



4 DEC 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

On 27 August 2019, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

1. *How many MSD offices are there in NZ that are used by MSD customers currently?*
2. *Of those MSD offices how many offices provide toilet facilities for MSD Customers?*
3. *Of those MSD Offices that provide toilet facilities for MSD Customers, how many are: (for each office)*
  - o *unisex toilets*
  - o *disabled toilet*
  - o *nappy changing station*
  - o *breastfeeding space*
  - o *children's toilet*
4. *How long has Papakura MSD office been operating at its present site (22 Queen Street, Papakura)?*
5. *Please provide reasons why toilets have not been provided for MSD customers over the period of time that the records have been kept.*
6. *Please provide reasons why toilets have not been provided for MSD customers at Papakura MSD Office over the period of time that the records have been kept.*
7. *Please provide details of where MSD customers at Papakura MSD office can access toilets include distance and is the distance covered (Is protection from rain provided?)*
8. *Please provide details of where MSD customers at Papakura MSD Office can access a nappy changing table*
9. *Please provide details on where MSD customers at Papakura MSD office can access a disabled toilet*
10. *Who makes the decision as to the which MSD offices provide toilets and what is the criteria they use to make their decision?*
11. *Please provide evidence of decisions made in regard to providing toilets for MSD customers at Papakura Office over the period of time that the records have been kept.*
12. *Are there toilets in the Papakura MSD/Oranga Tamariki building that can be used by customers? Are there toilets in the Oranga Tamariki office that can be used by the clients of Oranga Tamariki?*
13. *How many requests have MSD received to provide toilets for beneficiaries over the time period that records have been kept?*
14. *How many requests have MSD received to provide toilets for beneficiaries, nationwide over the time period that the records have been kept?*
15. *Please provide details of the number of MSD customers that attend MSD Papakura include weekly and daily figures for the past year (12 months)*

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16. Please provide details of the average length of time that MSD customers spend in the Papakura MSD office for the past year (12 months)
17. How many MSD customers who use Papakura MSD office currently have mobility disabilities such as wheelchair-bound, require walkers, require additional support to walk?
18. Do MSD and Oranga Tamariki share buildings? phone lines? Other services - please list?
19. Do MSD and Oranga Tamariki work together collaboratively to provide support for vulnerable populations?
20. Do MSD customers attend courses or are there plans for MSD customers to attend courses at the MSD/Oranga Tamariki building at Papakura and will they be provided with toilet facilities?
21. If MSD customers are required to attend courses at MSD/Oranga Tamariki buildings is there a legal requirement to provide toilets for their customers?
22. If there is a legal requirement for MSD/Oranga Tamariki to provide toilets for those that attend courses then what toilets do they use?

The Ministry is currently implementing changes across Service Centres throughout New Zealand to increase security and improve clients' experiences. The Ministry is working to create a warm and welcoming environment in Service Centres and make it easy for people to get the services and information they're looking for. This involves physical changes to enhance security and privacy during interviews, as well as changes to our reception and waiting areas. These changes include soft seating, community art, children areas, more signage, water coolers and plants. This is currently being implemented at the Papakura Service Centre.

In addition to these physical changes of our Service Centres, we are also improving the way we provide services and information. More information about the Ministry's upcoming changes can be found on: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/service-culture/index.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/service-culture/index.html).

Your questions are answered below in turn:

1. How many MSD offices are there in NZ that are used by MSD customers currently?
2. Of those MSD offices how many offices provide toilet facilities for MSD Customers?
3. Of those MSD Offices that provide toilet facilities for MSD Customers, how many are: (for each office)
  - o unisex toilets
  - o disabled toilet
  - o nappy changing station
  - o breastfeeding space
  - o children's toilet

The Ministry currently provides services to clients from 124 Service Centres around New Zealand. Of these Service Centres, 39 currently provide toilet facilities to clients. Two further sites will have client toilet facilities available from the end of November 2019.

All toilets are disability and unisex friendly. There are no child sized toilets, however, the Ministry is working to provide baby changing facilities where none are currently

available. We have a range of spaces in our Service Centres; if a mother would like a private space to breastfeed, we are able to offer private interview or seminar rooms.

4. *How long has Papakura MSD office been operating at its present site (22 Queen Street, Papakura)?*
5. *Please provide reasons why toilets have not been provided for MSD customers over the period of time that the records have been kept.*
6. *Please provide reasons why toilets have not been provided for MSD customers at Papakura MSD Office over the period of time that the records have been kept.*
7. *Please provide details of where MSD customers at Papakura MSD office can access toilets include distance and is the distance covered (Is protection from rain provided?)*
8. *Please provide details of where MSD customers at Papakura MSD Office can access a nappy changing table*
9. *Please provide details on where MSD customers at Papakura MSD office can access a disabled toilet*
10. *Who makes the decision as to which MSD offices provide toilets and what is the criteria they use to make their decision?*
11. *Please provide evidence of decisions made in regard to providing toilets for MSD customers at Papakura Office over the period of time that the records have been kept.*
12. *Are there toilets in the Papakura MSD/Oranga Tamariki building that can be used by customers? Are there toilets in the Oranga Tamariki office that can be used by the clients of Oranga Tamariki?*

The Ministry (including predecessor agencies) has been working from our current Service Centre in Papakura since 1986.

As part of the security layout changes that are underway, we are investigating the feasibility of adding public toilets (including a baby-changing unit) where they are not currently available. This is determined by the physical design and security requirements of each Service Centre. Given the physical design of the Papakura Service Centre (in conjunction with the security requirements), the Ministry cannot provide client toilet facilities. There are no nappy changing tables in the Papakura Service Centre however, a private space can be arranged.

