



26 October 2022

Tēnā koe

On 27 September 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *How much financial assistance was provided to clients via MyMSD in the previous 12 months?*
 - *this should include applications for assistance made via MyMSD.*
 - *a breakdown of what the assistance was for.*
 - *the % of all the MSD payments to clients that were applied for via MyMSD vs over the phone vs in a service centre.*

On 20 October 2022, the Ministry emailed you to clarify the information you were seeking. As the Ministry has not yet received a reply, we must proceed with your original request.

I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested as it is held in notes on individual case files. 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.

The Ministry is unable to report on applications that were made by clients on MyMSD that were then completed by a Ministry staff member. If, for example, you wish to receive specific information on the number of Special Needs food grants approved by MyMSD compared to the number of Special Needs food grants approved by a Ministry staff member, I encourage you to submit a new request.

The Ministry regularly publishes data regarding applications for financial assistance on our website. Please see the Benefit Fact Sheets for more information, here: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/index.html.

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.

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 applications for assistance made through MyMSD, 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

Bridget Saunders
**Manager Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**