



15 September 2023

Tēnā koe

On 2 August 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Each part of your request will be grouped-up and responded to in turn:

- 1. Can you please give me costs from the year ending March 2023 from June 2022 of SNG for Emergency Housing. Please confirm what this covers such as Motels or other temporary accommodation.*

When supporting clients to access emergency housing, the Ministry works with clients to identify emergency housing options best suited to their individual circumstances at the time of their application. Clients also often have their own preferences for where they wish to stay, which we take into consideration. The Ministry manages the needs of those requiring emergency housing through a range of commercial accommodation options. The use of particular suppliers can change over time as availability of options change or identified issues are addressed.

Please see the **Appendix, Table One** which provides the total amount of Emergency Housing Special Needs grants (EH SNGs) from 1 June 2022 to 31 March 2023.

More information about Emergency Housing EH SNGs is publicly available on the Ministry's website: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/emergency-housing-archive/index.html

In terms of what accommodation types the EH SNG expenditure covers, these include motels, hotels, Marae, hostels, holiday parks, camping grounds and shelters.

- 2. Please can I have 5 years of accommodation supplement payments given out and too how many New Zealanders?*

An Accommodation Supplement is a non-taxable benefit that provides assistance towards a client's accommodation costs. A person does not have to be getting a benefit to qualify for Accommodation Supplement

Please see the **Appendix, Table Two** which provides the total amount of Accommodation Supplements weekly rate paid, between 1 July 2018 and 31 June 2023.

3. Please tell me how many motels owned by the New Zealand government are operating and what are they each collecting weekly or yearly in rent payments ?

The Ministry grants financial assistance to clients and pays that to suppliers on their behalf. There is no direct relationship (or contract) between the Ministry and supplier. EHSNGs are intended as a one-off grant. They are not able to be paid in advance of the need, or beyond what an individual is entitled to at the time of application. Given the high level of need many clients experience, subsequent grants are applied for in succession, and these are paid for up to 21 days at a time.

In the context of emergency housing, the Ministry does not own any properties that are operating as motels.

4. Clients renting from question 3 , are they all kiwis on the EH waiting list ?

The Ministry does not have an emergency housing waiting list. When supporting clients to access emergency housing, the Ministry will work with clients to identify the emergency housing options best suited to their individual circumstances at the time of application, which includes ensuring that there is a vacancy for the client. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the information that you have requested does not exist.

6. How many are new citizens? New arrivals, working visas or refugees.

In order to be eligible for emergency housing, a person must be a New Zealand citizen or have a residence class visa in addition to being an ordinary resident in New Zealand. More information about emergency housing eligibility can be found on the Ministry's publicly available website: www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing/index.html

In the context of emergency housing, there is no centrally recorded database that enables us to access the current residency status of clients. Therefore, I am unable to provide you with this information 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.

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.

5. Please tell me at what % are clients in Emergency housing ie Motels are born citizens?

Please see the **Appendix, Table Three** which provides the number and percentage of clients who were born in New Zealand and residing in Emergency Housing for the month of June 2023.

All data contained in the **Appendix** has controls in place to protect confidentiality. The Ministry of Social Development uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data. This is achieved by applying random rounding to the data tables to base three to all cell counts in the table. The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.

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 'K. Hocking', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karen Hocking
Group General Manager
Housing



Appendix

Table One: The total amount of Emergency Housing Special Needs grants (EH SNGs) from 1 June 2022 to 31 March 2023

Month	Amount granted
June 2022	\$31,731,250.55
July 2022	\$30,000,557.04
August 2022	\$31,966,559.37
September 2022	\$29,777,190.94
October 2022	\$27,699,888.83
November 2022	\$28,048,891.07
December 2022	\$30,710,546.28
January 2023	\$23,794,403.85
February 2023	\$25,691,541.71
March 2023	\$29,650,762.28
Total from 1 June 2022 to 31 March 2023	\$289,071,591.92

Notes:

The amount granted is not necessarily the amount spent.

Table Two: The total amount of Accommodation Supplements weekly rate paid as-at the end of each June, from 2019 to 2023.

As at end of	Weekly Amount
June 2019	\$29,415,155.95
June 2020	\$34,551,882.70
June 2021	\$36,629,643.68
June 2022	\$36,626,992.93
June 2023	\$37,650,496.29

Table Three: The number and percentage of clients who were born in New Zealand residing in Emergency Housing for the month of June 2023.

For the month	Number of clients who were born in New Zealand	Number of clients who were not born in New Zealand	Percentage of clients who were born in New Zealand
June 2023	3,690	549	87.05%

Notes:

This is the number of clients, not the number of grants.

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