



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

On 11 March 2019, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *The most recent available figures regarding the number of people who declined to receive the Winter Energy Payment*

When the Winter Energy Payment was announced as part of the Families Package in December 2017, it was decided that eligibility to the payment would be to available to those who receive New Zealand Superannuation, Veteran's Pension or main benefits. This was to ensure that standard requirements relating to citizenship, residency status and being ordinarily resident would be met automatically, and allows for the administration of the Winter Energy Payment to be efficient and cost effective.

Recipients of one of these payments who do not wish to receive the Winter Energy Payment may contact the Ministry and ask for this payment to be stopped. The payment was available for the first time during the period 1 July 2018 to 29 September 2018.

Please see the below table which shows the number of opt-outs of the Winter Energy Payment during the period 1 July 2018 to 29 September 2018.

<b>Benefit type</b>	<b>Winter Energy Payment Opt-Outs</b>
New Zealand Superannuation, Veteran's Pension, and the Transitional Retirement Benefit	2,002
Sole parent support	3
Supported Living Payment	75
Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment	1
Emergency Benefit	5
Jobseeker Support	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,143</b>

Please note that clients who opted out of the Winter Energy Payment by mistake and were subsequently re-granted the payment, and clients who opted out and then in again are not included in this response.

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 available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development'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, 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.

Yours sincerely,



Cassandra Wise  
**Manager, Issue Resolution, Service Delivery**