



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

29 JUL 2021

Dear

On 1 July 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Number of people on the social housing register with the highest priority rating (I believe you call it A20) in Auckland City area, along with categorisation per number of bedrooms needed*
- *the average waiting time per number of bedrooms needed under the same priority (A20) in Auckland City area.*

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, previously known as the Social 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.

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 are referred to Public Housing providers when suitable properties become available.

Clients who approach the Ministry seeking public housing are offered other assistance appropriate to their situation. These options include, for example, an Accommodation Supplement for private renters, 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.

In response to your questions, we can advise that the Ministry is unable to provide the number of clients residing in Auckland City who are on the Social Housing Register. Client location data with regards to the Register is centrally recorded as the territorial local authority (TLA) of their recorded address at the time of the application for social

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housing (i.e., Auckland Super City in this instance). And more precise information about the whereabouts of such clients is held on their individual files. In order to provide you with this information, therefore, Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. As such, I refuse all of your questions under section 18(f) of the Act, on the ground that providing the requested information would require substantial manual collation. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

To be helpful, however, the Ministry has provided you with two tables, enclosed in **Appendix A. Table One** shows the number, as at 31 March 2021, of live A20 applications for social housing made by clients residing in the Auckland Super City TLA, broken down by number of bedrooms required. **Table Two** shows the mean and median time to house A20 social housing applications in the Auckland Super City TLA in the quarter ending 31 March 2021, broken down by the number of bedrooms required.

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
- 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
**General Manager
Housing**

Appendix One.

Table One: The number, as at 31 March 2021, of live A20 applications for public housing made by clients residing in the Auckland Super City TLA, broken down by number of bedrooms required

Bedrooms Required	Applications
1	21
2	9
3	6
4	12
5 or more bedrooms	3
Total	51

Notes for Table One:

- This only includes priority A20 applications.
- Tables include clients on both the Housing Register and the Transfer Register.
- TLA is estimated based on the clients address at the time of the application.
- Ungeocoded address records that are unable to be matched to a TLA through suburb and city details have an unknown Territorial Authority.
- 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.

Table Two: The mean and median time to house A20 social housing applications in the Auckland Super City TLA in the quarter ending 31 March 2021, broken down by the number of bedrooms required.

Bedrooms Required	Mean days to house	Median days to house
1	188	141
2	202	149
3	280	239
4	232	164
Total	229	164

Notes for Table Two:

- This only includes priority A20 applications.
- Tables include clients from both the Housing Register and the Transfer Register.
- After September 2015 time to house is defined as the number of calendar days between the date an application is first confirmed live on the Social Housing Register as an 'A' or 'B' priority and the date a tenancy is activated for that application.
- The date a tenancy is activated may differ from the tenancy start date.
- The quarter in which the tenancy was activated is the quarter in which the application has been reported as housed in.
- TLA is based on the tenancy address. TLA is defined under the Local Government Act 2002 as a city council or district council.
- Ungeocoded tenancy address records that are unable to be matched to a TA through suburb and city details have an unknown TLA.
- The mean average time to house is the total number of days to house all applications divided by the number of applications.
- The median average time to house is the midpoint of the time to house values.
- 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.
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