



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Dear

On 10 August 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *All advice or information received by the Minister for Social Development and the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction regarding increasing benefits by \$50 per adult per week in Budget 2021*

The following documentation is in scope of your request:

No.	Report number	Date	Document type	Document title
1.	REP/21/1/019	21 January 2021	Joint Report	Confirmation of decisions for the Budget 2021 proposal to increase main benefit rates
2.	REP/21/3/175	4 March 2021	Joint Report	Further advice on main benefit increase through Budget 2021
3.	REP/21/3/215	8 March 2021	Aide-memoire	Budget 2021 – Main benefit increases and other income support initiatives
4.	Part of REP/21/3/215	8 March 2021	A3	Budget 2021 Investment Package
5.	Part of REP/21/3/215	8 March 2021	A3	Vote Social Development Budget 2021 Investment Package Income Support Initiatives
6.	REP/21/3/268	19 March 2021	Joint Report	Further advice on the Budget 2021 proposal to increase main benefits following ministerial discussion
7.	REP/21/3/307	26 March 2021	Report	Increases to beneficiary incomes as a result of recent income support changes and the proposed Budget 2021 benefit rate increase
8.	REP/21/3/318	30 March 2021	Joint Report	Further advice on the Budget 2021 proposal to increase main benefits – further option for setting the MFTC threshold

Most of the documents in scope of your request are publicly available and have, therefore, been refused under section 18(d) of the Act. This applies to document 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8. They can be accessed here: <https://budget.govt.nz/information-release/2021/social-development-and-employment.htm>.

Please note, some information within the documents that are available online is withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act as it is under active consideration. The release of this information is likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest of effective government would not be served.

The names of some individuals in the documentation available online are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

Much of the information within the two documents to be released to you is out of scope of your request as it relates to Bids/Initiatives that are not related to your request. To expedite a response, this information has been redacted for this reason and highlighted accordingly.

The principles and purposes of the Act 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the \$50 benefit increase, 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.

Yours sincerely



Polly Vowles  
**Policy Manager**  
**Welfare System and Income Support Policy**

## Manifesto Commitments

Funding committed to delivering against government's stated intentions in their manifesto

Bid name	Funding amount	Funding years
Out of scope		

<b>Main Benefit Rate Increase and Complementary Changes for New Zealanders Receiving a Main Benefit</b>	\$2,621.400m (gross) \$2,164.600m (net)	4yrs
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Out of scope		
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## VOTE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES LED BY OTHER MINISTERS

Out of scope		
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## Crown Entity Initiatives

Bid name	Funding amount	Funding years
Out of scope		

## Critical Cost Pressures

Ensuring MSD is funded to continue providing its current level of service to New Zealanders

Bid name	Funding amount	Funding years
Out of scope		

## Critical Cost Pressures

Recommended initiatives that target improved client outcomes

Bid name	Funding amount	Funding years
Out of scope		

## Non-spending Initiative

Out of scope		
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Out of scope

**Manifesto Commitments**

Funding committed to delivering against government's stated intentions in their manifesto

BUDGET 2021 INITIATIVE NAME	FUNDING AMOUNT	FUNDING YEARS
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Out of scope		
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<p><b>Main Benefit Rate Increase and Complementary Changes for New Zealanders Receiving a Main Benefit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases to main benefits are one of the most highly targeted and cost-effective income support levers to make progress on child poverty.</li> <li>Increasing main benefit rates by \$25 per week will mean 436,000 people will have, on average, \$23 per week more to spend on food and other essential living costs.</li> <li>Of the proposals in the current Budget package, this initiative will have the biggest impact on the government's child poverty targets, reducing child poverty by around 9,000-14,000, depending on the measure used.</li> </ul>	<p>\$2,621.400m (gross) \$2,164.600m (net)</p>	<p>4yrs</p>
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Out of scope		
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**VOTE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES LED BY OTHER MINISTERS**

Out of scope		
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