



29 October 2021

Tēnā koe

On 6 October 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information regarding \$5k to Work:

- 1. How many people received the work and income \$5,000 payment for moving to the regions for a job.*
- 2. How many people who received the work and income \$5,000 payment are Maori or Pacific*

On 6 October 2021, you informed the Ministry that your date range for this information was for the last three years.

\$5K to Work is an incentive payment that supports clients who are relocating to take up work in a region or area that is not commutable. This initiative was previously known as \$3K to Work and was introduced to help jobseekers move into sustainable employment, following the Christchurch Earthquake. It was intended to support the Christchurch rebuild and was originally limited to the Christchurch region.

The initiative was expanded across New Zealand in 2015. On 1 October 2020, the initiative was increased by \$2,000 and the eligibility criteria was expanded to support more clients to relocate. It is now known as \$5K to Work.

More information about \$5K to Work, including the eligibility criteria, can be found on the Ministry's website at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/5k-to-work.html#null](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/5k-to-work.html#null).

The \$5K to Work payment must be repaid if:

- a client reapplies for a main benefit or returns to study within 91 days of the job start date
- the client left their job without a good and sufficient reason, or
- the client did not use the payment for the reason it was paid to them e.g. securing sustainable employment and relocating.

Please see **Table One** enclosed in the attached Excel Spreadsheet. This table outlines the number of clients receiving the \$3k / \$5k to work payment between 1 January 2018 and 30 September 2021, broken down by month and ethnicity.

You will note that the number of clients receiving the \$5k to Work grant significantly increased in October 2020. This is likely due to both the Wage Subsidy and COVID-19 Income Relief Payment coming to an end.

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 how many people have applied for \$5K to Work and have had their application approved, 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.

Ngā mihi nui

*Bridget Saunders*

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