



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA



Ministry of Social Development

Benefit Fact Sheets

Snapshot – September 2022 Quarter

The Benefit Fact Sheets provide a high-level view of trends in benefit receipt. The Benefit Fact Sheets are published quarterly and contain information on income support provided by the Ministry.

In the Benefit Fact Sheets Snapshot

Contents

Main benefit assistance

| | |
|--|---|
| Main benefits | 1 |
| Jobseeker Support | 1 |
| Sole Parent Support | 2 |
| Supported Living Payment | 2 |
| Regional distribution of Jobseeker Support | 3 |
| Regional distribution of Sole Parent Support | 4 |

Benefit grants and cancellations

5

Benefit sanctions

5

Supplementary assistance

6

Hardship assistance

7

| | |
|---|---|
| Total hardship assistance | 7 |
| Reasons for providing hardship assistance | 7 |
| Special Needs Grants | 8 |
| Benefit Advances | 8 |

Protecting our clients information – confidentiality

All information in this document has been randomly rounded to base 3. Data found here is rounded independently from other products produced by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) resulting in small differences in the data between products.

From 12 February 2021, MSD started applying a range of new confidentiality procedures to public data releases. These procedures will continue to protect client information, while making more data available. To find out how we have changed the way we work with client information, please visit: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/tools/how-we-keep-data-private.html

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to copy, distribute, and adapt the work, as long as you attribute the work to the Crown and abide by the other licence terms.

To view a copy of this licence, please visit: www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0.

Please note that no departmental or governmental emblem, logo or Coat of Arms may be used in any way which infringes any provision of the Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981. Attribution to the Crown should be in written form and not by reproduction of any such emblem, logo or Coat of Arms.

Published October 2022
Ministry of Social Development
PO Box 1556
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

Telephone: +64 4 916 3300
Email: info@msd.govt.nz
Facsimile: +64 4 918 0099
Web: www.msd.govt.nz

Main benefit assistance

Main benefits

Main benefits for working-age (18–64 years) clients include: Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support, Supported Living Payment, Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment, Emergency Benefit, Emergency Maintenance Allowance, Jobseeker Support Student Hardship, Widow’s Benefit Overseas, and Sole Parent Support Overseas.

Figure 1a. Number of working-age clients receiving main benefits at the end of the last six September quarters.

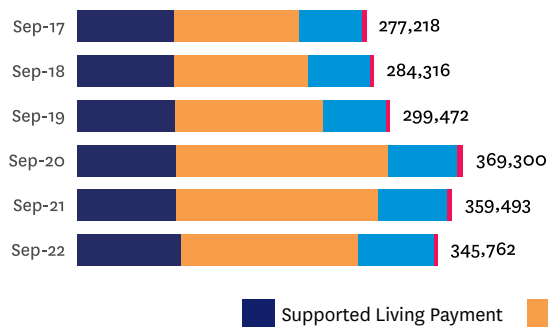
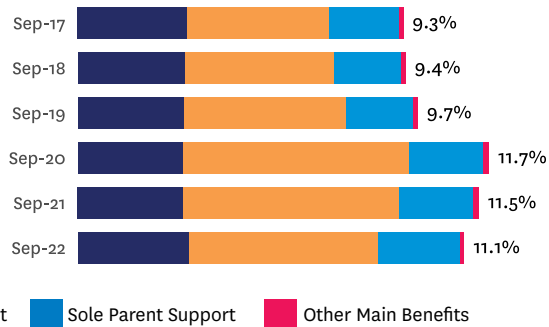


Figure 1b. Proportion of working-age population receiving main benefits at the end of the last six September quarters.



345,762 working-age people receiving a main benefit at the end of September 2022.

11.1 percent of the working-age population receiving a main benefit at the end of September 2022.

The number of working-age people receiving a main benefit was 3.8 percent lower at the end of September 2022, when compared to the end of September 2021. Over the same period, benefit numbers as a proportion of the working-age population also decreased to 11.1 percent, from 11.5 percent.

The working-age population is a subset of the estimated New Zealand resident population, defined as those aged 18–64. To calculate population proportions, the working-age population is used, most recent June estimate available.

Jobseeker Support

Figure 2a. Number of working-age people receiving Jobseeker Support by sub category at the end of the last six September quarters.

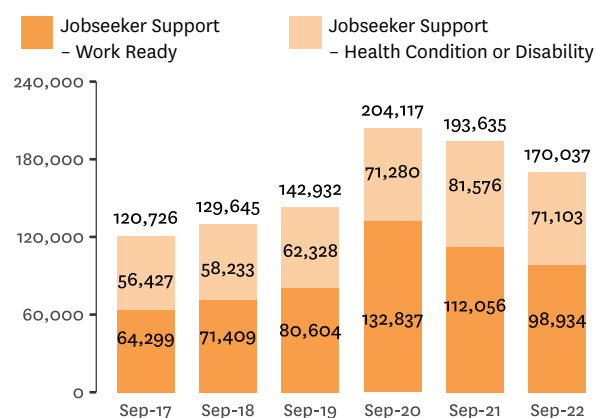
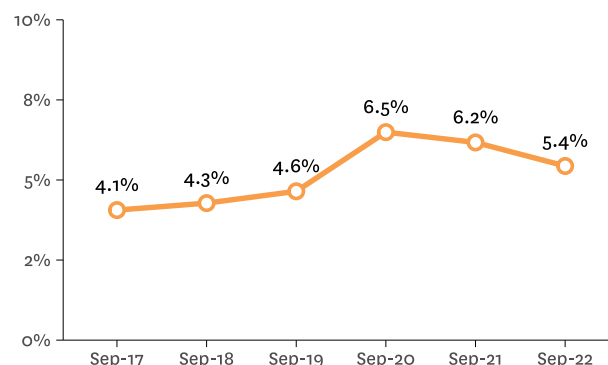


Figure 2b. Proportion of working-age population receiving Jobseeker Support at the end of the last six September quarters.



