



Tēnā koe

On 2 March 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information regarding the Flexible Funding Package:

- *Updated figures showing the distribution of MSD's Flexible Funding Assistance, and if there's some numbers to drill down to in Nelson (like what the money has been used for)*

As part of the New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan, the Ministry introduced Flexible Funding Assistance in November 2020, to compliment the many existing products that provide housing support in our communities. The assistance is in part a recognition that families with children are staying in emergency housing for longer periods and need additional support.

More information about the New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan is available online at the following link: www.hud.govt.nz/community-and-public-housing/addressing-homelessness/aotearoa-homelessness-action-plan-2020-2023/progress-on-the-homelessness-action-plan/.

Please refer to **Table One** below, which shows the total amount of Flexible Funding Assistance (FFA) accessed by clients of the Ministry, broken down by region, as at 31 January 2022.

Table One: The total amount of Flexible Funding Assistance (FFA) accessed by clients of the Ministry, broken down by region, as at 31 January 2022

Region	Amount
Auckland	\$266,500.00
Bay of Plenty	\$270,000.00
Canterbury	\$72,000.00
Central	\$135,332.00
East Coast	\$326,250.00
Nelson	\$37,000.00

Region	Amount
Southern	\$48,000.00
Taranaki	\$124,502.00
Waikato	\$700,000.00
Wellington	\$368,000.00
Northland	\$0.00*
Total	\$2,347,584.00

*Budget for Northland FFA has been included in Auckland

The Ministry has chosen to support the needs of families in emergency housing in Northland directly through case manager services as there are a small number of children in emergency housing in the region. Where a family in Northland has an immediate need that can be met by FFA, this can be accessed through the Auckland region.

Payments of FFA are made by contracted providers on the Ministry's behalf. Due to the way in which FFA is administered and recorded by providers, the Ministry is unable to provide a specific breakdown for the Nelson region. The Ministry would need to manually review individual files and confirm whether their address was within the district. As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Act due the substantial manual collation required. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

FFA can be used for individuals, and where appropriate, groups of children. For example, the Ministry has partnered with community organisations to deliver after-school programmes and school holiday programmes for children in emergency housing. Other examples include sports gear, swimming pool passes, bikes, movie passes.

FFA has also been used for additional early childhood education, employment preparedness, travel (where whānau are financially disadvantaged and need to attend house viewings in an area of their choice for a long-term home), and sports equipment for children who would benefit from extra-curricular activities or the attendance of gymnastics classes, for example.

More information about FFA can be found on the Ministry's website, here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/flexible-funding-assistance/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 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 the Flexible Funding Package, 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



Karen Hocking
**Group General Manager
Housing**