



01 OCT 2020

Tēnā koe

On 3 September 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *a breakdown of: household composition; age of main applicant; and prioritised ethnicity of main applicant; as set out in the applicant demographics section of the quarterly data released, for households on the Housing Register in Lower Hutt by quarter for the period between June 2017 and June 2020 please?*

Demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and more people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is generated by a shortage of affordable housing driving up house prices and rents. People on low incomes are most affected by rising housing costs and many seek financial help through the Ministry.

When New Zealanders are in need of public housing, their needs are recorded on either the Housing Register or the Transfer Register. The combined register is referred to as the Public Housing Register. The Housing Register shows people who are not currently in public housing but who have been assessed as eligible for public housing. The Transfer Register shows people already in public housing but who have applied to be rehoused. While the Ministry completes the housing assessments which inform the Public Housing Register, responsibility for funding and supply sits with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Kāinga Ora, respectively. More information about the Housing Register is available here: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/index.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/index.html).

Each housing application is given a priority rating based on the Ministry's assessment of housing need, and all applications are measured against the same criteria to determine that priority rating. Applicants who are assessed as at risk (Priority A) or as having a serious housing need (Priority B) are placed on the Register until a house becomes available. The Ministry's role is to assess people's needs for public housing and if they or a family member need an accessible home, we capture that as part of the assessment process. Clients who are on the Register will be contacted on a regular basis to confirm their circumstances and are referred to Public Housing providers when suitable properties become available.

Further information regarding the assessment of a client's housing need, housing need priority ratings and the calculation of overall priority ratings can be found on the Work and Income website here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/assessment-of-housing-need-01.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/assessment-of-housing-need-01.html).

The Public Housing Register is dynamic rather than static, and it changes as people's circumstances and situations change. Placing people and families into houses is

about matching them with the right house in the area they want to live. This includes ensuring the family has the right number of bedrooms, is close to essential services such as schools, and that the accommodation meets any disability needs if appropriate. Those assessed as having the greater need for housing will be prioritised higher. As people's needs change, their priority on the Register may change also. As such, the length of time spent on the Register awaiting housing can vary significantly.

Clients who approach the Ministry seeking public housing are offered other assistance appropriate to their situation. This can include Accommodation Supplement for private rent, Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNG), or a Recoverable Assistance Payment Grant. Further information regarding available support can be accessed on the Ministry's website here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/living-expenses/housing.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/living-expenses/housing.html).

In regard to your request, please find an Excel spreadsheet enclosed with the following four tables:

- **Table One:** Public Housing Register numbers for the Lower Hutt City TLA, broken down by household type and quarter
- **Table Two:** Public Housing Register numbers for the Lower Hutt City TLA, broken down by the number of adults and children included in the application and quarter
- **Table Three:** Public Housing Register numbers for the Lower Hutt TLA, broken down by age of the main applicant and quarter
- **Table Four:** Public Housing Register numbers for the Lower Hutt City TLA, broken down by the prioritised ethnicity of the main applicant and quarter

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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the housing register in Lower Hutt, 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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Hocking', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karen Hocking  
**General Manager**  
**Housing**