



28 APR 2021

Tēnā koe

On 26 March 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *A breakdown of the type of housing required by people on the housing register and transfer register for the following districts:*
 - *Waitomo (in the Waikato Region)*
 - *Ōtorohanga (in the Waikato Region)*
 - *Taumarunui (in the Waikato Region)*
- *A further breakdown of the December 2020 Housing Factsheets, with any details that would indicate the need for various sizes of houses.*
- *Any update to the December 2020 Housing Factsheets.*

The demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and more people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is generated by a shortage of affordable housing, which is driving up house prices and rent. People on low incomes are most affected by rising housing costs, and many seek financial help through the Ministry.

When New Zealanders are in need of public housing, their needs are recorded on either the Housing Register or the Transfer Register. The combined register is referred to as the Public Housing Register. The Housing Register shows people who are not currently in public housing but who have been assessed as eligible for public housing. The Transfer Register shows people already in public housing but who have applied to be rehoused. While the Ministry completes the housing assessments which inform the Public Housing Register, responsibility for funding and supply sits with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Kāinga Ora, respectively. More information about the Housing Register is available here: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/index.html.

Across government, there is a major programme of work underway aimed at increasing the supply of public housing and improving housing affordability and supply. Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga/the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Kāinga Ora are responsible for increasing the supply of affordable and public housing. This includes planning, and with Kāinga Ora, delivering more public housing,

transitional housing, and services to tackle homelessness. HUD is also working to improve housing affordability and supply for aspiring homeowners.

The Public Housing Register is dynamic rather than static, and changes as people's circumstances and situations change. Placing people and families into houses is about matching them with the right house in the area they want to live. This includes ensuring the family has the right number of bedrooms, is close to essential services such as schools, and that the accommodation meets any disability needs if appropriate. Those assessed as having a greater need for housing will be prioritised higher. As people's needs change, their priority on the Register may also change. As such, the length of time spent on the Register awaiting housing can vary significantly.

Clients who approach the Ministry seeking public housing are offered other assistance appropriate to their situation. This can include Accommodation Supplement for private rent, Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNG), or a Recoverable Assistance Payment Grant. Further information regarding available support can be accessed on the Ministry's website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/living-expenses/housing.html.

At any given time, we have many people, often with high needs and complex situations, looking for housing. The Ministry's role is to ensure that people receive the help they need to access emergency housing, while longer term options are progressed.

In response to your request, please find enclosed **Appendix A**, which contains:

Table One, which shows the number of applications on the Public Housing Register for Waitomo, Otorohanga, and Ruapehu Territorial Local Authorities (TLA) as at end of December 2020, broken down by number of bedrooms required.

Table Two, which shows the number of applications on the Public Housing Register for Waitomo, Otorohanga, and Ruapehu TLAs as at end of December 2020, broken down by household composition.

Please note, the regions used in the tables above are based on New Zealand's TLA. The TLA is estimated based on the clients' address at the time of the grant. This TLA may not be the same as the address of the emergency housing supplier. Where the client address is not recorded, the location of the Ministry's service centre case managing the client has been used to approximate which TLA a client resides in. However, as the Ministry has switched to working from national queues, EH SNGs and other hardship grants could be granted by a case manager working anywhere in New Zealand. Therefore, in such cases, the TLA may not reflect the actual client address or location. Due to the transient nature of people receiving EH SNGs, the recorded address for a client may also be that of a trusted family member or friend who receives mail on their behalf.

The lowest geographical boundary the Ministry reports on for the housing register is TLA. As you are interested in the Taumarunui district, the Ministry has provided information from the Ruapehu TLA, which contains the Taumarunui district.

In response to your third question, the release of an update to the Housing Factsheet is anticipated to be released shortly by HUD. As such, your request for this information is refused under section 18(d) of the Official Information Act on the basis that the

information requested will soon be publicly available. This information will be published as soon as possible this year.

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 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.

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.

Ngā mihi nui



Karen Hocking
General Manager
Housing

Appendix A

Table One: Number of applications on the Public Housing Register for Waitomo, Otorohanga, and Ruapehu TLAs as at end of December 2020, broken down by number of bedrooms required and TLA.

Bedrooms required	OTOROHANGA DISTRICT			RUAPEHU DISTRICT			WAITOMO DISTRICT		
	Housing Register	Transfer Register	Public Housing Register Total	Housing Register	Transfer Register	Public Housing Register Total	Housing Register	Transfer Register	Public Housing Register Total
1 Bedroom	15	0	15	24	3	27	15	0	18
2 Bedrooms	15	3	18	24	0	24	18	0	18
3 Bedrooms	6	0	6	3	3	6	9	0	9
4 Bedrooms	6	0	3	6	0	6	3	0	3
5 Bedrooms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total applications	39	3	42	60	3	63	48	3	51

Table Two: Number of applications on the Public Housing Register for Waitomo, Otorohanga, and Ruapehu TLAs as at end of December 2020, broken down by household composition and TLA.

Household composition	OTOROHANGA DISTRICT			RUAPEHU DISTRICT			WAITOMO DISTRICT		
	Housing Register	Transfer Register	Public Housing Register Total	Housing Register	Transfer Register	Public Housing Register Total	Housing Register	Transfer Register	Public Housing Register Total
2+ adults	3	0	3	3	0	3	3	0	6
2+ adults with child(ren)	3	0	6	3	0	3	6	0	6
Single age 24 years or younger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Single age 25 years +	15	0	15	24	3	24	18	0	18
Single with child(ren)	18	0	18	33	3	33	21	0	21
Total applications	39	3	42	60	3	63	48	3	51

Notes for Table One and Two:

- Tables are based on counts of applications, not number of individuals included in each application.
- Tables only include priority A and B applications.
- The A and B priority applications used in these tables are as at the time of application and may have changed prior to this date.
- Tables include clients on the Housing Register and the Transfer Register.
- TLA is based on the client's address. TLA is defined under the Local Government Act 2002 as a city council or district council.
- To protect confidentiality the Ministry of Social Development uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- These data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table. A value of one or two may be rounded to zero or three.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.

Notes for Table Two only:

- Household composition is based on the people included in the social housing application; it may not be reflective of their actual family size.