170,037 working-age people receiving Jobseeker Support at the end of September 2022.

5.4 percent of the working-age population receiving Jobseeker Support at the end of September 2022.

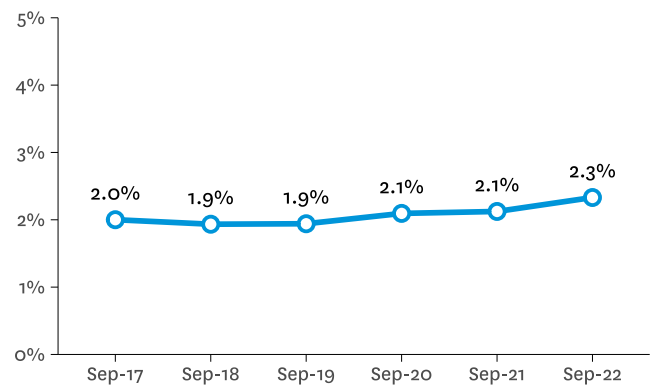
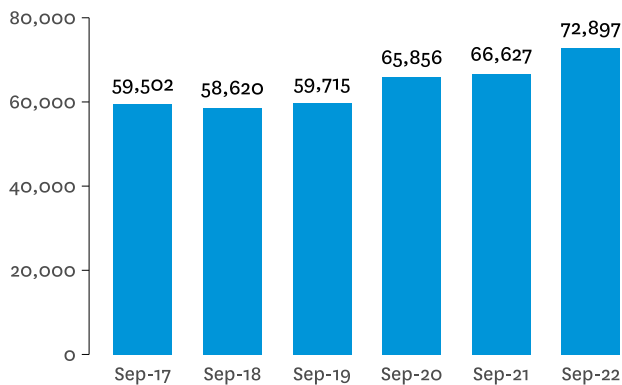
At the end of September 2022, the number of working-age people on Jobseeker Support decreased by 12.2 percent, when compared to the end of September 2021. Those receiving Jobseeker Support – Work Ready decreased by 11.7 percent when comparing the end of September 2022 (98,934) to the end of September 2021 (112,056).

Jobseeker Support is for people who are actively looking for or preparing for work. It includes people with part-time work obligations and those who cannot look for work at the moment (e.g. those with a health condition, injury, or disability).

Sole Parent Support

Figure 3a. Number of working-age people receiving Sole Parent Support at the end of the last six September quarters.

Figure 3b. Proportion of working-age population receiving Sole Parent Support at the end of the last six September quarters.



72,897 working-age people receiving Sole Parent Support at the end of September 2022.

At the end of September 2022, the number of working-age people receiving Sole Parent Support was 9.4 percent higher than at the end of September 2021. The proportion of working-age people receiving Sole Parent Support increased to 2.3 percent at the end of September 2022.

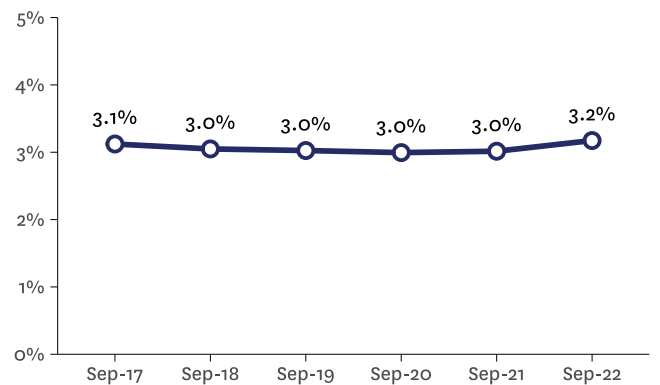
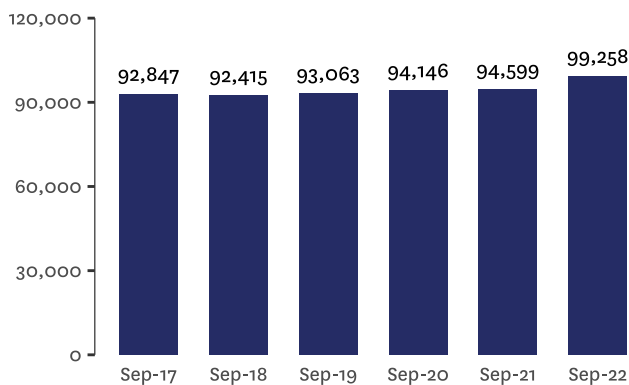
2.3 percent of the working-age population receiving Sole Parent Support at the end of September 2022.

