



Report

Date: 01 October 2021

Security Level: IN CONFIDENCE

To: Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development and Employment
Hon Poto Williams, Associate Minister for Housing (Public Housing)

Monthly Housing Update – 31 August 2021

Purpose of the report

- 1 This report introduces a new Monthly Housing Update for the month ending August 2021.

Recommended actions

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **note** we have developed a new Monthly Housing Update, which describes the number of Register and Emergency Housing clients as at 31 August 2021
- 2 **note** MSD officials welcome feedback on the content of this new reporting and are available to discuss this with you if required
- 3 **agree** to forward this report to the Minister of Housing, the Associate Minister of Housing (Māori Housing) and the Associate Minister of Housing (Homelessness)
agree/disagree

Fleur McLaren

01/10/2021

Fleur McLaren
General Manager System Performance
Strategy and Insights

Date

C.S.

4/10/21

Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Minister for Social Development and
Employment

Date

Hon Poto Williams
Associate Minister for Housing (Public Housing)

Date

Background

- 2 Since May this year, MSD have provided monthly Housing reports with information on the Public Housing Register and Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants.
- 3 In August, MSD signalled that the newly established Housing Insights function would begin to enhance monthly reporting to:
 - be more consistent with our regular reporting on the benefit system
 - align with official and externally published numbers
 - move away from the more operational focus of previous reports
 - use a phased approach to begin transitioning to a system view of housing reporting [REP/21/8/877 and REP/21/8/876 refer].
- 4 The attached report is the first version of this new Monthly Housing Update series and provides information up to the end of August 2021.

Key housing insights for August

- 5 There were several changes in the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants and Public Housing Register figures this month, which can be attributed to the Level 4 lockdown. The key insights are:
 - The number of households in Emergency Housing increased in all regions. The increase was particularly from households without children entering Emergency Housing
 - In August, there was a higher rate (21%) of households entering Emergency Housing for the first time, compared to the previous six months. This is consistent with trends observed in the previous level 4 lockdown (during the March-May 2020 lockdown, over 30% of clients were new to Emergency Housing)
 - There was a decrease in the average duration in Emergency Housing from 17.4 weeks in July to 16.8 weeks in August. This is due to the increase in new households entering Emergency Housing, which reduced the overall average
 - There was an increase in new applications being placed onto the Public Housing Register. This partially reflects an increase in staff capacity to complete assessments throughout the lockdown period, as other activities cannot be delivered during Alert levels 3 and 4
 - There was a decrease in the number of applications housed in Public Housing during August, from around 500-700 is a usual month to 321 in August. This reflects a decrease in the number of Public Housing properties listed throughout the lockdown, along with households being unable to move throughout this period.

Next steps

- 6 We intend to continue developing the content and supporting commentary in these regular reports. We welcome any feedback you have on the updated report and the direction of this reporting. Officials are also available to discuss these changes if required.
- 7 We have worked with Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to develop this reporting and will continue to partner to ensure our reporting and supporting commentary across the housing system is aligned.
- 8 You will receive the next version of this Update, covering information up to the end of September, by the end of this month.

Appendix

Monthly Housing Update –31 August 2021

REP/21/9/1007

Author: Out of scope, Principal Analyst, System Performance

Responsible manager: Fleur McLaren, General Manager System Performance, Strategy and Insights

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

Emergency Housing SNGs | Aug 2021

Emergency housing is short-term accommodation (usually in motels) for individuals who have an urgent need because they are unable to remain in their usual place of residence. It is funded through Special Needs Grants that clients apply for when they cannot access accommodation and we've explored all the other options available to them. Grants can cover between 1 and 21 nights accommodation at a time.

