



13 May 2022

Tēnā koe

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

- *For the past two years, a list of the providers of emergency housing in Whanganui, Rangitīkei, Manawatū, Palmerston North, Horowhenua, Manawatū and Tararua and how much has been paid to each provider.*
- *For the past two years, a list of the providers of transitional housing in Whanganui, Rangitīkei, Manawatū, Palmerston North, Horowhenua, Manawatū and Tararua and how much has been paid to each provider.*
- *For the past two years, how many people have used emergency housing and transitional housing in Whanganui, Rangitīkei, Manawatū, Palmerston North, Horowhenua, Manawatū and Tararua?*
- *The Public Housing Quarterly Report lists the transitional housing places by region and the area I'm interested in is the Central region. Are you able to clarify where exactly the central region covers?*

On 26 April 2022, the Ministry transferred the sections of your request relating to transitional housing and the Public Housing Quarterly Report to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development for response.

On the same day, the Ministry clarified your request to confirm how you would like the information broken down. You noted that you were happy to receive the data broken down by year.

As such, please find attached **Appendix One** providing **Table One** showing the number of grants, clients and amount granted for Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs) in the Central Region Territorial Local Authority (TLA) from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021.

You will note that information regarding some individuals is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons.

The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

Demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and more people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is generated by a shortage of affordable housing driving up house prices and rents. People on low incomes are most affected by rising housing costs and many seek financial help through the Ministry in the form of emergency housing.

The EH SNG is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. The Ministry pays EH SNGs directly to the accommodation supplier and assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights but can be extended dependant on individual circumstances. Some people may struggle to access suitable housing due to a lack of available supply or they simply may not be able to meet the high cost of housing which may result in them receiving EH SNG support for an extended period of time.

The Ministry works hard to support people in emergency housing to secure a long-term housing solution, either through Public Housing administered by Kāinga Ora and community housing providers or private rental accommodation. Other options including transitional housing, administered by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, can also be explored as an option depending on availability and the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution or the solution that we want to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. They provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available at the following link:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html.

Please note that **Table One** provides information for EH SNGs granted to recipients whose address is recorded in the Ministry's system as residing in the Central Region TLA. You will note that this list of registered emergency housing suppliers includes suppliers from outside this TLA. This is due to a client's TLA being estimated based on upon their registered address at the time of the grant.

Where the client address is not recorded, the location of the Ministry's assigned service centre case manager has been used to approximate which TLA a client resides in. However, as the Ministry has switched to working from national queues, EH SNGs and other hardship grants can be granted by a case manager working anywhere in New Zealand. Therefore, in such cases, the TLA may not reflect the actual client address or location. Due to the transient nature of people receiving EH SNGs, the recorded address for a

client may also be that of a trusted family member or friend who receives mail on their behalf.

Please also note that the registered supplier name is the name of the parent company of the accommodation supplier, and not necessarily the name of the accommodation itself. One registered supplier may provide accommodation across multiple premises in different locations or trading names, receiving payment through the single supplier record. You will also note that some suppliers may be listed due to a coding error when a client receives multiple assistance payments at one point in time, for example for petrol or groceries.

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, 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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'PP. [unclear]', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karen Hocking
**Group General Manager
Housing**