



23 SEP 2020

Dear

On 27 July 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. How many people in receipt of a benefit have been granted recoverable assistance for rent bond since September 2016?*
- 2. How many people were declined recoverable assistance for rent bond since September 2016?*
- 3. How many people in receipt of a benefit have been granted non-recoverable assistance for rent bond since 2016?*
- 4. How many people were declined non-recoverable assistance for rent bond since 2016?*
- 5. What benefit types were the people on who were granted rent bond assistance since 2016?*
- 6. What benefit types were the people on who were declined rent bond assistance since 2016?*

On 17 August 2020, you clarified your request in the following way:

- Regarding questions two and four of your request, you are seeking data for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.
- Regarding questions three to six of your request, data as at October 2016 will be sufficient.
- Regarding questions one to four, quarterly data is sufficient.
- Regarding all questions, data of the number of grants, not the number of people in receipt of a payment is sufficient.

On 19 August 2020, the Ministry advised you that your clarification reset the response period, and that you can expect a response on or before 14 September 2020. On 14 September 2020, the Ministry advised you that it requires more time to respond to your request, and that the Ministry's decision will be with you no later than 23 September 2020.

The Ministry provides hardship assistance to help people pay a tenancy bond in a number of different ways, depending on the circumstances of the client, and whether

the client is in receipt of a main benefit. The hardship assistance available to help pay a tenancy bond includes Advance Payment of Benefit (ADV), Recoverable Assistance Payment (RAP), and a Housing Support Product (HSP) Bond Grant.

An ADV is a recoverable payment available to people receiving a main benefit (e.g., Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support, Supported Living Payment) who require assistance to meet a particular immediate need for an essential item, such as a tenancy bond. Clients accessing this type of assistance can receive an advance of up to six weeks of their net benefit entitlement.

The RAP, on the other hand, provides non-taxable, interest-free, recoverable financial assistance to non-beneficiaries to meet an essential immediate need for specific items or services, such as a tenancy bond. It is only available to people who meet an income and asset test and is paid up to a maximum amount of six weeks of the rate of the Supported Living Payment.

Repayment arrangements for recoverable assistance, such as ADVs and RAPs, are agreed at the outset and take the individual circumstances and financial situation of the person into account.

Housing Support Products (HSP) are also available to both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries as a set of products that aim to address barriers to accessing or retaining housing. One of the many HSPs available is a Bond Grant, which is a non-recoverable payment towards the cost of rental bonds for people considered able to afford and sustain alternative housing. The maximum Bond Grant payable is limited to whichever of the following is the lesser amount: (a) the amount of the bond payable by the person for the alternative housing; (b) the equivalent of four weeks' rent; or (c) \$2,000.

You can find more information about hardship assistance for tenancy bonds on the Ministry's website at: www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/move-house/bond-and-rent-in-advance/index.html.

As per your request, please find the following four tables enclosed in Appendix One:

- Table One: The number of applications for recoverable and non-recoverable bond assistance granted to clients in receipt of a main benefit during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by quarter
 - *Note: This table answers your first and third question.*
- Table Two: The number of applications for recoverable and non-recoverable bond assistance declined during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by quarter
 - *Note: This table answers your second and fourth question.*
- Table Three: The number of applications for recoverable and non-recoverable bond assistance granted to clients in receipt of a main benefit during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by main benefit type and quarter
 - *Note: This table answers your fifth question.*

- Table Four: The number of applications for recoverable and non-recoverable bond assistance declined for clients in receipt of a main benefit for the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by main benefit type and quarter
 - *Note: This table answers your sixth question.*

Please note, in regard to Table 1 and Table 2, the Ministry has also provided the requested figures as at October 2016 in order to be consistent with the presentation of the data in the remaining tables.

Clients in receipt of New Zealand Superannuation or Veteran's Pension have been excluded from the attached data tables. If you would like these clients to be included, please contact the OIA Team.

In order to protect client privacy, some values 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.

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
- 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 available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and Appendix One 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, 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



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

Appendix One

Table One: The number of applications for recoverable (ADV) and non-recoverable (HSP) bond assistance granted to clients in receipt of a main benefit during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by quarter

Quarter Ending	ADV (recoverable)	HSP (non-recoverable)	Total Grants
December 2016	8,831	249	9,080
March 2017	8,681	226	8,907
June 2017	8,507	197	8,704
September 2017	8,851	257	9,108
December 2017	8,233	220	8,453
March 2018	7,881	175	8,056
June 2018	8,305	222	8,527
September 2018	8,810	275	9,085
December 2018	8,383	243	8,626
March 2019	8,181	197	8,378
June 2019	7,816	261	8,077
September 2019	8,451	329	8,780
December 2019	7,971	361	8,332
March 2020	7,444	304	7,748
June 2020	6,222	295	6,517

Notes for Table One:

- The table shows a count of grants, not clients. The same client may have received a grant more than once in any given period.
- ADV is Advance Payment of Benefit, a recoverable assistance type for beneficiaries.
- HSP is Housing Support Product, a non-recoverable assistance type for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, although the latter client group receiving this form of assistance are excluded for the above table.
- Recoverable Assistance Payment grants, including for bond assistance, are available to non-beneficiaries only and thus are excluded from the above table.
- Main Benefits exclude New Zealand Superannuation, Veteran's Pension, non-beneficiary assistance (i.e., where a client is in receipt of supplementary assistance, such as the Disability Allowance or Accommodation Supplement, without also receiving a main benefit), Orphan's Benefit, and the Unsupported Child's Benefit.

