.70	\$113.53
	Auckland	3,842	105,671	\$11,254,229.82	\$106.50
	Waikato	1,075	26,076	\$2,771,279.76	\$106.28
	Taranaki	576	9,902	\$994,101.81	\$100.39
	Bay of	2,006	22,953	\$2,428,100.67	\$105.79
	East Coast	500	19,416	\$2,222,166.10	\$114.45
	Central	476	16,727	\$1,891,924.08	\$113.11
	Wellington	802	26,626	\$2,918,740.67	\$109.62
	Nelson	417	10,437	\$1,217,822.86	\$116.68
	Canterbury	908	15,356	\$1,562,749.40	\$101.77
	Southern	616	18,863	\$2,060,164.63	\$109.22
Other	3,915	82,211	\$8,268,753.16	\$100.58	
2016/17	Northland	451	20,513	\$2,345,204.67	\$114.33
	Auckland	3,591	119,714	\$12,966,288.39	\$108.31
	Waikato	965	27,862	\$2,931,448.83	\$105.21
	Taranaki	410	11,756	\$1,167,864.77	\$99.34
	Bay of	1,401	25,626	\$2,728,604.53	\$106.48
	East Coast	480	19,108	\$2,145,001.12	\$112.26
	Central	421	18,250	\$2,034,878.59	\$111.50
	Wellington	732	26,922	\$2,921,714.99	\$108.53
	Nelson	340	10,277	\$1,155,628.24	\$112.45
	Canterbury	690	15,025	\$1,506,216.86	\$100.25
	Southern	681	19,923	\$2,127,181.29	\$106.77
Other	5,757	132,358	\$13,402,901.87	\$101.26	
2017/18	Northland	576	16,876	\$1,842,864.59	\$109.20
	Auckland	3,462	125,847	\$14,053,292.23	\$111.67
	Waikato	1,054	24,151	\$2,454,941.70	\$101.65
	Taranaki	405	10,903	\$1,074,681.50	\$98.57
	Bay of	1,308	23,020	\$2,401,761.23	\$104.33
	East Coast	394	17,137	\$1,882,199.92	\$109.83
	Central	436	17,306	\$1,888,209.79	\$109.11
	Wellington	543	24,692	\$2,678,004.73	\$108.46
	Nelson	268	8,949	\$988,416.01	\$110.45
	Canterbury	673	14,257	\$1,395,745.06	\$97.90
	Southern	893	17,879	\$1,839,302.73	\$102.88
Other	10,099	243,739	\$23,959,662.18	\$98.30	
2018/19	Northland	1,125	15,594	\$1,643,348.38	\$105.38
	Auckland	2,585	154,413	\$18,516,079.20	\$119.91
	Waikato	987	26,139	\$2,594,454.57	\$99.26
	Taranaki	235	12,415	\$1,273,498.57	\$102.58
	Bay of	1,338	24,308	\$2,442,075.24	\$100.46
	East Coast	316	17,088	\$1,832,927.17	\$107.26
	Central	452	17,860	\$1,887,373.56	\$105.68
	Wellington	544	25,634	\$2,690,846.14	\$104.97
	Nelson	237	8,985	\$980,049.56	\$109.08
	Canterbury	660	14,116	\$1,320,267.67	\$93.53
	Southern	584	16,355	\$1,669,469.08	\$102.08
Other	9,739	434,695	\$41,913,631.31	\$96.42	

**Table Four: The number of Housing Support Products (HSP) declined during the period 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2019 by type.**

Financial year	Regions	HSP Bond Grant	HSP Letting Fees Non-Beneficiary assistance	HSP Moving Assistance	HSP Tenancy Costs Cover	HSP Transition to Alternative Housing Grant
2015/2016	Northland	S	S	S	0	0
	Auckland	6	S	S	S	0
	Waikato	0	0	0	0	S
	Taranaki	0	0	0	0	S
	East Coast	S	S	0	0	0
	Central	0	0	0	0	S
	Wellington	0	0	S	0	0
	Nelson	S	0	0	0	S
	Canterbury	0	0	0	0	S
Other	0	0	0	S	0	
2016/2017	Northland	S	S	0	0	0
	Auckland	11	S	S	0	S
	Waikato	S	S	S	0	S
	Wellington	0	0	S	0	0
	Nelson	S	0	0	0	0
	Canterbury	S	0	S	0	S
	Southern	S	0	0	0	0
Other	S	0	S	0	0	
2017/2018	Northland	S	S	S	0	0
	Auckland	8	6	7	S	S
	Waikato	S	0	S	0	S
	East Coast	S	S	0	S	S
	Nelson	S	0	0	0	S
	Canterbury	S	0	S	S	S
2018/2019	Northland	S	S	S	0	0
	Auckland	S	0	S	0	S
	Waikato	S	0	S	S	0
	Bay of	S	0	S	0	0
	East Coast	0	0	S	0	0
	Nelson	S	0	S	0	0
Canterbury	0	0	S	0	S	

**Notes on Tables Three and Four:**

- This includes clients of all ages and benefit types.
- Clients may have attended more than one appointment in a period.
- Clients may have more than one application in a period.
- The "Other" region includes grants made through contact centres, MyMSD and centralised processing units.

**Table Five (a): The number of Housing Support Product (HSP) grants amount granted and average amount granted during the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2019, broken down by region.**

Financial year	Region	HSP Bond Grant			HSP Letting Fees - Non-Beneficiary assistance			HSP Moving Assistance		
		Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted
2015/16	Northland	253	\$264,958	\$1,047	54	\$17,805	\$330	24	\$11,700	\$488
	Auckland Metro	176	\$260,367	\$1,479	76	\$38,478	\$506	21	\$12,756	\$607
	Waikato	22	\$24,000	\$1,091	12	\$4,092	\$341	8	\$4,909	\$614
	Taranaki	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	\$606	\$202
	Bay of Plenty	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	East Coast	37	\$37,811	\$1,022	12	\$4,061	\$338	11	\$4,156	\$378
	Central	9	\$9,920	\$1,102	S	\$1,420	\$355	S	\$2,668	\$667
	Wellington	27	\$42,342	\$1,568	13	\$5,567	\$428	15	\$11,616	\$774
	Nelson	28	\$30,839	\$1,101	11	\$4,708	\$428	12	\$6,425	\$535
	Canterbury	29	\$37,209	\$1,283	10	\$5,024	\$502	7	\$6,648	\$950
	Southern	14	\$11,881	\$849	S	\$1,558	\$312	S	\$2,160	\$1,080
	Other	17	\$29,203	\$1,718	6	\$2,495	\$416	S	\$1,921	\$640
Northland	339	\$366,714	\$1,082	118	\$40,757	\$345	102	\$68,093	\$668	
Auckland Metro	634	\$863,941	\$1,363	221	\$105,495	\$477	132	\$69,066	\$523	
Waikato	46	\$57,125	\$1,242	20	\$8,439	\$422	21	\$13,944	\$664	
Taranaki	16	\$18,158	\$1,135	13	\$4,257	\$327	7	\$5,664	\$809	
Bay of Plenty	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	
East Coast	64	\$71,026	\$1,110	18	\$5,987	\$333	13	\$8,587	\$661	
Central	10	\$15,215	\$1,522	S	\$2,231	\$446	S	\$2,421	\$807	
Wellington	23	\$31,948	\$1,389	S	\$1,721	\$344	13	\$5,821	\$448	
Nelson	75	\$80,423	\$1,072	21	\$7,827	\$373	12	\$5,224	\$435	
Canterbury	37	\$41,902	\$1,132	7	\$3,117	\$445	11	\$9,168	\$833	
Southern	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	
Other	9	\$13,530	\$1,503	S	\$2,576	\$515	0	0	0	
2016/17										



