



08 APR 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

On 19 February 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act (the Act) 1982, the following information:

- *the average length of stay in emergency housing in the Carterton/ Masterton /South Wairarapa Districts*

On 24 February 2020, you clarified your request to be for the following information:

1. *The average length of time a client stayed in emergency housing in the Carterton / Masterton / South Wairarapa Districts*
2. *The number of people who were granted an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) for the calendar years 2017, 2018 and 2019 in the Carterton /Masterton /South Wairarapa Districts.*
3. *The cost of EH SNGs for the Carterton/ Masterton/ South Wairarapa Districts over the last three years to December 2019.*
4. *The cost of EH SNGs for the 2019 calendar year*
5. *Where was emergency housing suppliers found for clients in need of emergency housing in the Carterton/ Masterton/ South Wairarapa Districts*
6. *Were there any emergency housing suppliers found or used in Featherston, Greytown or Masterton?*

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place or 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.

After these seven nights, Work and Income arrange another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation and if another grant is required. The supply of affordable accommodation is tight across the country. Work and Income provide ongoing support to help people secure a long-term housing solution, including public housing and private rental accommodation. Other options including transitional housing can also be explored as an option depending on the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution, particularly for vulnerable people with complex needs. The need to provide EH SNGs is a reflection of two things; the shortage of affordable housing, and secondly the Government's commitment to ensuring that those in need have somewhere to stay, so they are not

sleeping in their cars or outside. They provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed.

A small number of people have exceptional circumstances, which makes accessing suitable and affordable accommodation more difficult and may result in them receiving EH SNG support for an extended period of time. This includes people with mental health issues, those with criminal convictions, and people who need to live in a specific location to access school or health services.

People with circumstances as these present unique needs that can lead to them requiring short term accommodation for significant periods of time. Work and Income work closely with these people to ensure that any potential housing arrangements are well suited to their needs and provide a long-term housing solution.

More information about EH SNGs is available here: [www.housing.msdc.govt.nz/housing-options/emergency-housing.html](http://www.housing.msdc.govt.nz/housing-options/emergency-housing.html).

For the sake of clarity, your questions are addressed in turn:

1. *The average length of time a client stayed in emergency housing in the Carterton/ Masterton/ South Wairarapa Districts*
2. *The number of people who were granted an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) for the calendar years 2017, 2018 and 2019 in the Carterton/ Masterton /South Wairarapa Districts.*
3. *The cost of EH SNGs for the Carterton /Masterton/ South Wairarapa Districts over the last three years to December 2019.*
4. *The cost of EH SNGs for the 2019 calendar year*

Please find below Table One and Table Two which provide figures for the number of clients granted an EH SNG at the Wairarapa Service Centre, by calendar year and the number of consecutive weeks a client received an EH SNG.

**Table One: The number of EH SNGs granted at the Wairarapa Service Centre, broken down by calendar year, the number of distinct clients and the total amount granted**

<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>Grants</b>	<b>Clients</b>	<b>Amount</b>
2017	127	73	\$77,989.50
2018	260	100	\$199,771.00
2019	264	84	\$243,335.67

**Table Two: The number of EH SNGs granted at the Wairarapa Service Centre, broken down by calendar year and the average number of consecutive weeks a client received an EH SNG**

<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>Clients</b>	<b>Average consecutive weeks</b>
2017	73	2.2
2018	100	2.2
2019	84	3.5

Notes on Table One and Table Two:

- This data provides the number of EH SNGs paid under the emergency housing need code.
  - Geographic breakdowns are only available by the Service Centre responsible for the client's case management. A client may not necessarily reside in the same area as their Service Centre.
  - The Wairarapa Service Centre provides services for clients in the Carterton, Masterton and South Wairarapa Districts.
  - Consecutive weeks is based on the number of weeks in which the client has received an EH SNG. After four weeks with no grants, the consecutive count is reset to zero and a new spell of emergency housing is begun.
  - This data is based on the clients most recent grant within the calendar year. A client may have had multiple grants in the year.
5. *Where was emergency housing suppliers found for clients in need of emergency housing in the Carterton/ Masterton /South Wairarapa Districts*
  6. *Were there any emergency housing suppliers found or used in Featherston, Greytown or Masterton?*

I am unable to confirm where emergency housing suppliers were found for clients in need of housing in the Wairarapa, as it is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the 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.

I am also refusing your request in part under section 18(g) of the Act, as even if Ministry officials were to review the individual files, the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry in a way that can be consistently reported on. I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

I can advise that the Ministry uses the following emergency housing suppliers in the Ministry's Wairarapa Region:

- Acorn Estate Motel
- Disabled Homefinders
- Cornwall Park Motel
- The Highwayman Motel
- Masterton Motor Lodge
- Disabled Amble Inn Motel
- Featherston Motels and Camping
- Empire Lodge
- MSD Social Housing Provider Group
- Oak Estate Motor Lodge
- Carterton District Council
- U Studios Paraparaumu Beach
- Chanel Court Motel
- Mawley Park Motel Camp
- Featherston Motels and Carterton Holiday Park 2018
- Matador Motel
- Marquis Dupoint Motel
- Greyfriars Motel
- Mana Motel
- Ormond Street Motel
- Trust Housing Ltd- Masterton Ambassador Motel Inn
- Pahiatua Carnival Park Board of Accommodation Gateway
- Econo Lodge the Villas Ltd
- Abbey Court Motel
- Acacia Court Motel
- Cottage Park Motor Lodge
- Go to Martinborough
- M & M Tipoki
- Marina Motor Lodge
- North Lodge
- Pavilion Motel and Conference Centre
- Pioneer Motel
- Raceway Court Motel
- Te Rakau Cabins
- Wairarapa Property Management

Please note that the Ministry's Wairarapa Region does not align with the Statistics New Zealand Wairarapa Region.

Clients in need of emergency housing may be granted an EH SNG in a different Region if emergency housing is not available in their Region. As such, a client in Wairarapa may secure emergency housing in another Region and a client in another Region may secure emergency housing in Wairarapa.

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. 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 EH SNGs in the Wairarapa, 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



Karen Hocking  
**General Manager Housing  
Service Delivery**