



31 March 2023

Tēnā koe

On 14 February 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*We seek to better understand the issues facing individuals and whanau across the Wellington Regions/District that are experiencing housing insecurities and homelessness.*

*We are requesting that you please supply the following information under the Official Information Act (OIA):*

*A breakdown for each respective calendar year being, January 2017 through to December 2022 which provides detail of client beneficiary type being:*

1. *Non-Beneficiaries*
2. *Youth Payment (YP)*
3. *Young Parent Payment (YPP)*
4. *Job Seeker (JS)*
5. *Sole Parent Support (SPS)*
6. *Supported Living Payment (SLP)*

*With the following recorded information:*

- *For each respective year and benefit type the number of clients aged 16yrs, 17yrs, 18yrs, 19yrs, 20yrs, 21yrs, 22yrs, 23yrs and 24yrs at the time made application via submission of a SNG/RAP form for Emergency Housing Support*
- *For each respective year and benefit type the number of clients aged 16yrs, 17yrs, 18yrs, 19yrs, 20yrs, 21yrs, 22yrs, 23yrs and 24yrs at the time made application via submission of a SNG/RAP form for Emergency Housing Support for 7 days or more and were accepted*

- *For each respective year and benefit type the average number of nights stay of clients aged 16yrs, 17yrs, 18yrs, 19yrs, 20yrs, 21yrs, 22yrs, 23yrs and 24yrs in Emergency housing*

*We seek to better understand the issues facing individuals and whanau across the Waikato Regions/District that are experiencing housing insecurities and homelessness.*

*We are requesting that you please supply the following information under the Official Information Act (OIA):*

*A breakdown for the calendar year 1 January 2022 to 30 December 2022 which provides detail of each beneficiary type being:*

- 1. Non-Beneficiaries*
- 2. Youth Payment (YP)*
- 3. Young Parent Payment (YPP)*
- 4. Job Seeker (JS)*
- 5. Sole Parent Support (SPS)*
- 6. Supported Living Payment (SLP)*

*With the following recorded information:*

- *The number of clients aged 16yrs, 17yrs, 18yrs,19yrs, 20yrs, 21yrs, 22yrs, 23yrs and 24yrs at the time made application via submission of a SNG/RAP form for Emergency Housing Support*
- *The number of clients aged 16yrs, 17yrs, 18yrs,19yrs, 20yrs, 21yrs, 22yrs, 23yrs and 24yrs at the time made application via submission of a SNG/RAP form for Emergency Housing Support for 7 days or more and were accepted*
- *The average number of nights stay of clients aged 16yrs, 17yrs, 18yrs, 19yrs, 20yrs, 21yrs, 22yrs, 23yrs and 24yrs in Emergency*

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (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.

After these seven nights, Work and Income arrange another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation and assess whether another grant is required. The Ministry works hard to support people in emergency housing to secure a long-term housing solution, either through public housing or private rental accommodation. Other options including, transitional housing, 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. Emergency housing provides 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](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html).

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 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.

For the sake of clarity, the Ministry has separated the data in two appendices, one for the Wellington Region and one for the Waikato Region.

Please find **APPENDIX ONE**, containing the following tables in regard to the Wellington Region.

- **Table One** which shows the number of distinct clients aged 16 to 24 granted EH SNGs and the total number granted in the Wellington Region for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.
- **Table Two** which shows the number of distinct clients aged 16 to 24 granted EH SNGs for 7 days or more and total number granted in the Wellington Region for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.
- **Table Three** which shows the average and median number of nights granted for EH SNGs to clients over the period of a calendar year, aged 16 to 24 in the Wellington Region, for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.
- **Table Four** which shows the average and median nights granted for a single EH SNG grant to clients aged 16 to 24 in the Wellington Region for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.

You will find in **APPENDIX TWO** containing the following tables related to EH SNGs in the Waikato Region.

- **Table Five** which shows the number of distinct clients aged 16 to 24 granted EH SNGs and the total number granted in the Waikato Region for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.
- **Table Six** which shows the number of distinct clients aged 16 to 24 granted EH SNGs for 7 days or more and total number granted in the Waikato Region for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.
- **Table Seven** which shows the average and median number of nights granted EH SNGs to clients over the period of a calendar year, aged 16 to 24 in the Waikato Region for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.
- **Table Eight** which shows the average and median nights granted for a single EH SNG grant to clients aged 16 to 24 in the Waikato Region for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2022, broken down by benefit type, age and year.

To protect confidentiality, the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data. These data tables have had random rounding where values have been randomly rounded to the nearest multiple of 3. This is applied to all cell counts in the table. The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals. The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.

Cells with 'S' are those where data has been suppressed to protect identification of individuals and is applied to values less than 6.

Regarding the tables provided, please note that the Territorial Local Authority (TLA)s which make up each region, is estimated based on the clients' address at the time of the grant. These TLA's may not be the same as the address of the emergency housing supplier. Where the client address is not recorded, the location of the Ministry's service centre case managing the client 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 could 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.

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 data on Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants for the Wellington and Waikato Regions, 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



Karen Hocking  
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