Financial year	Region	HSP Bond Grant			HSP Letting Fees			HSP Moving Assistance		
		Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted
2017/18	Northland	250	\$289,602	\$1,158	70	\$26,205	\$374	67	\$43,232	\$645
	Auckland Metro	559	\$811,820	\$1,452	173	\$84,456	\$488	128	\$68,862	\$538
	Waikato	37	\$51,084	\$1,381	21	\$8,527	\$406	23	\$11,907	\$518
	Taranaki	37	\$41,715	\$1,127	17	\$5,783	\$340	6	\$2,981	\$497
	Bay of Plenty	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	East Coast	135	\$165,614	\$1,227	24	\$8,191	\$341	34	\$19,008	\$559
	Central	30	\$40,380	\$1,346	18	\$6,854	\$381	S	\$1,539	\$513
	Wellington	14	\$20,395	\$1,457	S	\$2,039	\$408	11	\$9,736	\$885
	Nelson	95	\$116,041	\$1,221	31	\$12,051	\$389	26	\$18,947	\$729
	Canterbury	54	\$67,768	\$1,255	17	\$7,117	\$419	6	\$4,446	\$741
	Southern	29	\$33,440	\$1,153	9	\$3,056	\$340	10	\$6,190	\$619
	Other	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Northland	348	\$404,811	\$1,163	60	\$25,082	\$418	82	\$49,726	\$606
	2018/19	Auckland Metro	506	\$816,085	\$1,613	77	\$38,964	\$506	79	\$54,557
Waikato		87	\$112,143	\$1,289	18	\$7,667	\$426	32	\$17,344	\$542
Taranaki		96	\$120,130	\$1,251	29	\$11,307	\$390	25	\$10,658	\$426
Bay of Plenty		11	\$15,655	\$1,423	S	\$489	\$489	S	\$2,653	\$884
East Coast		95	\$120,723	\$1,271	7	\$2,506	\$358	12	\$7,280	\$607
Central		49	\$61,195	\$1,249	S	\$1,921	\$384	8	\$6,367	\$796
Wellington		22	\$30,118	\$1,369	S	\$1,966	\$492	13	\$8,652	\$666
Nelson		116	\$151,585	\$1,307	16	\$5,762	\$360	22	\$17,514	\$796
Canterbury		56	\$74,201	\$1,325	9	\$3,404	\$378	20	\$15,003	\$750
Southern		30	\$32,178	\$1,073	S	\$1,817	\$454	11	\$6,844	\$622
Other		18	22891	2332	S	1886	629	S	2239	1055

**Table Five (b): The number of Housing Support Product (HSP) grants amount granted and average amount granted during the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2019, broken down by region.**

Financial year	Regions	HSP Tenancy Costs Cover			HSP Transition to Alternative Housing Grant		
		Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted
2015/2016	Northland	13	\$6,979	\$537	6	\$13,802	\$2,300
	Auckland	12	\$6,190	\$516	59	\$173,215	\$2,936
	Waikato	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Taranaki	0	0	0	0	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Bay of	0	0	0	10	\$21,000	\$2,100
	East Coast	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Central	0	0	0	6	\$18,000	\$3,000
	Wellington	0	0	0	27	\$81,000	\$3,000
	Nelson	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Canterbury	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Southern	0	0	0	0	\$9,000	\$3,000
	Other	0	0	0	67	\$201,000	\$3,000
	2016/2017	Northland	S	S	S	S	S
Auckland		17	\$12,776	\$752	144	\$393,540	\$2,733
Waikato		S	S	S	S	S	S
Taranaki		S	S	S	S	S	S
Bay of		S	S	S	S	S	S
East Coast		S	S	S	S	S	S
Central		S	S	S	S	S	S
Wellington		S	S	S	21	\$51,370	\$2,446
Nelson		S	S	S	S	S	S
Canterbury		S	S	S	8	\$13,313	\$1,664
Southern		0	0	0	0	\$9,000	\$3,000
Other		S	S	S	8	\$24,000	\$3,000

Financial year	Regions	HSP Tenancy Costs			HSP Transition to Alternative Housing Grant		
		Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted	Number Granted	Amount Granted	Average Amount Granted
2017/2018	Northland	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Auckland	20	\$19,322	\$966	110	\$284,654	\$2,588
	Waikato	S	S	S	6	\$18,000	\$3,000
	Taranaki	S	S	S	0	0	0
	Bay of	0	0	0	S	S	S
	East Coast	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Central	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wellington	S	S	S	13	\$32,700	\$2,515
	Nelson	S	S	S	6	\$18,000	\$3,000
	Canterbury	S	S	S	6	\$15,000	\$2,500
2018/2019	Southern	0	0	0	8	\$24,000	\$3,000
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Northland	S	S	S	0	0	0
	Auckland	10	\$13,357	\$1,336	30	\$83,374	\$2,779
	Waikato	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Taranaki	S	S	S	0	0	0
	Bay of	S	S	S	S	S	S
	East Coast	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Central	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Wellington	S	S	S	7	\$21,000	\$3,000
Nelson	S	S	S	S	S	S	
Canterbury	S	S	S	8	\$21,400	\$2,675	
Southern	S	S	S	S	S	S	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	

**Notes on Tables Five(a) and (b):**

- This includes clients of all ages and benefit types.
- Clients may have been granted more than one HSP grant in a period
- This is a count of grants and not a count of clients.
- The "Other" region includes grants made through contact centres, MyMSD and centralised processing units.