Table Two: The number of applications for recoverable (RAP and ADV) and non-recoverable (HSP) bond assistance declined during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by quarter

Quarter Ending	RAP and ADV (recoverable)	HSP Bond Grant (non-recoverable)	Total Grants Declined
December 2016	S	S	505
March 2017	478	7	485
June 2017	S	S	465
September 2017	S	S	486
December 2017	S	S	414
March 2018	S	S	407
June 2018	S	S	340
September 2018	S	S	324
December 2018	S	S	356
March 2019	S	S	308
June 2019	S	S	326
September 2019	310	9	319
December 2019	428	13	441
March 2020	403	17	420
June 2020	567	16	583

Notes for Table Two:

- The table shows a count of declines, not clients. The same client may have been declined assistance more than once in any given period.
- The number of recoverable and non-recoverable grants declined includes both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.
- ADV is Advance Payment of Benefit, a recoverable assistance type for beneficiaries.
- RAP is Recoverable Assistance Payment, a recoverable assistance type for non-beneficiaries.
- HSP is Housing Support Product, a non-recoverable assistance type for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.
- Many of the HSP figures were below 7 and, therefore, had to be suppressed. This also led to secondary suppression of many of the figures in the RAP and ADV column, which, if left unsuppressed, could have enabled the HSP figures to be determined.

Table Three: The number of applications for recoverable (ADV) and non-recoverable (HSP) bond assistance granted to clients in receipt of a main benefit during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by main benefit type and quarter

Quarter Ending	Sole Parent Support	Jobseeker Support	Supported Living Payment	Other	Total Grants
December 2016	3,301	3,954	1,537	288	9,080
March 2017	3,196	3,817	1,559	335	8,907
June 2017	3,161	3,761	1,539	243	8,704
September 2017	3,171	4,064	1,585	288	9,108
December 2017	2,788	3,811	1,580	274	8,453
March 2018	2,629	3,700	1,461	266	8,056
June 2018	2,887	3,885	1,490	265	8,527
September 2018	2,966	4,357	1,530	232	9,085
December 2018	2,595	4,220	1,543	268	8,626
March 2019	2,471	4,134	1,460	313	8,378
June 2019	2,501	3,988	1,389	199	8,077
September 2019	2,779	4,452	1,340	209	8,780
December 2019	2,453	4,322	1,323	234	8,332
March 2020	2,292	3,996	1,208	252	7,748
June 2020	1,931	3,603	809	174	6,517

Notes for Table Three:

- The table shows a count of grants, not clients. The same client may have received a grant more than once in any given period.
- ADV is Advance Payment of Benefit, a recoverable assistance type for beneficiaries.
- HSP is Housing Support Product, a non-recoverable assistance type for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, although the latter client group receiving this form of assistance are excluded for the above table.
- Recoverable Assistance Payment grants, including for bond assistance, are available for non-beneficiaries only and thus are excluded from the above table.
- 'Other' refers to other main benefits, including the Emergency Benefit, Emergency Maintenance Allowance, Jobseeker Support Student Hardship, Supported Living Payment Overseas, Sole Parent Support Overseas, Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment.
- Main Benefits exclude New Zealand Superannuation, Veteran's Pension, non-beneficiary assistance (i.e., where a client is in receipt of supplementary assistance, such as the Disability Allowance or Accommodation Supplement, without also receiving a main benefit), Orphan's Benefit, and the Unsupported Child's Benefit.

Table Four: The number of applications for recoverable (ADV) and non-recoverable (HSP) bond assistance declined for those in receipt of a main benefit for the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2020, broken down by main benefit type and quarter

Quarter Ending	Sole Parent Support	Jobseeker Support	Supported Living Payment	Other	Total Grants Declined
December 2016	61	181	54	8	304
March 2017	59	178	54	17	308
June 2017	56	149	47	7	259
September 2017	63	159	43	8	273
December 2017	58	151	34	14	257
March 2018	49	114	29	14	206
June 2018	36	99	30	0	165
September 2018	34	97	S	S	163
December 2018	42	110	26	6	184
March 2019	18	131	31	6	186
June 2019	40	98	S	S	170
September 2019	36	127	S	S	192
December 2019	63	166	49	16	294
March 2020	55	170	31	13	269
June 2020	85	255	34	10	384

Notes for Table Four:

- The table shows a count of declines, not clients. The same client may have been declined a grant more than once in any given period.
- ADV is Advance Payment of Benefit, a recoverable assistance type for beneficiaries.
- HSP is Housing Support Product, a non-recoverable assistance type for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, although the latter client group receiving this form of assistance are excluded for the above table.
- Recoverable Assistance Payment grants, including for bond assistance, are available for non-beneficiaries only and thus declined applications for these are excluded from the above table.
- Main Benefits exclude New Zealand Superannuation, Veteran's Pension, non-beneficiary assistance (i.e., where a client is in receipt of supplementary assistance, such as the Disability Allowance or Accommodation Supplement, without also receiving a main benefit), Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit.
- 'Other' refers to other main benefits, includes Emergency Benefit, Emergency Maintenance Allowance, Jobseeker Support Student Hardship, Supported Living Payment Overseas, Sole Parent Support Overseas, Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment.