



5 December 2022

Tēnā koe

On 7 November 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*Please find a request for information, for the Covid-19 Leave Support Scheme.*

*The following request is for the period of **2021, and January 1, 2021, to date, for:***

- 1. The total number of applications made for the year 2021, broken down per month, and centres.*
- 2. The total number of requests approved for 2021, broken down per month.*
- 3. The total number of applications made from January 1, 2022, to date, broken down per month, and centres.*
- 4. The total number of requests approved from Jan 1, 2022, to date, broken down per month.*

The Ministry will now respond to your request. Some questions are placed together as they are addressed by the same data.

- 1. The total number of applications made for the year 2021, broken down per month, and centres.*
- 3. The total number of applications made from January 1, 2022, to date, broken down per month, and centres.*

Please see the attached spreadsheet containing **Table One** which outlines the number of COVID Leave Support Subsidies applications received during the period 1 January 2021 to 31 October 2022 as at 4 November 2022 by month.

Your request for this data to be broken down by centres is refused in full under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist. The Ministry does not centrally record this data.

*2. The total number of requests approved for 2021, broken down per month.*

*4. The total number of requests approved from Jan 1, 2022, to date, broken down per month.*

Please see the attached spreadsheet containing **Table Two** which outlines the number of COVID Leave Support Subsidies granted during the period 1 January 2021 to 31 October 2022 as at 4 November 2022 by month.

To support New Zealand's health response and minimise the spread of COVID-19, the Ministry administers a range of financial supports that are designed to protect New Zealanders while they and their whānau self-isolate.

One of these is the COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme, which helps employers pay wages or salary costs for an employee who can't work from home and either:

- has COVID-19
- is caring for a dependant who has COVID-19, or
- is at risk of severe illness from COVID-19, or has a household member who is, and have been advised by a medical practitioner to self-isolate.

During the initial surge of Omicron, beginning in August 2021, we observed a high number of Leave Support Scheme applications being declined because applicants were attempting to apply for other financial supports, including the Wage Subsidy August 2021, using the incorrect application form.

Over time, the decline rate reduced as applicants understood which form to use for the wage subsidy, which was designed to help businesses that experienced a predicted or actual loss of revenue due to COVID-19 restrictions pay their staff.

Where Leave Support Scheme payments were declined, businesses were alerted via email to let them know their application was unsuccessful.

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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding Covid-19 Leave Support Scheme applications, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



George Van Ooyen  
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