Sole Parent Support is for single parents, with at least one dependent child under 14 years.

Supported Living Payment

Figure 4a. Number of working-age people receiving Supported Living Payment at the end of the last six September quarters.

Figure 4b. Proportion of working-age population receiving Supported Living Payment at the end of the last six September quarters.



99,258 working-age people receiving Supported Living Payment at the end of September 2022.

At the end of September 2022, the number of working-age people on Supported Living Payment increased by 4.9 percent, when compared to the end of September 2021. The proportion of working-age people receiving Supported Living Payment increased to 3.2 percent at the end of September 2022.

3.2 percent of the working-age population receiving Supported Living Payment at the end of September 2022.

Supported Living Payment is for people who have, or care for someone with, a health condition, injury or disability that limits their ability to work. The long-term nature of conditions for people on Supported Living Payment mean that fewer people transfer to other benefits or move into paid employment, compared to other benefit types.

Regional distribution of Jobseeker Support as a proportion of the working-age population, by Work and Income region, in September 2022.

Comparing the end of September 2022 with September 2021, the proportion of the working-age population* receiving Jobseeker Support decreased in all regions. Northland had the highest proportion receiving Jobseeker Support, at 9.9 percent at the end of June 2022.

The largest percentage point decreases were in East Coast (1.5 percent), and Taranaki (1.0 percent).

Work and Income has 11 geographical regions. An extra category, "Other Region", is used to count people managed by national units, for example contact centres and processing centres.

All percentages have been rounded to the nearest decimal point. As a result, a percentage point change may be displayed as zero.

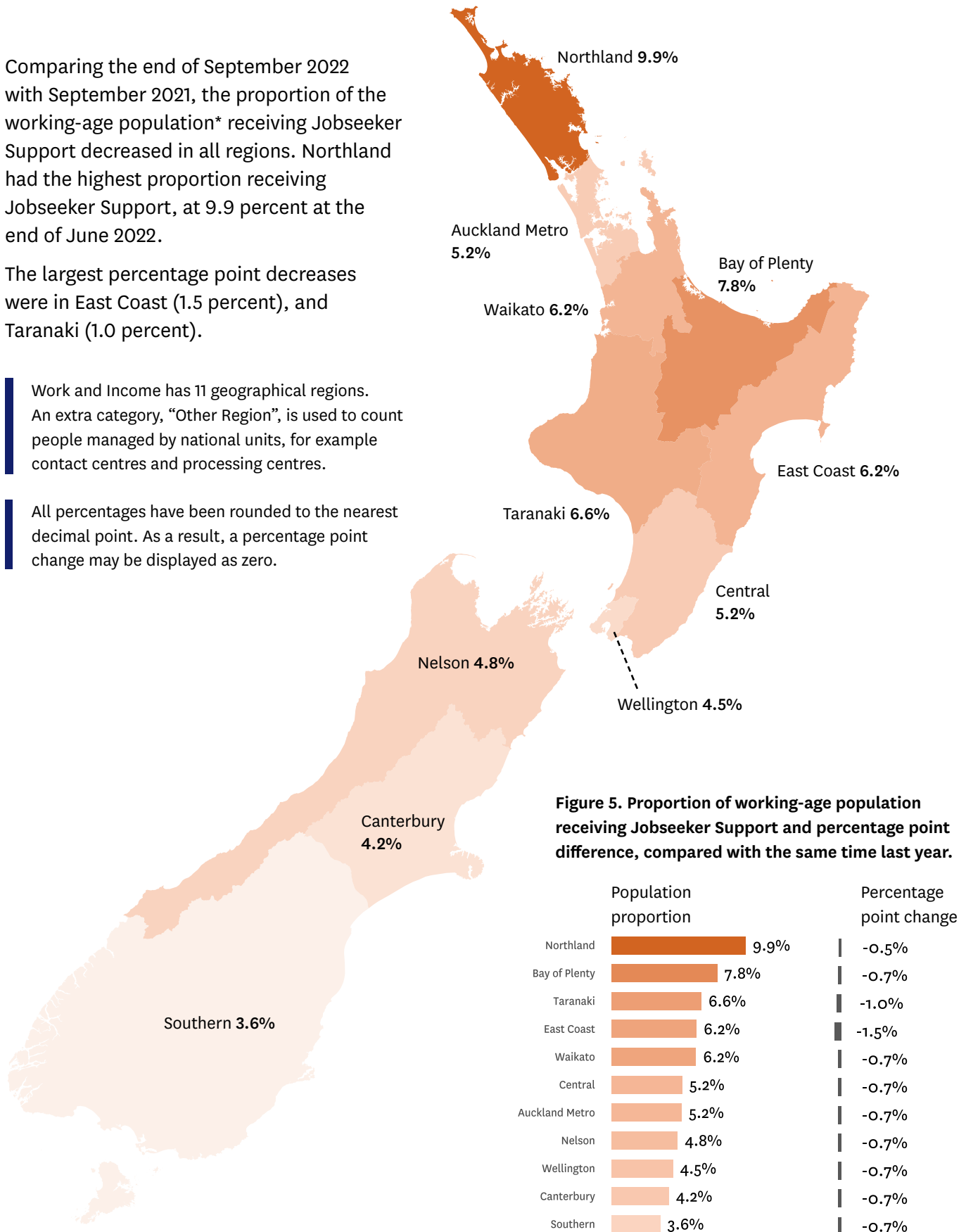


Figure 5. Proportion of working-age population receiving Jobseeker Support and percentage point difference, compared with the same time last year.

