



05 MAY 2021

Tēnā koe

On 8 April 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information regarding a response to your previous request on the \$5k to Work initiative:

- *How many people were given [the 5k to Work] grants to move away from Queenstown?*

The \$5k to Work initiative is an incentive payment that supports clients who are relocating to take up work in a region or area that is not commutable. This initiative was previously known as \$3k to Work and was introduced to help jobseekers move into sustainable employment following the Christchurch Earthquake. It was intended to support the Christchurch rebuild, and was originally limited to the Christchurch region.

The initiative was expanded across New Zealand in 2015. On 1 October 2020, the initiative was increased by \$2,000 and the eligibility criteria was expanded to support more clients to relocate. It is now known as the '\$5k to Work'.

More information about the \$5k to Work initiative, including the eligibility criteria, can be found on the Ministry's website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/5k-to-work.html#null

In regard to your request, please find **Table One** enclosed as **Appendix A** showing the number of \$3k/\$5k to Work grants granted at the Ministry's Queenstown Service Centre, broken down by year and grant type, for the calendar years 2019 and 2020. This also includes the figures for January to February 2021.

You may note an uptake in the initiative for the calendar year 2020. The Ministry is acutely aware of the increased numbers of New Zealanders without jobs because of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Ministry made greater use of phone-based and online services which meant that clients in a region may have received a grant from another regional office regardless of their physical location. These changes to the way assistance was granted during COVID-19 mean that the number of grants for a particular region is no longer a true indicator of demand in the region.

In order to protect client confidentiality, the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data. As such, the datasets provided to you have had random rounding to base three applied to the figures in the table. This means a value of one or two may be rounded to zero or three.

The impact of random rounding is that the columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row total however, the published figures will never differ by more than two counts and still allow you to see trends.

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 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 to your request regarding the \$5k to Work initiative, 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



Jayne Russell
**Group General Manager
Employment**

Appendix A

Table One: The number of 3k/5k to Work grants for the calendar years 2019 and 2020, and the period of January to February 2021, granted at the Ministry's Queenstown Service Centre, broken down by year and grant type

Grant date (year)	Payment project description			
	\$3K to Christchurch/\$3K to Work		\$5k to Work	
	Number grants	Granted amount	Number grants	Granted amount
2019	3	\$6,000	0	0
2020	9	\$30,000	15	\$70,000
January-February 2021	0	0	6	\$30,000

Notes:

- \$5k to Work is an 'incentive payment' to assist clients who have secured sustainable employment to relocate.
- The \$5k to Work incentive payment is a non-taxable payment of \$5,000 and is not asset or income tested.
- A client cannot get more than one \$5k to Work payment within a 52-week period.
- On 01 October 2020, \$5K to Work grant came into effect.
- 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.