



18 SEP 2020

Tēnā koe

On 24 August 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. At 31 July 2020, how many children (aged 0-17) were dependent on a caregiver in receipt of a main benefit, unsupported child benefit or young parent payment?*
- 2. Please provide a breakdown of this data by benefit, ethnicity of caregiver and age of child.*
- 3. At 31 July 2017 how many children (aged 0-17) were dependent on a caregiver in receipt of a main benefit, unsupported child benefit or young parent payment?*
- 4. Please provide a breakdown of this data by benefit, ethnicity of caregiver and age of child.*
- 5. How many working age caregivers added a child aged under one to a main benefit in the year ending 31 July 2020?*
- 6. Please provide a breakdown of this data by benefit, ethnicity, age and gender of caregiver.*

The Ministry offers several main benefits to people who need financial support and fit the eligibility criteria. The type of main benefit a person may receive is dependent on their circumstances. Information about the types of benefits available and what type of benefit is suitable to a person's circumstance can be accessed on the Work and Income website available at: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/index.html).

Please find attached an excel spreadsheet which provides the following two tables in response to your request:

- Table One: Number of dependent children aged 0-17 included in all benefit types as at the end of July 2017 and 2020, broken down by caregiver's benefit and child age.
- Table Two: Number of dependent children aged 0-17 included in all benefit types as at the end of July 2017 and 2020, broken down by caregiver's ethnic group and child age.

In order to protect client privacy, you will note that some values are suppressed and are represented by 'S'. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number

as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

Please note the ethnicity classification that is used to construct Table Two does not necessarily align with the current Statistics New Zealand classification of ethnicity. Ethnicity details recorded by the Ministry have been gathered under a variety of classification methods as clients come into contact with the Ministry. The ethnicity data may be self-identified based on an individual's preference or self-construct.

While the Ministry collects multiple ethnicities from clients, we only report a unique form of 'identified' ethnicity for core benefit data (one ethnic group per person with Māori coming first, Pacific groups second followed by other groups ending with NZ European).

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 and attachments 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 number of children included in all benefit types, 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



Bridget Saunders  
**Manager, Issue Resolution  
Service Delivery**