



21 SEP 2020

Tēnā koe

On 24 August 2020, the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) accepted a transfer of your information request to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development for Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants statistics. You requested, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *a monthly breakdown of data for Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants, including the breakdown of the number of district clients, age, ethnicity, income - main benefit type, the number of nights a household spent in the accommodation during each quarter, and household type and size, e.g. if the household includes dependent children, for the Lower Hutt region and the period of January 2019 to July 2020*

Please find the following six tables attached as a spreadsheet containing statistics for Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs) for the Lower Hutt City Territorial Local Authority (TLA).

- **Table One:** The number of distinct clients who have received one or more Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants within Lower Hutt City TLA, by month of grant.
- **Table Two:** The number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants granted to clients within Lower Hutt City TLA, by client age at grant and month of grant.
- **Table Three:** The number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants granted to clients within Lower Hutt City TLA, by declared ethnicity at grant and month of grant.
- **Table Four:** The number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants granted to clients within Lower Hutt City TLA, by benefit type and month of grant.
- **Table Five:** The number of distinct clients who have received one or more Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants within Lower Hutt City TLA, by the number of nights emergency housing was funded for in that month
- **Table Six:** The number of distinct clients who have received one or more Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants within Lower Hutt City TLA, by household size for the last grant in the month.

A number of very low figures have been suppressed in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. This information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

In regard to Table Three, please note the ethnicity classification that is used to construct this table 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

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 'prioritised' 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).

In regard to Table Six, the Ministry does not hold information regarding the household composition of clients in Emergency Housing prior to April 2020. The Ministry recently made changes to its IT system in order to collect the number of children staying in emergency housing at the time of each grant. The information for Lower Hutt predating April 2020 is severely limited and does not provide an accurate representation of housing in Lower Hutt. As such, your request for this information prior to April 2020 is refused under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as this information is not held by the Ministry and there are no grounds to believe this information is held by another department, Minister of the Crown, or organisation.

Furthermore, the Ministry is unable to provide you with emergency housing data for July 2020, as the Ministry only reports to the end of the latest financial quarter and as such, this information is not yet available. As this information is requested regularly by the Hutt City Council, the Ministry can include the data for July 2020 when you make a request for an updated dataset.

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, 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



Karen Hocking
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