



13 September 2022

Tēnā koe

On 21 July 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Can I please, under the OIA, ask how much you have paid to West Coast (South Island) motel providers since the pandemic began, per motel.

There has been a growing demand nationally for emergency housing, as the shortage of affordable housing and rising rents continues to impact low-income whānau, particularly those who are beneficiaries. The year 2020 saw a significant increase in demand for emergency housing, as the Ministry supported people through the COVID-19 pandemic period with accommodation where they could safely self-isolate. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, people also could not easily move out of emergency housing into long-term accommodation, which contributed to longer durations of stay and higher costs.

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.

I refer you to **Table One** in **Appendix One**, attached, showing the number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs) granted during the period 1 March 2020 and 30 June 2022 for the West Coast area in the South Island.

Regarding the data provided, 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.

Some of the emergency housing suppliers may have received an incorrect payment which has been refunded. For example, in some of the tables, the Ministry of Social Development is listed as receiving payment as a supplier.

This is due to an incorrect payment being made to a supplier, and that payment being returned to the Ministry in order to correct this error.

You will note that the 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.

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.

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



Karen Hocking
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Housing