Amount granted
Aug 2021

\$29.4M

\$3.2M more than last month

Monthly emergency housing special needs grants

11,961

798 more than last month

Current households in emergency housing as at 31 Aug

4,425

681 more than 31 July

↳ Adults in emergency housing as at 31 Aug

5,058

759 more than 31 July

↳ Children in emergency housing as at 31 Aug

4,107

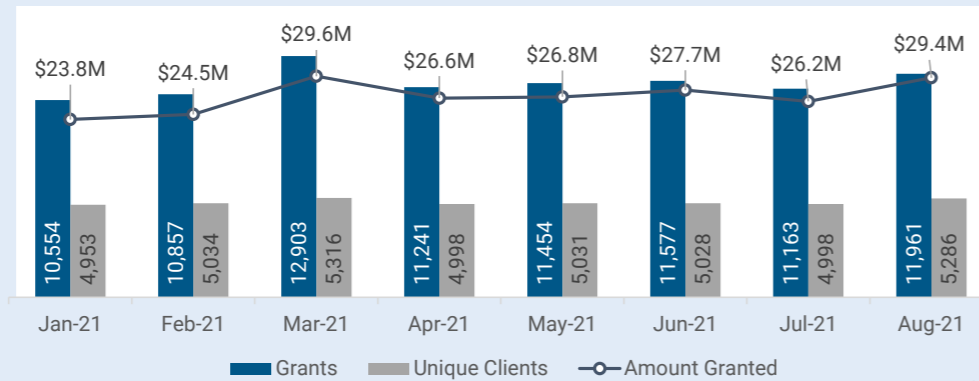
273 more than 31 July

Note: Households living in Contracted Emergency Housing in Rotorua are not included in this reporting. The new model is being piloted in Rotorua. Reporting of the number of households in Contracted EH is currently unavailable.

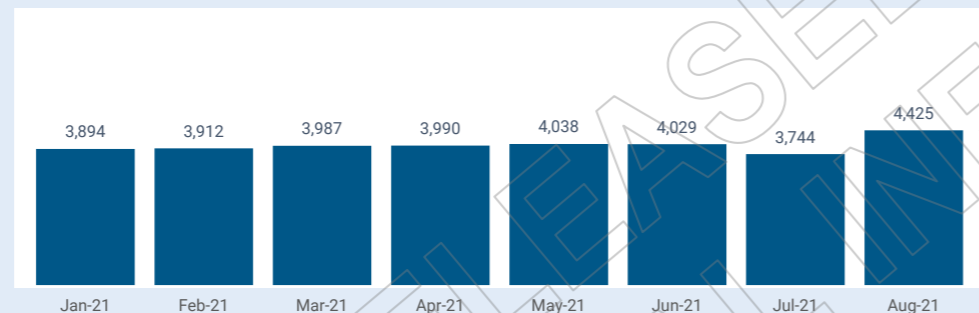
Random rounding has been applied to these figures. Figures in tables may not add up to the total due to random rounding.

Emergency Housing – Over the month and historic numbers

1 Grants/clients/amount granted by month



2 Number of households in Emergency Housing – as at the last of each month



Commentary

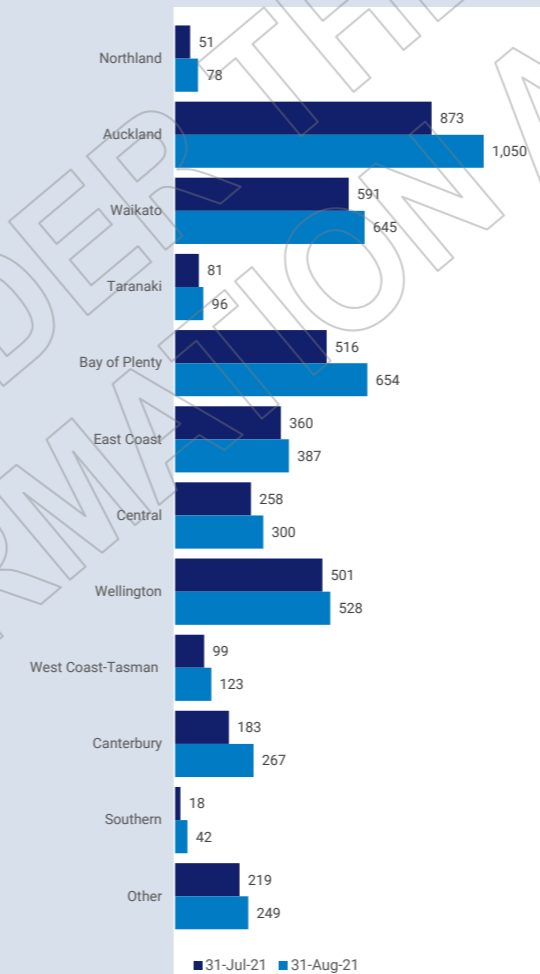
The increase in grants, amount granted, and the corresponding \$100 increase to the average amount per grant can be attributed to the level 4 Lockdown beginning on 17 August. For the past 7 months the average number of nights for each grant was between 10.4 and 10.9 nights. In August this increased to 11.4 nights, as clients were provided increased assurance of their accommodation stability by staff during lockdown. During lockdown, clients entering Emergency Housing can have their initial grants extended from 7 nights to 14 nights due to the exceptional circumstances of the current situation. An additional 30 suppliers provided Emergency Housing to clients in August than in July, reflecting the increase in demand during lockdown.