*The regional estimated working-age population figures used on pages three and four of this report have been calculated using Statistics New Zealand's revised regional population estimates as at June 2021.

Regional distribution of Sole Parent Support as a proportion of the working-age population, by Work and Income region, in September 2022.

Comparing the end of September 2022 with September 2021, the proportion of the working-age population receiving Sole Parent Support increased slightly in all regions. Northland had the highest proportion at 4.1 percent, at the end of September 2022.

The largest percentage point increases were in Northland and Bay of Plenty (both 0.5 percent), and East Coast (0.4 percent).

Work and Income has 11 geographical regions. An extra category, "Other Region" is used to count people managed by national units, for example contact centres and processing centres.

All percentages have been rounded to the nearest decimal point. As a result, a percentage point change may be displayed as zero.

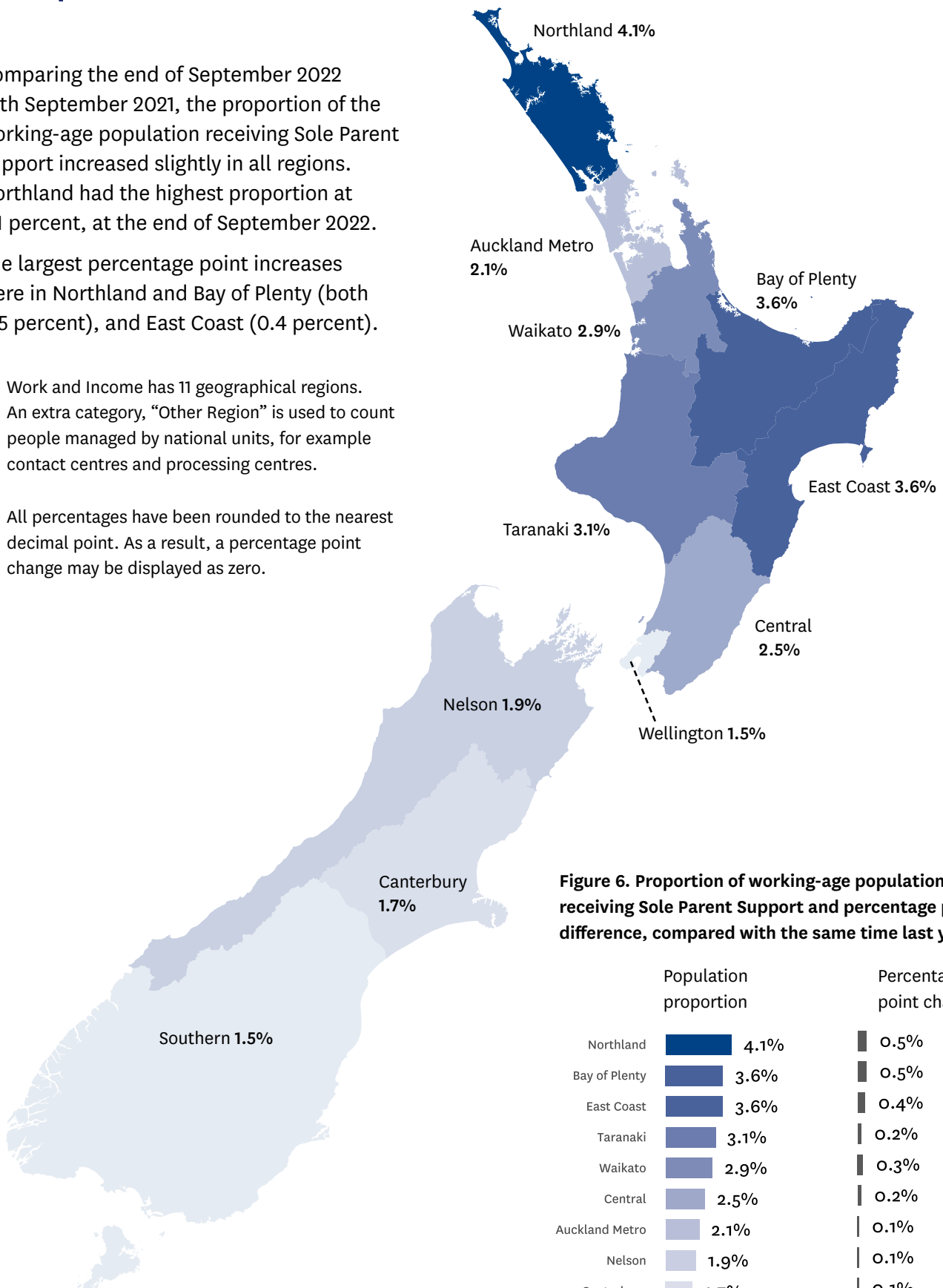


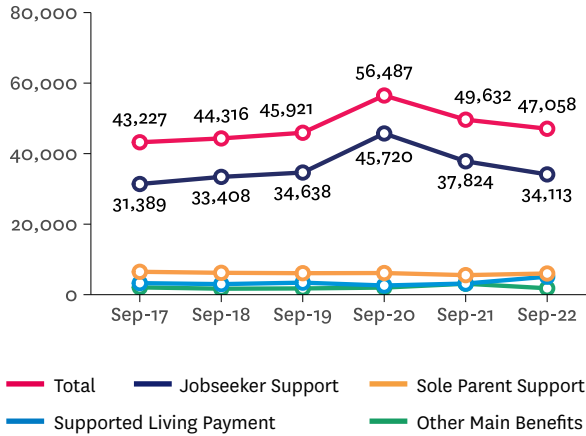
Figure 6. Proportion of working-age population receiving Sole Parent Support and percentage point difference, compared with the same time last year.

| Region | Population proportion | Percentage point change |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Northland | 4.1% | 0.5% |
| Bay of Plenty | 3.6% | 0.5% |
| East Coast | 3.6% | 0.4% |
| Taranaki | 3.1% | 0.2% |
| Waikato | 2.9% | 0.3% |
| Central | 2.5% | 0.2% |
| Auckland Metro | 2.1% | 0.1% |
| Nelson | 1.9% | 0.1% |
| Canterbury | 1.7% | 0.1% |
| Southern | 1.5% | 0.1% |
