



8 June 2022

Tēnā koe

On 23 May 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *I refer to the MSD report on wage subsidy payments. How much in dollar terms was paid out in wage subsidy in Northland in 2020 and 2021 please? www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/covid-19/who-received-the-covid-19-wage-subsidies-may-2022.html*

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 to quickly deliver funds to support workers, families and businesses. The Ministry informed employers that they could apply for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy if they thought they would have a financial downturn as a result of the pandemic. If they did not experience a significant downturn, then they were informed that they would need to repay the money. More information about these obligations can be found in the Employer Declaration Links that were previously provided to you.

Please note, the report you have referenced in your request is reporting on jobs that have been supported and not on businesses that have been supported. As such, it excludes payments to sole traders.

For the 2020 Wage Subsidies (Original Wage Subsidy, Wage Subsidy Extension, and Resurgence Wage Subsidy) as at 11 September 2020, \$340m was paid to Employers to help people stay connected to their jobs in Northland,

For the 2021 Wage Subsidies (Wage Subsidy Payments) as at 7 January 2022, \$119m was paid to jobs in Northland,

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 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 regarding the total wage subsidy amount paid out in Northland in 2020 and 2021, 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, Issues Resolution
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