



14 December 2021

Tēnā koe

On 16 November 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *My request is for information on the trend in the number of people on JS WR and HC over at least the past decade (i.e. since 2011 or earlier if data is available) who are receiving income support and report earnings from employment as well.*

You may be aware that Jobseeker Support only came into effect from 15 July 2013, as part of welfare reforms. Three benefits replaced most of the previous benefit types, including Jobseeker Support which you have requested information for. These benefits are:

- Jobseeker Support (JS)
- Sole Parent Support (SPS)
- Supported Living Payment (SLP)

Therefore, we cannot provide the requested information prior to July 2013 as Jobseeker Support did not come into effect until then. As such, this aspect of your request for information prior to 2013 is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as this information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

People receiving Jobseeker Support need to declare any extra income they earn to the Ministry. The income will then be recorded on their file for the same week it was earned, and payments adjusted accordingly. More information about declaring income and how this affects payments is available on the Work and Income website at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/on-a-benefit/tell-us/income/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/on-a-benefit/tell-us/income/index.html)

Please see enclosed **Appendix A** which contains the following table:

- **Table One** shows the number of working age Jobseeker Support Clients and those who have declared earnings as at October 2013 to October 2021.

Please note, the data has been presented as a point in time snapshot. The data provides a view of any clients who have income declared on their record at the time the data was pulled. It is important to note that many people may be in casual or temporary work and could have earned wages at another point in the year however, they will not be represented in the below data if they were not earning and declaring wages as at October.

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'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 on the trend in number of people on benefits over the past decade, 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*

Bridget Saunders  
**Manager**  
**Issues Resolution**

## Appendix A

**Table One: Number of working age Jobseeker Support clients and those who have declared earnings from October 2013 to October 2021**

As at:	JS HC&D related		JS Work Ready related		Total	
	Total clients	Clients with earnings	Total clients	Clients with earnings	Total clients	Clients with earnings
<b>October 2013</b>	56,796	5,835	67,599	10,932	<b>124,395</b>	<b>16,770</b>
<b>October 2014</b>	55,446	5,856	65,295	10,083	<b>120,741</b>	<b>15,939</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	54,957	5,556	64,938	9,213	<b>119,895</b>	<b>14,766</b>
<b>October 2016</b>	56,157	5,463	65,364	8,826	<b>121,524</b>	<b>14,289</b>
<b>October 2017</b>	56,595	5,109	63,231	7,683	<b>119,826</b>	<b>12,792</b>
<b>October 2018</b>	58,596	4,863	70,410	7,623	<b>129,006</b>	<b>12,483</b>
<b>October 2019</b>	62,679	4,752	79,452	7,368	<b>142,128</b>	<b>12,120</b>
<b>October 2020</b>	73,305	4,866	130,065	10,995	<b>203,373</b>	<b>15,861</b>
<b>October 2021</b>	81,384	6,735	108,471	10,983	<b>189,855</b>	<b>17,721</b>

### Notes:

- JS Work Ready related includes Job Seeker Work Ready, Job Seeker Work Ready Hardship, Job Seeker Work Ready Training and Job Seeker Work Ready Training Hardship.
- JS HC&D related includes Jobseeker Support Health Condition, Injury or Disability and Jobseeker Support Health Condition, Injury or Disability Hardship.
- The tables include working age only (18 to 64 years).
- Earnings are self-declared and are a weekly amount, subject to regular change.
- To protect confidentiality, the Ministry of Social Development uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- These data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table.
- A value of one or two may be rounded to zero or three.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.