| Wellington | 1.5% | 0.1% |

Benefit grants and cancellations

Benefit grants

Figure 7. Number of benefits granted during the last six September quarters.



The total number of benefits granted during the September 2022 quarter decreased by 2,574, or 5.2 percent, when compared with the September 2021 quarter.

There were 34,113 benefit grants for Jobseeker Support during the September 2022 quarter, a decrease of 3,711, or 9.8 percent, when compared with the September 2021 quarter.

A benefit grant is the formal acceptance of entitlement to a benefit. The numbers reported here are for the total number of main benefits granted during the September quarter (i.e. 1 July to 30 September), for the last six September quarters.

Benefit cancellations

Figure 8a. Number of cancellations by benefit during the last six September quarters.

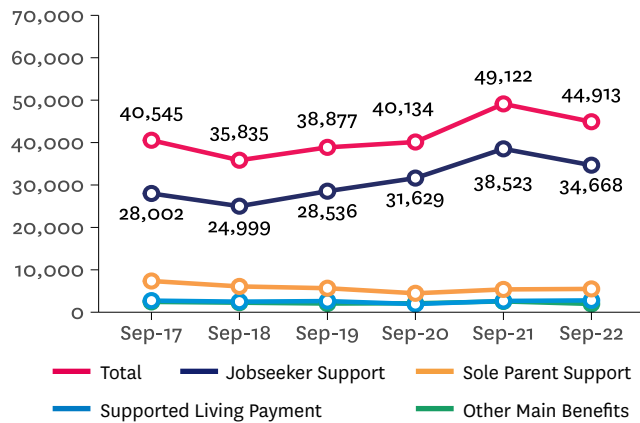
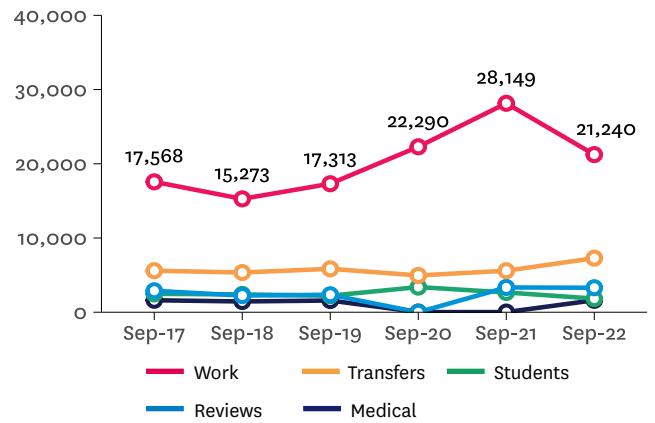


Figure 8b. Number of cancellations by selected reason during the last six September quarters.



The number of benefit cancellations during the September 2022 quarter decreased by 4,209 or 8.6 percent, when compared to the September 2021 quarter. Obtaining work, a main reason for benefit cancellations, decreased by 24.5 percent when compared to the September 2021 quarter.

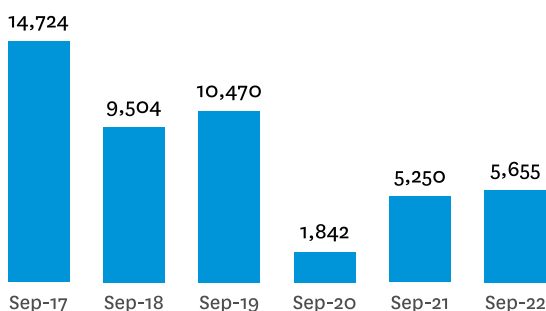
A cancellation (cancel) is the formal process that ends the entitlement to a benefit. The numbers reported above are for benefits cancelled within the September quarter (i.e. 1 July to 30 September), for the last six September quarters.

44,913 benefit cancellations during the September 2022 quarter.

