



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

21 December 2021

Tēnā koe

On 13 September 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. Could I please have information held by MSD which shows if people who receive a RAA HSP go into emergency housing or go on the public housing register within three months. I am interested in this data from 2019-2021 (see p.10).*
- 2. The report back to the Joint Ministers (Finance, Housing and Social Development) in October 2020 related to the Rent Arrears Assistance and support for renters during COVID and lockdowns. (see p.10)*
- 3. Any communications materials developed around the revised RAA HSP to increase awareness of this form of assistance (see p.9).*

Rent Arrears Assistance is a payment designed to help people in sustainable accommodation, who have incurred rent arrears, to retain their property. It is a one-off, recoverable payment of up to \$2,000 and is available once in a 52-week period (unless there are exceptional circumstances). For more information about Rent Arrears Assistance, please see the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/live-in-home/housing-costs/rent-arrears.html.

For question one, your request for this information is refused under section 18(d) of the Act on the basis that the information requested is publicly available. This information is available on the Ministry's Annual Report 2021 on pages 58-59, which can be found at the following link:

<https://annualreport2021.msd.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/documents/Performance-financial-statements-and-appendices.pdf>.

Regarding questions two and three of your request, please find the following documents identified as in scope attached to this response:

- REP/20/11/1073 - Report - *Rent Arrears Assistance: Update on COVID-19 demand and request for an extension until 30 June 2021*, dated 4 December 2020
- Rent Arrears Assistance factsheet, dated July 2020
- Help with Housing brochure, dated October 2020
- Excerpts of In the Loop
- Excerpts of On the Radar
- Rent arrears extension - email sent to stakeholders, July 2020
- Helping Clients with Rent Arrears flowchart

Please note that the Ministry has interpreted your request to be for documents developed by the Ministry's Communications team to increase the awareness of this type of assistance. If this interpretation is incorrect, please let us know. Furthermore, for the In the Loop and On the Radar documents, the Ministry has only provided excerpts for information relevant to your request.

Some information within these documents is withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act as it is under active consideration. The release of this information is likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest of effective government would not be served.

The information regarding some individuals is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

You will note that some information has been deemed to be 'outside of scope' of your request, as this information related to Ministry staff names and contact details who are below Tier 4 and/or who are not decision-makers.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

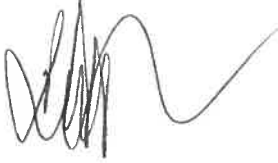
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

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.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding Rent Arrears Assistance, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



 Karen Hocking
General Manager, Housing