



2 May 2022

Tēnā koe

On 11 February 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *The amount spent on Emergency housing at the Northerner Motor Inn from January 1, 2020 to January 1, 2022*
- *The amount spent on maintenance at the Northerner 01/01/20 – 01/01/22 (is Msd required to pay for maintenance or is there a set amount that MSD pay to the Northerner?)*
- *The Northerner Motor Inn is currently for sale, will MSD continue to pay for emergency housing at the premises if sold?*
- *When does the contract expire for emergency housing between MSD and The Northerner Motor Inn? Is it reviewed annually? What makes The Northerner Motor Inn ideal emergency housing accommodation from MSD perspective?*
- *Could I please have the total amount spent at The Norther Motor Inn since the contract for emergency housing was established with the Government at the property.*
- *What is the longest length of time an emergency housing resident resided at the Northerner Motor Inn? Was it an individual or a family – if it's a family how many children?*
- *What is the longest length of time an emergency housing resident stayed at a premises paid for by MSD since emergency housing was established and where?*
- *What services do MSD provided emergency housing residents to assist them with transitioning to homes?*
- *Can I please have the amount spent in each region for emergency housing across the country between 01/01/20 to 01/01/22*

- *The rent paid by residents in emergency housing how is that obtained? Does that automatically get deducted by MSD when the client is paid their benefit? Can you please explain the process and can you please tell me where exactly the rental money goes.*
- *If the rent is paid directly to the emergency housing property, does the Government receive a cut of the rent, if so how much or what percentage is paid back to the Government?*
- *Can I please have the total amount the Government has received back in rental payments from emergency housing residents between 01/01/20 – 01/01/22*

On 11 March 2022, the Ministry advised you that more time was required by the Ministry to respond to your request due to the large amount of information

On 11 April 2022, the Ministry advised you that your request was being granted in part but that more time was required to prepare the information for release.

For the sake of clarity, I have grouped your questions and will answer them in turn.

- *The amount spent on Emergency Housing at the Northerner Motor Inn from January 1, 2020 to January 1, 2022.*

The Ministry has not paid Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs) to the Northerner Motor Inn during this period.

- *Can I have the names of all motels/ hotels/ hostels MSD pay for emergency housing in Kaitaia and an itemised list of how much was spent at each property for emergency housing and all associated costs between 01/01/20-01/01/22*

Please see the **attached Excel spreadsheet** which contains the following table in response to your request:

- **Table One:** Emergency Housing amount granted to clients in the Far North District in the years 2020 and 2021, broken down by supplier name and year.
- *What is the total amount spent at The Northerner Motor Inn since the contract for emergency housing was established with the Government at the property?*
- *When does the contract expire for emergency housing between MSD and The Northerner Motor Inn? Is it reviewed annually? What makes*

*The Northerner Motor Inn ideal emergency housing accommodation from MSD perspective?*

- *The Northerner Motor Inn is currently for sale, will MSD continue to pay for emergency housing at the premises if sold?*

Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNG) are paid directly to an accommodation supplier by the Ministry on behalf of our clients. In order to receive an EH SNG payment, an accommodation supplier must register with the Ministry as a supplier. The Ministry can only pay into the bank accounts of businesses who are registered as suppliers, and this registration does not create a contractual relationship between the Ministry and the accommodation supplier. The Ministry does not contract EH suppliers.

If the new owner of the Northerner Motor Inn wishes to receive EH SNGs, they must register with the Ministry as a supplier. The Ministry can only make payments to the Northerner Motor Inn while they are registered as a supplier.

- *The amount spent on maintenance at the Northerner 01/01/20 - 01/01/22 (is MSD required to pay for maintenance or is there a set amount that MSD pay to the Northerner?)*

The Ministry does not pay for the maintenance of properties which are used by clients for emergency housing. Therefore, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist.

