



24 JUL 2020

Dear

On 17 June 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

1. *Information on how many persons in New Zealand depend on and receive a main benefit, e.g. Jobseeker Support, Supported Living Payment, Sole Parent or any other such benefit, being the latest available information, ideally also broken down into benefit type.*
2. *Information on how many persons in New Zealand depended on and received a main benefit, e.g. Jobseeker Support, Supported Living Payment, Sole Parent or any other such benefit, being the number at the end of March 2020, or on 1 April 2020, ideally also broken down into benefit type.*
3. *Information on how many of all those persons on such a main benefit also depend on and receive a Special Benefit, being information for the latest month available.*
4. *Information on how many of all those persons on such a main benefit also depended on and received a Special Benefit, being information for the end of March 2020 or on 1 April 2020.*
5. *Information on how many of all those persons on such a main benefit also depend on and receive Temporary Additional Support, being information for the latest month available.*
6. *Information on how many of all those persons on such a main benefit also depended on and received Temporary Additional Support, being information for the end of March 2020 or on 1 April 2020.*

On 25 June 2020, the Ministry provided you two links via email to satisfy questions one and two of your request. In that same email the Ministry suggested refining your request to the following:

1. *Information on how many of all those persons on such a main benefit also depended on and received a Special Benefit, being information for quarter one and two of 2020.*
2. *Information on how many of all those persons on such a main benefit also depended on and received Temporary Additional Support, being information for quarter one and two of 2020.*

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On 25 June, you advised the Ministry that you accepted the suggested refinements.

Temporary Additional Support (TAS) is a non-taxable supplementary that can be paid for a maximum of 13 weeks. It is paid as a last resort to help clients with their regular essential living costs that cannot be met from their chargeable income and other resources. A client does not have to be receiving a main benefit to qualify. For more information about TAS, including the eligibility criteria for this assistance, please see this link: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/temporary-additional-support/index.html>.

The Special Benefit (SPB), on the other hand, is a discretionary non-taxable benefit. Its intent is to provide assistance to clients whose particular circumstances are causing them hardship. A client does not need to be receiving a benefit in order to be granted Special Benefit. However, grants of Special Benefit cannot be made to people who were not receiving it or applied for it immediately before 1 April 2006. Special Benefit was replaced by Temporary Additional Support on this date. For more information about SPB, please see this link: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-benefit/introduction.html>

Please find **table one** attached to this response which provides you with the number of working age clients on a main benefit who are also receiving Temporary Additional Support or the Special Benefit, as at the end of March and June 2020.

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. 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.

If you are not satisfied with this response about Temporary Additional Support and Special Benefit, 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 or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



PP Bridget Saunders
Manager, Issue Resolution, Service Delivery

Table One: Working age clients on main benefits also receiving Temporary Additional Support (TAS) or Special Benefit (SPB) as at the end of March 2020 and June 2020

Benefit Group		Total number of clients receiving benefit	Total number also receiving TAS	Total number also receiving SPB
March 2020	EB	1,078	268	S
	EMA	702	107	0
	JS related	151,745	36,323	279
	JSSH	83	S	0
	SLP	93,861	14,665	1,214
	SPS	60,983	12,508	S
	YP/YPP	1,543	S	0
	Total	309,995	63,963	1,562
June 2020	EB	2,238	556	S
	EMA	750	115	0
	JS related	190,456	44,500	274
	JSSH	359	11	0
	SLP	94,144	14,394	1,088
	SPS	64,029	13,454	S
	YP/YPP	1,464	97	0
	Total	353,440	73,127	1,427

Notes:

- The table includes working age only (18 to 64 years)
- Main Benefits exclude NZ Superannuation, Veteran's Pension, Non-Beneficiary assistance, Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit
- EB is Emergency Benefit
- EMA is Emergency Maintenance Allowance
- JS is Jobseeker Support
- JSSH is Jobseeker Support Student Hardship
- SLP is Supported Living Payment
- SPS is Sole Parent Support
- YP/YPP is Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment
- TAS is Temporary Assistance Payment
- SPB is Special Benefit
- In certain circumstances low numbers may potentially lead to individuals being identified. Due to these privacy concerns, numbers for some categories of clients have been suppressed or aggregated.
- Secondary suppression rules have also been applied when required. Suppressed numbers have been replaced by an 'S'.
- Number of clients is as at the last week of March 2020 or June 2020.