21,240 benefit cancellations during the September 2022 quarter due to obtaining work.

Benefit sanctions

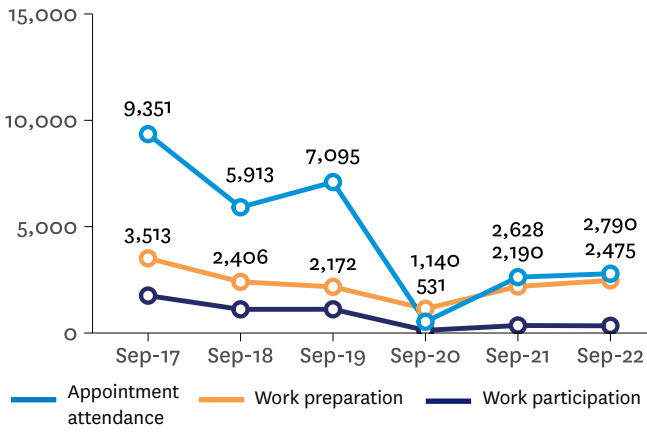
Figure 9. Number of sanctions for unfulfilled work obligations during the last six September quarters.



The number of sanctions issued during the September 2022 quarter was 5,655. Between 23 March and 27 May 2020, work-related obligation failures were suspended. They restarted back in late June 2020, which is why the number of sanctions in the June 2020 quarter was lower than other quarters.

A sanction is a reduction in a person's benefit that may occur if they do not fulfil their work obligations. Sanctions can affect benefit recipients in a number of ways, depending on their circumstances and the number of times they have had a sanction over the last 12 months. There are three types of sanctions: graduated (i.e. percentage reduction in benefit amount), suspended, or cancelled.

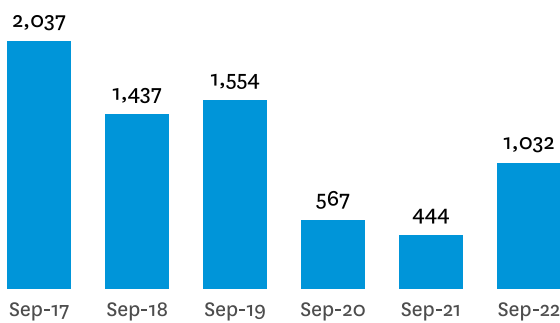
Figure 10. Number of sanctions for unfulfilled work obligations by reason, during the last six September quarters.



During the September 2022 quarter, the main reasons for unfulfilled work obligation sanctions were clients **not attending appointments** (including seminar appointments) and **failing to prepare for work**, with 2,790 and 2,475 sanctions, respectively.

The maximum main benefit reduction for sole parents and couples with dependent children is 50 percent, when sanctioned within a 12-month period. For people without a de facto partner or couples with no dependent children, the first sanction is a maximum 50 percent reduction of their main benefit; for a second non-fulfilment of an obligation, they face a 100 percent suspension of their main benefit; and a third sanction will then result in a cancellation of their benefit.

Figure 11. Number of graduated sanctions active at the end of the last six September quarters.

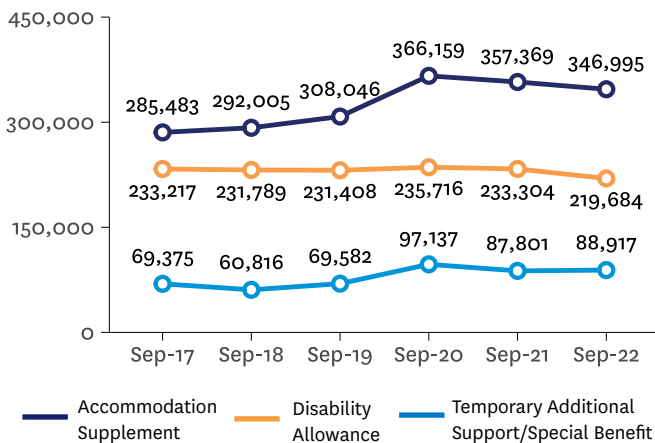


At the end of September 2022, there were **1,032 graduated sanctions actively in place** (i.e. when a client has a percentage reduction in their weekly benefit rate).

Not everyone who does not fulfil their obligations gets sanctioned. If benefit recipients re-comply or provide additional information, the sanction can be overturned.

Supplementary assistance

Figure 12. Number of recipients of supplementary assistance at the end of the last six September quarters.



The number of people receiving **Accommodation Supplement** at the end of September 2022 decreased by 10,374 when compared to September 2021.

The number of people receiving **Temporary Additional Support/Special Benefit** at the end of September 2022 increased by 1,116 when compared to September 2021.

The number of people receiving **Disability Allowance** at the end of September 2022 decreased by 13,620 when compared to September 2021.

The Accommodation Supplement is a weekly payment to assist people on low incomes with their rent, board, or the cost of owning a home, but is not available to those in public housing or charged Income-Related Rent. The number of people receiving an Accommodation Supplement tends to change in line with main benefit numbers.

The Disability Allowance is a weekly payment to assist people who have on-going costs because of a disability. A person does not need to be receiving a main benefit in order to qualify for the Disability Allowance. The number of people receiving a Disability Allowance tends to change in line with main benefit and New Zealand Superannuation numbers.

