



Dear

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

- *How many Households in PNCC boundary have or are eligible for a community services card?*

The Community Services Card (CSC) is available to New Zealanders over the age of 16 on a low to middle income that meet the eligibility criteria. The card can be used to reduce the costs of a range of fees associated with healthcare and is administered on behalf of the Ministry of Health. For more information about the CSC, please see the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/community-services-card.html.

In regard to your request for the number of households in the Palmerston North City Council boundary that have a CSC, please see **Table One** below.

Table One: The number of CSC holders and households with a CSC holder in the Palmerston North Territorial Local Authority as at the end of June 2021.

Number of CSC holders	Number of Households with a CSC holder
19,737	5,688

Notes:

- This includes CSC and CSC plus Super Gold Card (SGC).
- The number of cards includes the card status 'Issued', 'Reissued', 'Expired' and 'Cancelled'. The 'Expired' and 'cancelled' cards can still be used.
- Households are counted by a card holder or card holder with a partner. Children receiving the CSC are counted in the 'number of cards' and not included in the household count.
- To protect confidentiality, the Ministry 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. 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.

The CSC is income tested. People in receipt of certain types of financial assistance are automatically issued with a CSC, however, other people (typically those who are not on a benefit) need to apply to test their eligibility. Therefore, the Ministry is unable to provide you with the number of people who are eligible for a CSC as this information would not be held unless an application were made. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the information you have requested 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.

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 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 regarding CSC in the Palmerston North City Council Boundary, 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

Bridget Saunders
**Manager, Issue Resolution
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