The number of households in Emergency Housing has increased significantly across the country. This was driven by a large increase in the number of households beginning new spells in emergency housing during the last two weeks of August, as the impact of the level 4 lockdown is realised. 21% of those in Emergency Housing in August were new to Emergency Housing and had not had a previous stay in Emergency Housing since its inception in 2016.

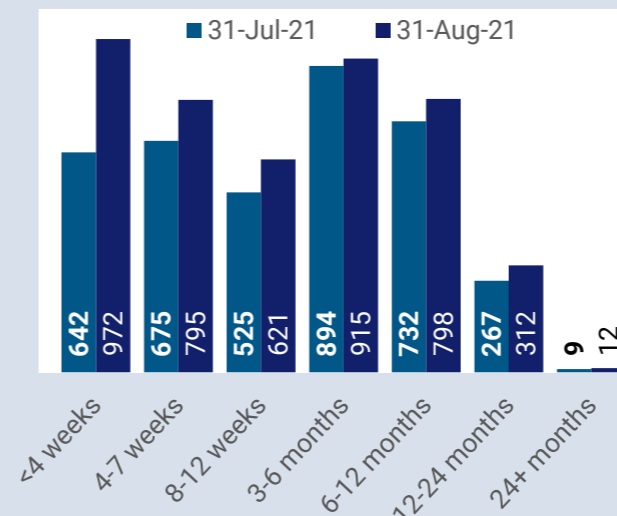
There was a large increase in the number of single and adult couples without children entering Emergency Housing in August. As at 31 August, Households without children now account for over 53% of the Emergency Housing population. The increase in households entering emergency housing in August has impacted the average duration in Emergency Housing, as it reduced from 17.4 weeks in July to 16.8 weeks in August. The number of long term Emergency Housing households continues to increase as households are unable to move to other forms of accommodation during level 4 lockdown.

Emergency Housing – At the end of the month

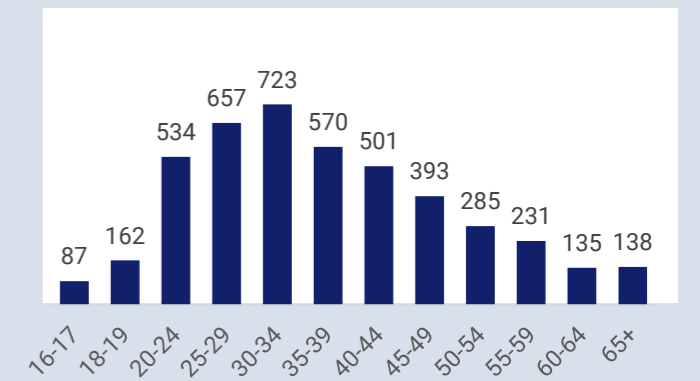
3 Households in emergency housing by region – as at 31 August 2021