The Temporary Additional Support is a weekly payment that helps people to cover essential living costs that cannot be met from their income or other resources. A person does not have to be receiving a main benefit to qualify for Temporary Additional Support. Temporary Additional Support replaced Special Benefit in 2006, however some people are still entitled to receive Special Benefit, therefore these are counted together.

Hardship assistance

A total of 588,237 hardship assistance payments, worth \$236,462,932 were provided during the September 2022 quarter. Compared with the September 2021 quarter, the number of hardship assistance payments was 2.8 percent higher and the value of hardship payments was 18.1 percent higher.

Hardship assistance includes, but is not limited to: Special Needs Grants, Benefit Advances, and Recoverable Assistance Payments. These forms of assistance are designed to help people who have immediate needs. The numbers reported for hardship assistance are those provided within the September quarter (i.e. 1 July to 30 September). Hardship assistance data is not limited to the working-age population (i.e. 18–64 years).

Total hardship assistance

Figure 13a. Number of hardship payments provided during the last six September quarters, by type of assistance.

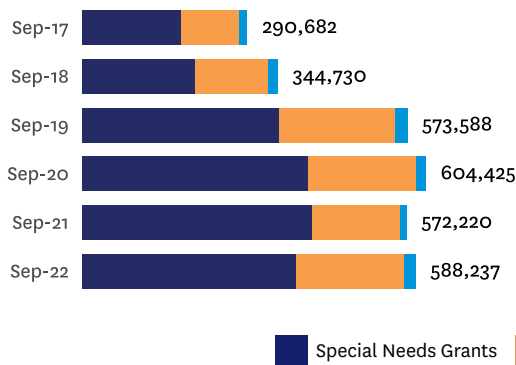
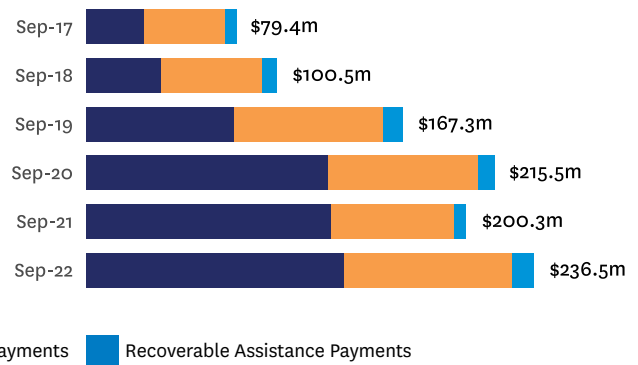


Figure 13b. Value of hardship payments provided during the last six September quarters, by type of assistance.



588,237 hardship payments provided during the September 2022 quarter.

\$236,462,932 is the value of hardship payments provided during the September 2022 quarter.

Reasons for providing hardship assistance

Figure 14a. Number of hardship payments provided during the last six September quarters, by selected reason.

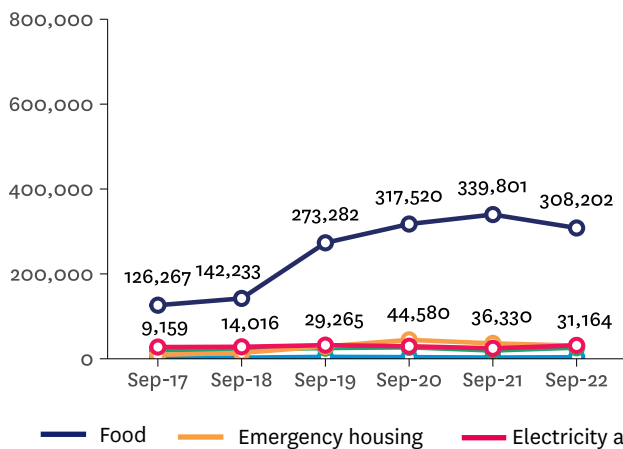
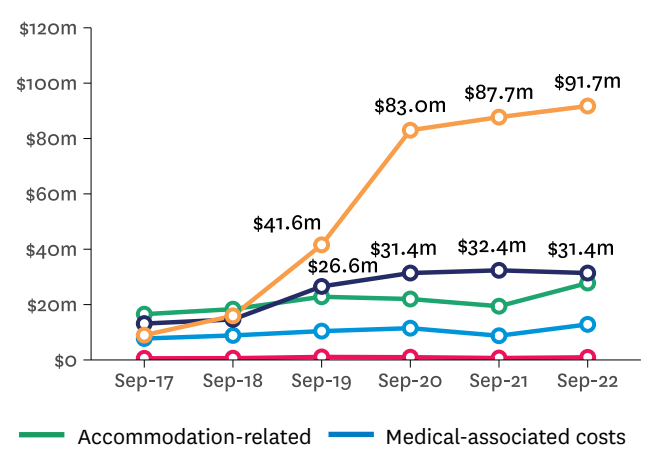


Figure 14b. Value of hardship payments provided during the last six September quarters, by selected reason.

