



23 May 2023

Tēnā koe

On 2 May 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*Please advise as to the following:*

- 1. Whether or not phone calls regarding personal information to WINZ Service Centres both inbound and outbound are recorded.*
- 2. Whether or not the automatic recording of phone calls regarding personal information is limited to WINZ Contact Centres only.*
- 3. Whether or not a WINZ client may request to be provided the phone reference number and a recording and/or transcript of a phone conversation between a client and a WINZ agent regarding personal client information at Service Centres or Contact Centres.*

I will respond to each part of your request in turn:

- 1. "Whether or not phone calls regarding personal information to WINZ Service Centres both inbound and outbound are recorded."*
- 2. "Whether or not the automatic recording of phone calls regarding personal information is limited to WINZ Contact Centres only."*

All calls between clients and the Ministry's 0800 contact centre staff are recorded.

The Ministry's call recordings are limited to any Ministry staff who use Integrated Communication Environment technology – this is a specific soft-phone technology widely used to interact with clients. Only staff in the Ministry's 0800 contact centres use this application to record all calls between themselves and clients.

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Calls made to or from individual staff desk phones or cell phones, such as calls to or from a specific Case Manager's desk phone, are not recorded (except for voicemail).

Calls transferred from contact centre staff to other phone numbers stop being recorded when the contact centre staff member leaves the conversation

Recording begins only when the contact centre staff member is connected to a client. Parts of the call where a client is listening to announcement messages, entering their client number, or listening to music while waiting in queue are not recorded. Before being connected to a staff member, a message is played to advise the caller that their call will be recorded.

The contact centres also record outgoing calls to clients. In this case, the staff member advises the client the call is being recorded at the beginning of the conversation.

In both cases, call recordings are used for training purposes to enable staff to learn how to manage different types of calls and to measure the quality of information provided by staff to clients. It is not possible to turn off call recordings for these lines for clients who do not wish to be recorded. In this case, they will need to be booked an appointment to speak to a case manager.

3. *"Whether or not a WINZ client may request to be provided the phone reference number and a recording and/or transcript of a phone conversation between a client and a WINZ agent regarding personal client information at Service Centres or Contact Centres."*

If possible, the Ministry will release call recordings to the client if requested under the Privacy Act 2020. The Ministry does not offer transcripts as we do not have the resources to provide transcripts of call recordings outside of exceptional circumstances.

Please note: The call recording component of the Contact Centre technology can only store calls for a period of 90 days, after this calls are deleted as part of the ministry security policies.

Privacy Act requests by an individual to access or obtain a copy of a recording, or personal information that would include recordings, must be assessed in relation to the Ministry's ability to readily retrieve the recording, maintain the privacy of any other identifiable individuals in the recording and other factors as detailed in the Privacy Act 2020. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis.

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 phone call recordings at WINZ service centres, 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



Geoff Cook  
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**Contact Centre and Digital Services**