



2 December 2022

Tēnā koe

On 3 October 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Any advice since the 2017 election on the cancellation or writing off of MSD debt. I am aware that there is a policy program focused on debt reduction by e.g. reducing overpayments; I'm specifically seeking advice on debt cancellation.*

On 14 October 2022, the Ministry contacted you to refine your request for information, as it was broad in scope and was likely to be refused under section 18(f) of the Act as substantial manual collation would be required to provide the information requested. As such, you agreed to refine your request to the following:

- *A list of titles of advice from the Ministry to Minister Sepuloni since 2020 (elections).*

On 2 November 2022, the Ministry emailed you to advise more time was required to respond to this request. The reason for the extension was that consultations necessary to make a decision on the request are such that a proper response to the request cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit. This was done in accordance with section 15(1) and 15A of the Act, that a decision would be with you on or before 30 November 2022.

As requested, please see below a list of titles of advice from the Ministry to Minister Sepuloni since the elections in 2020 regarding debt cancellation policy:

- REP/21/3/232 – Briefing - *Addressing Debt to Government – Update*, dated 11 March 2021
- REP/22/3/271 – Memo - *Debt to Government: Current Settings: Ministry of Social Development*, dated 30 March 2022

- REP/22/5/372 – Report - *Scope of Debt to Government work*, dated 11 May 2022
- REP/22/6/553 – Report - *Debt to Government: Comparing approaches to writing off Income Support payment debt*, dated 27 June 2022
- REP/22/6/568 – Report - *Debt to Government: Draft Cabinet paper*, dated 17 June 2022
- REP/22/9/915 – Aide-mémoire - *Feedback on Debt to Government Cabinet paper*, dated 27 September 2022
- REP/22/5/487 - *Debt to Government – Project update #2*
- REP/22/5/488 – *Debt to Government – Debt framework*

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 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, 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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