



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

22 SEP 2016



Dear

On 25 August 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, all media enquiries received by the Ministry about specific individuals or families regarding social housing, social housing wait lists, housing conditions and homelessness.

The Ministry is refusing your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act; your request is very broad and substantial manual collation would be required to locate and prepare all documents within scope of your request.

You note in your request that you are not interested in the specific details of individuals. Nevertheless, the substantial amount of information that falls within scope of your request would need to be reviewed line by line to ensure personal information regarding individuals and their families is not released.

The Ministry conservatively estimates that it would take a minimum of eight weeks to collate and prepare the information you have requested; 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.

In regard to the second part of your request, the following may prove helpful.

The Ministry took over responsibility for assessing social housing eligibility in April 2014. People are assessed using the five main criteria of Adequacy, Suitability, Affordability, Accessibility and Sustainability. Each person on the register is given a priority rating based on their individual circumstances. However, people's priority rating may change over time if their circumstances change.

There are occasions when people on the social housing register provide information to the media that they have not shared with the Ministry. When that information is used to update our records, it may become apparent that their situation has worsened and they have not made us aware. As a result these people will be reassessed, which may result in an increase to their priority rating.

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It's important to understand that there is no consecutive ranked list for social housing applicants; rather the register is dynamic and always changing as people come on and off it. People with the most urgent needs will be matched to a property first as opposed to the length of time they may have been on the register, dependant on the availability of properties that matches these needs.

It's vital that people keep the Ministry updated regarding their circumstances and inform us about changes even if on their own they don't seem significant. By having a full picture of their needs, we are better able to respond to them.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rachel Sutherland', written over a large, stylized, light-colored scribble or watermark.

Rachel Sutherland
General Manager, Ministerial and Executive Services