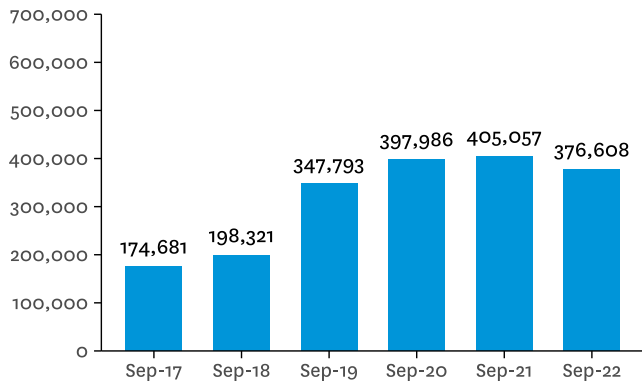


The number of Special Needs Grants for food decreased since the September 2021 quarter. There were 31,599 fewer Special Needs Grants for food provided, totalling 308,202 during the September 2022 quarter. The value of Special Needs Grants for food provided decreased by 3.0 percent to \$31,395,586 during the September 2022 quarter.

The number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants during the September 2022 quarter decreased when compared with the same period last year. There were 5,166 fewer Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants provided, totalling 31,164 during the September 2022 quarter.

Special Needs Grants

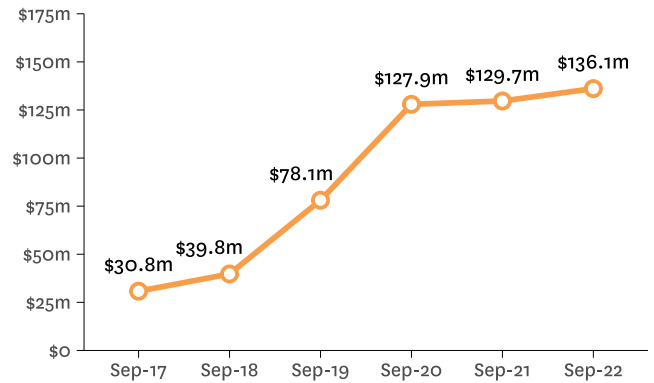
Figure 15a. Number of Special Needs Grants provided during the last six September quarters.



376,608 Special Needs Grants provided during the September 2022 quarter.

\$136,104,599 is the value of Special Needs Grants provided in the September 2022 quarter.

Figure 15b. Value of Special Needs Grants provided during the last six September quarters.

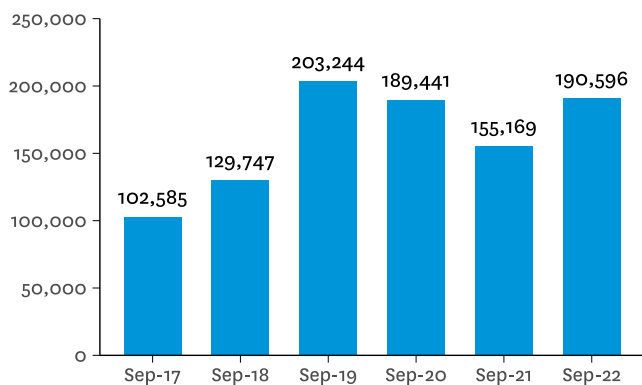


The number of Special Needs Grants provided was **28,449 fewer** during the **September 2022** quarter when compared to the same period in 2021. The value of grants provided increased from \$129,654,488 during the September 2021 quarter to \$136,104,599 during the September 2022 quarter.

A Special Needs Grant provides a non-taxable, one-off recoverable or non-recoverable payment to help people meet immediate needs. A person does not need to be receiving a main benefit to be eligible for a Special Needs Grant.

Benefit Advances

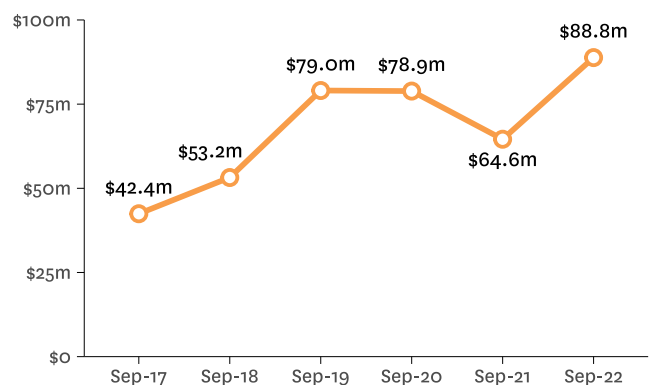
Figure 16a. Number of Benefit Advances provided during the last six September quarters.



190,596 Benefit Advances provided during the September 2022 quarter.

\$88,821,432 is the value of Benefit Advances provided during the September 2022 quarter.

Figure 16b. Value of Benefit Advances provided during the last six September quarters.



When compared to the same period last year, the number of **Benefit Advances provided increased by 22.8 percent** to 190,596 during the September 2022 quarter. The value of **Benefit Advances provided increased by 37.5 percent** to \$88,821,432 during the September 2022 quarter.

Anyone receiving a main benefit who requires assistance to meet an immediate essential need can have access to a Benefit Advance. The advance can be up to six weeks of their net entitlement, and is recovered from subsequent payments of benefit. People not receiving a main benefit may be eligible for Recoverable Assistance Payments instead.