



8 August 2022

Tēnā koe

On 18 July 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Overall picture

We want to know the following about debt to MSD in Taitoko, Levin as at 30 March 2022 or the most recent date available and the comparison with latest date before February 2020 pre Covid-19:

- 1. and 14. Total amount of debt owed*
- 2. and 15. Total number of people that owe money*
- 3. and 16. Average amount that is owed*
- 4. and 17. Median amount that is owed*
- 5. and 18. Of those with debt to government over \$500 how many had been receiving assistance from Work and Income for:
 - a) less than one of the last 6 years or*
 - b) more than one of the last 6 years?**

Ethnicity

We want a break-down of debt to MSD in Taitoko by ethnicity as at 30 March 2022 or the most recent date available and the comparison with latest date before February 2020 pre Covid-19:

- 6. and 19. Total amount of debt broken down by ethnicity*
- 7. and 20. Total number of people that owe money broken down by ethnicity*

Age

We would like a breakdown of debt to MSD by age groups (5-year groupings) in Taitoko, Levin area as at 30 March 2022 or the most recent date available and the comparison with latest date before February 2020 pre Covid-19:

8. and 21. *Total amount of debt broken down by age groups*
9. and 22. *Total number of people that owe money broken down by age*

Children in household

We would like to understand how many of the households with children in Taitoko owe debt to MSD and how much they owe.

We therefore want a breakdown of the debt to MSD in Taitoko/Levin area with the following as at 30 March 2022 or the most recent date available and the comparison with latest date before February 2020 pre Covid-19:

10. and 23. *What number of the total number of people that owe debt to MSD have children in their household?*
11. and 24. *How much of the total debt to MSD is owed by households that have children?*
12. and 25. *Breakdown of the total debt by households with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or more than 7 children.*
13. and 26. *Breakdown of total number of people that owe money by households with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or more than 7 children.*

On 26 July 2022, the Ministry emailed you to advise that your original request had been condensed into the request above and to clarify your request to the suggested changes:

- *Reporting on current Working Age clients (18 – 64), as there is no standard reporting for clients outside of this age group,*
- *Confirming the following age groupings: 18 – 19, 20 – 24, 25 – 29, 30 – 34, 35 – 39, 40 – 44, 45 – 49, 50 – 54, 55 – 59 and 60 – 64.*

The Ministry received a response the same day advising the suggested changes were suitable and agreeing to condensing your request.

For the sake of clarity, the Ministry will respond to each section of your request in turn.

Please find enclosed the responses to Overall picture, questions 1 – 5 and 14 – 18 in **Appendix One**, which shows:

- **Table One:** The total number, the average and the medium debt amounts, of current beneficiaries, as at the end of January 2020 and June 2022, for the Horowhenua District.

- **Table Two:** The number of current main beneficiaries and the total debt amounts for those with debts over \$500, as at the end of January 2020 and June 2022, for Horowhenua District by continuous duration.

Please find enclosed the responses to Ethnicity questions 6 – 7 and 19 – 20 in **Appendix Two**, which contains:

- **Table Three:** The number of current main beneficiaries and the total debt amounts, as at the end of January 2020 and June 2022, for Horowhenua District by total response ethnicity.

Please find enclosed the response to Age questions 7 – 9 and 21 – 22 in **Appendix Three**, which contains:

- **Table Four:** The number of current main beneficiaries and total debt amounts, as at the end of January 2020 and June 2022, for Horowhenua District by age group.

Please find enclosed the response to Children in household questions 10 – 13 and 23 – 26 in **Appendix Four**, which contains:

- **Table Five:** The number of current main beneficiaries and total debt amounts, as at the end of January 2020 and June 2022, for Horowhenua District by numbers of children.

Please note that from December 2021, the Ministry has changed its ethnicity reporting to an approach called 'total response'. This change reflects our clients more accurately, aligns our approach with Statistics New Zealand reporting and reflects best practice.

Ethnicity is about people's identity and sense of belonging, measuring cultural affiliation, rather than race, ancestry, nationality, or citizenship. Ethnicity is self-perceived, and people can identify with more than one ethnic group.

Previously, the Ministry reported ethnicity using an approach called 'prioritised ethnicity', meaning people were allocated a single ethnic group in an order of priority. The priority previously used by the Ministry was Māori, Pacific Peoples, Other and NZ European. For more information about 'total response' for ethnicity reporting, please see: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/tools/how-we-report-ethnicity.html.

Regarding the tables provided, please note that the Territorial Local Authorities (TLA) is estimated based on the clients' address at the time of the grant. This TLA may not be the same as the address of the emergency housing supplier. Where the client address is not recorded, the location of the Ministry's service centre case managing the client has been used to approximate which TLA a client resides in.

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 and attachments on the Ministry'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, 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



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