



Dear

On 28 July 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *The most recent figures available by territorial local authority for how many businesses have taken on new workers through Flexiwage. Also, could I please have the latest possible Flexiwage expenditure figures by territorial local authority. More specifically, is it possible to obtain these two figures for the Kaipara ki Mahurangi and Whangaparaoa electorates, or the region/s that approximately compose these electorates? Could the figures please be placed in Excel.*

Flexi-wage provides a wage subsidy and extra assistance to support employers to take on people who do not meet the entry level requirements of the job. This helps people get the employment skills and experience they need to get into and stay in unsubsidised employment.

In order for a person to qualify for Flexi-wage the person must:

- be at risk of long-term benefit receipt or
- be disadvantaged in the labour market or
- have specific employment needs.

The amount paid and the duration is based on a person's needs and their barriers to employment and reflects the level of support they need to reach the entry-level requirements of the job.

The expected outcome of Flexi-wage is that the person stays in employment after the subsidy has ended.

More information regarding Flexi-wage can be found on the Ministry's website at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/flexi-wage.html.

In response to your request, please find attached as an excel spreadsheet, the following two tables:

- **Table One: The number of businesses granted Flexi-wage during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, broken down by contract regions and type of contract.**
- **Table Two: The amount of Flexi-wage expenditure during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, broken down by contract region and contract type.**

Please note that the Ministry only reports on Flexi-wage by region which is why we are providing you this information rather than rather than by territorial local authority or

electorates. Therefore, I am refusing part of your request 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.

Furthermore, you will note that there is a contract region called 'other'. This is due to clients not being assigned to a region at the time the contract was resulted.

In addition to the Flexi-wage subsidy, there are two further ways we help people into work through Flexi-wage; they are Flexi-wage Self-employment, and Flexi-wage Project in the Community.

- **Flexi-wage Self-employment**

Flexi-wage Self-employment provides a short-term wage subsidy to clients who want to start up their own business and need financial support while they get started.

Although Flexi-wage Self-employment is not included in the Employment and Work Readiness Assistance Programme, \$30m of the recent allocation of \$300m for the Flexi-wage programme is ring-fenced for Flexi-wage Self-employment. For more information: www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/flexi-wage-self-employment.html

- **Flexi-wage Project in the Community**

Flexi-wage Project in the Community is a subsidy that allows a client to participate in project-based work where they can develop work habits, general on-the-job skills and progress towards sustainable employment. This type of work experience will assist individual people to progress towards more sustainable employment opportunities. Flexi-wage Project in the Community is primarily a wage subsidy.

Figures for both Flexi-wage Self-employment and Flexi-wage Project in the Community are included in the attached tables for your information.

Intention to publish on the MSD website

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 and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments 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 Flexi-wage contracts, 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

P.P.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hugh Miller', written in a cursive style.

Hugh Miller
**Group General Manager
Employment**