



11 DEC 2020

Tēnā koe

On 19 November 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information regarding the Disability Allowance:

- *How many clients are in receipt of DA at the maximum rate but their costs are in excess of the maximum DA payable?*

The Disability Allowance (DA) is an income tested, non-taxable form of additional financial assistance available to clients who have on-going additional costs because of a disability or medical condition, such as visits to the doctor or hospital, medical alarms, counselling, pharmaceutical costs, special foods, or travel.

Work and Income pays up to a maximum of \$65.36 a week for a DA. How much a client receives depends on the extra costs that client has because of their disability. As a part of the application for DA, clients are required to provide a Disability Certificate form - which is completed by a health practitioner - along with proof of their on-going disability-related costs (e.g. pharmacy and medical receipts and invoices, electricity bills, or petrol receipts).

A client is obliged to advise Work and Income of any changes in their circumstances that might affect their entitlement to a DA. Furthermore, a case manager may also review a DA at any time to ensure a client is receiving the correct rate of payment.

In regard to your request, please find Table One below showing the number of current DAs' and the number of DAs' paid at the maximum rate with excess costs.

**Table One: The total number of current Disability Allowances and the number of Disability Allowances paid at the maximum rate with excess costs, as at the end of September 2020.**

<b>As at Month Ending</b>	<b>All Current Disability Allowances</b>	<b>Disability Allowances at Max Rate with Excess Costs</b>
September 2020	235,716	16,282

**Notes:**

- This is a number of DA. A client may receive one or more DA.
- Recipients of DA may have more than one cost type so a client is counted more than once.
- DA can be paid to a client or on behalf of a dependent.
- As at 01 April 2020 the maximum rate payable for DA is \$65.36.

Further information about the Disability Allowance can be found online here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/disability-allowance/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/disability-allowance/index.html).

Please note, there are other forms of assistance available to clients who need additional support. For example, if a client has eligible disability or medical costs over and above the maximum rate of the DA, they may also be entitled to receive Temporary Additional Support (TAS) to help them cover these costs.

Further information about TAS can be found on the Ministry's website here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/temporary-additional-support.html#null](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/temporary-additional-support.html#null).

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. 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 relating to maximum rates of DAs, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



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