If clients at the Papakura Service Centre need to use a bathroom, public toilets are across the road from the Service Centre (approximately 100 meters away). The distance to these public toilets is mostly uncovered, with the exception of shopfronts directly opposite the public toilets. If it is unreasonable for a client to use these public toilets, they can be escorted to the staff bathroom (which includes a disabled toilet).

13. *How many requests have MSD received to provide toilets for beneficiaries over the time period that records have been kept?*
14. *How many requests have MSD received to provide toilets for beneficiaries nationwide over the time period that the records have been kept?*

The Ministry does not keep a record of requests to provide toilet facilities to clients. As such, I am refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as

the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

*15. Please provide details of the number of MSD customers that attend MSD Papakura include weekly and daily figures for the past year (12 months)*

*16. Please provide details of the average length of time that MSD customers spend in the Papakura MSD office for the past year (12 months)*

The Ministry assists thousands of New Zealanders who present to Service Centres every day. People may come to Service Centres alone or with family and/or support people. These appointments typically take from anywhere between fifteen minutes and one hour to complete, depending on the persons individual needs. Over the last financial year, the Papakura Service Centre had 86,464 appointments. This is not equivalent to the number of clients that visited the Service Centre, some clients may have had more than one appointment.

The Ministry does not record the number of clients that have visited the Papakura Service Centre or the length of their visit. As such, I am unable to provide this information under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

*17. How many MSD customers who use Papakura MSD office currently have mobility disabilities such as wheelchair-bound, require walkers, require additional support to walk?*

The Ministry does not centrally record the number of clients, support people and other visitors with mobility issues who may visit the Papakura Service Centre. As such your request for this information is also refused under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

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.

*18. Do MSD and Oranga Tamariki share buildings? phone lines? Other services - please list?*

*19. Do MSD and Oranga Tamariki work together collaboratively to provide support for vulnerable populations?*

The Ministry works closely with a wide range of agencies and organisations to help support vulnerable people; this includes Oranga Tamariki. The Ministry and Oranga Tamariki share buildings in 42 locations across the country, including Papakura. This includes a mixture of client facing offices, as well as regional offices, contact centres and national office buildings. The shared facilities and available services differ in each building. See the below table for a list of locations where buildings are shared.

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Address</b>
1	Wellington	56 The Terrace
2	Kaitia	28 North Park Drive
3	Kaikohe	7 Memorial Ave
4	Whangarei	Walton Plaza, 3-5 Albert St
5	Dargaville	62-79 Normanby St
6	Orewa	27 Florence Ave
7	Waitakere	36-44 Sel Peacock Drive
8	Westgate	22-24 Cabemet Cres
9	Auckland	440-452 Queen St
10	Ellerslie	Building A, 65 Main Highway
11	Otahuhu	4 Fairburn Rd
12	Mangere	93 Mascot Ave
13	Otara	52 Lovegrove Cres
14	Manukau	Corner of Osterley & Amersham Way
15	Papakura	20-22 Queen St
16	Pukekohe	7-9 Tobin St
17	Paeroa	Corner of Te Aroha & Rotokohu Rd
18	Huntly	37 William St
19	Hamilton	Anglesea Tower, Anglesea St
20	Whakatane	Pyne Street
21	Rotorua	1207 Pukuatua St
22	Tokoroa	8-10 Torphin Cres
23	Taupo	77 Heu Heu St
24	Taumarunui	Meredith House, Marae St
25	New Plymouth	Dawson House, cnr Devon & Dawson Sts
26	Gisborne	Tangata Rite Bldg, Lowe St
27	Wairoa	236-238 Marine Parade
28	Napier	Dalton House, 180 Dalton St
29	Hastings	506 Eastbourne St West
30	Waipukurau	1 Marlborough St
31	Masterton	49-51 Lincoln Rd
32	Porirua	L2, 1 Walton Leigh Ave
33	Wellington	186 Willis St
34	Greymouth	112-116 Mackay St
35	Rangiora	4-6 High St
36	Papanui	56 Langdons Rd
37	Christchurch	161 Cashel St
38	Sydenham	39 Durham St
39	Timaru	7-15 Beswick St/14 Strathallan St
40	Oamaru	23 Coquet St
41	Balclutha	Corner of George & Charlotte St
42	Gore	24 Raford St

20. Do MSD customers attend courses or are there plans for MSD customers to attend courses at the MSD/Oranga Tamariki building at Papakura and will they be provided with toilet facilities?
21. If MSD customers are required to attend courses at MSD/Oranga Tamariki buildings is there a legal requirement to provide toilets for their customers?

*22. If there is a legal requirement for MSD/Oranga Tamariki to provide toilets for those that attend courses then what toilets do they use?*

Papakura's Service Centre does hold work and budgeting seminars. The duration of these seminars is usually less than half an hour. If someone requires access to a toilet during a seminar, they can be escorted to the staff toilets.

The Building Act (2004) (the Act) governs the provision of toilet facilities in buildings. Section 118 of the Act states that if any building is to be constructed or altered to which members of the public are to be admitted (such as a Service Centre) reasonable and adequate provision of sanitary facilities (including toilets) must be made for persons with disabilities who may be expected to visit that building.

If the Ministry unreasonably denies a client entry to a toilet on its premises, the Ministry may be liable in tort for misfeasance in public office. It is important to note that unreasonably denying the toilet to a client is dependent on the client's individual circumstances, the circumstances of the specific Service Centre, as well as the safety and security obligations that the Ministry must uphold. In the case of Papakura's Service Centre, it is not unreasonable to expect clients to use the nearby public toilets unless the client's specific circumstances suggest otherwise.

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 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 the Ministry's office services further 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 toilet facilities in the Ministry, 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



Bridget Saunders  
**Manager Issue Resolution**