- *What is the longest length of time an emergency housing resident resided at the Northerner Motor Inn? Was it an individual or a family - if it's a family how many children?*
- *What is the longest length of time an emergency housing resident stayed at a premises paid for by MSD since emergency housing was established and where?*

I am unable to provide you with this information as information regarding the length of time people stay at emergency housing would be held in notes on individual case files, if held at all. In order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review a substantial number of files. As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Act. 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.

- *What services do MSD provide emergency housing residents to assist them with transitioning to homes?*

The Ministry provides a wide range of support to clients in Emergency Housing.

Clients who spend time in Emergency Housing are supported by Case Managers and Housing Navigators to help address the barriers they face to accessing and sustaining suitable housing. Housing Brokers build connections with local landlords and property managers to promote Ministry clients as potential tenants and match them with housing opportunities in the private rental market. Integrated Services Case Managers work with at risk families in Emergency Housing in their region to help them break the cycle of disadvantage they may face and to raise the chances of positive outcomes for their children.

The Ministry provides Flexible Funding Assistance for clients with dependent children staying in Emergency Housing. This is a last resort, non-taxable and non-recoverable financial assistance paid under the Flexible Funding Programme. This programme is to help with meeting the educational, early childhood and wellbeing needs of families with children when additional costs have happened because they are staying in emergency housing. You can find more information about Flexible Funding Assistance here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/flexible-funding-assistance/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/flexible-funding-assistance/index.html).

The Ministry also supports clients to find long-term housing. Clients can apply to be placed on the Public Housing Register. If the client is supported into public housing, the Government assists by paying a portion of the rent. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as well as Kāinga Ora (KO) provide Public Housing assistance. More information about Public Housing can be found here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/find-a-house/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/find-a-house/index.html).

The Ministry's Ready to Rent programme helps people in Emergency Housing or at risk of housing instability better prepare for the private rental market by equipping them with the skills and confidence they need to become preferred tenants and sustain long-term housing. Ready to Rent is an optional two-day programme that is run by community providers contracted by the Ministry.

The Ministry, through Work and Income, provides recoverable and non-recoverable financial assistance to help people meet an immediate need for essential items such as food, health costs, power and other costs.

Where clients meet the eligibility and entitlement criteria, the Ministry can assist them with paying rent in advance, tenancy bond, and moving costs for the client to move into sustainable housing.

The Ministry also provides supplementary assistance such as the Accommodation Supplement and Temporary Additional Support, to assist clients with weekly costs. Further information about financial assistance and eligibility can be found on the Work and Income website: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/individuals/a-z-benefits/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/individuals/a-z-benefits/index.html).

- *Can I please have the amount spent in each region for emergency housing across the country between 01/01/20 to 01/01/22*

This information can be found in the quarterly reports published by HUD, available here: [www.hud.govt.nz/research-and-publications/statistics-and-research/public-housing-reports/](http://www.hud.govt.nz/research-and-publications/statistics-and-research/public-housing-reports/).

- *The rent paid by residents in emergency housing, how is that obtained? Does that automatically get deducted by MSD when the client is paid their benefit? Can you please explain the process and can you please tell me where exactly the rental money goes.*
- *If the rent is paid directly to the emergency housing property, does the Government receive a cut of the rent, if so how much or what percentage is paid back to the Government?*
- *Can I please have the total amount the Government has received back in rental payments from emergency housing residents between 01/01/20-01/01/22?*

Clients in EH do not pay rent, after seven nights they will start to pay some of their accommodation costs. This is called an Emergency Housing Contribution, which generally constitutes 25 per cent of income (after tax). If the client has a partner, they will also have to contribute about 25 per cent of their income (after tax). You can find more relevant information here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.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.

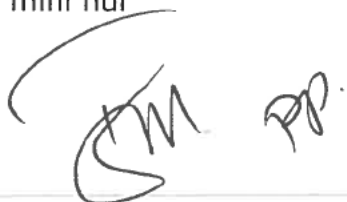
This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry's website. Your personal details will 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the Northerner Motor Inn, 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'KH' followed by a flourish and a period.

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Karen Hocking  
**Group General Manager  
Housing**