



15 SEP 2021

Tēnā koe

On 21 August 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Decline options given to those needing the wage subsidy or COVID Income Relief Payment.*

On 27 August 2021, you clarified that your request referred to the reasons or grounds on which the Ministry may decline applications for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy or COVID-19 Income Relief Payment.

The Wage Subsidy Scheme has enabled rapid support for thousands of New Zealand businesses during this time of uncertainty and has ensured that employees are able to remain connected with their employers during the COVID-19 lockdown. The scheme has been set up on a high-trust model in order to quickly deliver funds to support workers, families and businesses.

In the event where the Ministry is unable to approve an application for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy or COVID-19 Income Relief Payment, the applicant will receive an e-mail which will list the following reasons:

- the details provided to the Ministry do not match those held by Inland Revenue, or
- another subsidy application has already been approved, or
- the applicant has completed the wrong application form, or
- the application was completed by an employee (not the employer), or
- the Ministry cannot confirm if the applicant is self-employed.

More information regarding the reasons the Ministry is unable to approve an application can be found at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/covid-19/application-not-approved.html.

If an applicant believes that the wrong decision has been made, they can request a review of their application through a link provided in the e-mail.

More information about the criteria for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy and COVID-19 Income Relief Payment can be found on the Work and Income website at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/covid-19/index.html.

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 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 COVID-19 Wage Subsidy or COVID-19 Income Relief Payment information, 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

Bridget Saunders

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**Manager, Issue Resolution
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