



11 MAY 2021

Tēnā koe

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

- *Please provide me with a District Council level split of the supplementary assistance data tables. Specifically seeking data for the West Coast, which is combined with Tasman.*

On 20 April 2021, the Ministry contacted you to clarify your request. The Ministry asked you to confirm the time frame that you were after and if you would like regional council boundaries or Territorial Local Authority (TLA) boundaries.

On 21 April 2021, the Ministry received your refinement. You have requested the number of recipients of supplementary assistance as at the end of March in the years 2019 to 2021. Furthermore, you have indicated that you would like the data regarding recipients broken down by both regional council and TLA boundaries.

Supplementary assistance is additional assistance provided to people for specific, on-going costs, such as those related to accommodation, disability, or the direct costs of children. The most recent factsheets and data tables relating to benefits and supplementary assistance can be found on the Ministry's website, here: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications\\_resources/statistics/benefit/index.html#LatestBenefitFactSheetsrelease1](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications_resources/statistics/benefit/index.html#LatestBenefitFactSheetsrelease1).

On that webpage, the excel table entitled, *Work and Income regions supplementary assistance data table – March 2021* includes data tables relating to three supplementary assistance payment types:

- Accommodation Supplement (AS)
- Disability Allowance (DA)
- Temporary Additional Support (TAS)

The AS is a non-taxable weekly payment that provides assistance towards accommodation costs. It is available to people who rent, board, or own their own home, and a person does not have to be receiving a benefit to qualify. More information about AS can be found at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/introduction.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/accommodation-supplement/introduction.html).

The DA is a weekly payment to assist people who have on-going costs because of a disability or a health condition. A person does not need to be receiving a main benefit in order to qualify for this type of assistance. More information about DA

can be found at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/disability-allowance/introduction.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/disability-allowance/introduction.html).

TAS, on the other hand, is non-taxable extra help paid for a maximum of 13 weeks before reapplication is required. It is paid as a last resort to help clients with their regular essential living costs that cannot be met from their income and through other resources. As with AS and DA, a client does not need to be in receipt of a main benefit to qualify for TAS. More information about TAS can be found at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/temporary-additional-support/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/temporary-additional-support/index.html).

In response to your request, we have emailed you a file labelled **Appendix A**, which contains the following two tables:

**Table One:** The number of recipients of supplementary assistance as at the end of March in the years 2019 to 2021, broken down by regional council boundaries and supplementary assistance type.

**Table Two:** The number of recipients of supplementary assistance as at the end of March in the years 2019 to 2021, broken down by TLA boundaries and supplementary assistance type.

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 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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



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