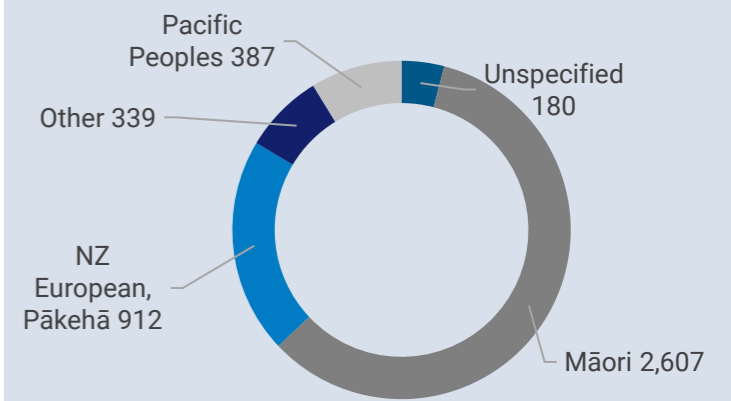
4 Households by duration in emergency housing – as at 31 Aug 2021



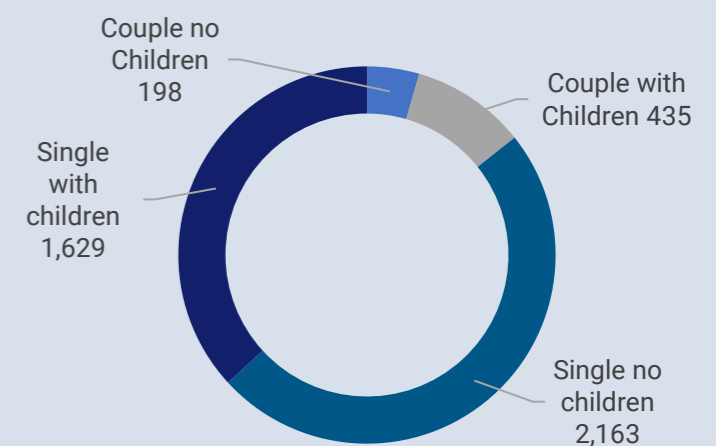
5 Age distribution of primary applicants in emergency housing – as at 31 Aug 2021



6 Ethnicity of primary applicant in emergency housing – as at 31 Aug 2021



7 Household composition – as at 31 Aug 2021



Public housing Register | As at 31 Aug 2021

The Public Housing Register is a non-time bound list of all applicants eligible to be placed in Public Housing. Applicants complete a public housing assessment which determines eligibility and priority for public housing against an agreed set of criteria, which is then used to assist the public housing provider in matching to the most appropriate property.



Public Housing Register as at 31 Aug

28,539

711 more than 31 July

Housing Register

23,799

543 more than 31 July

Transfer Register*

4,740

168 more than 31 July

New applications that entered the Register in Aug

2,487

702 more than July

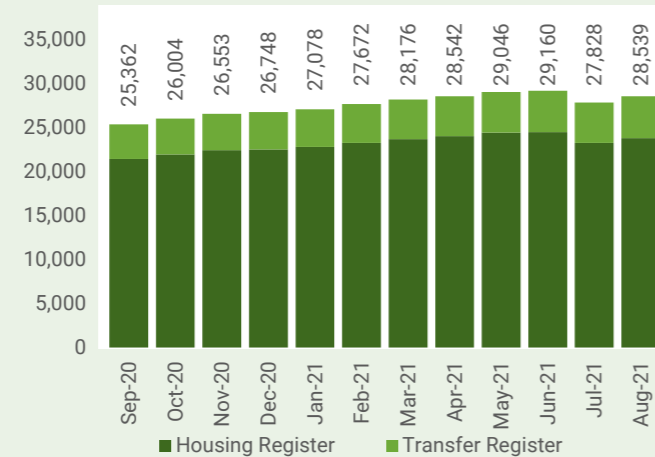
Housed in public housing in Aug

321

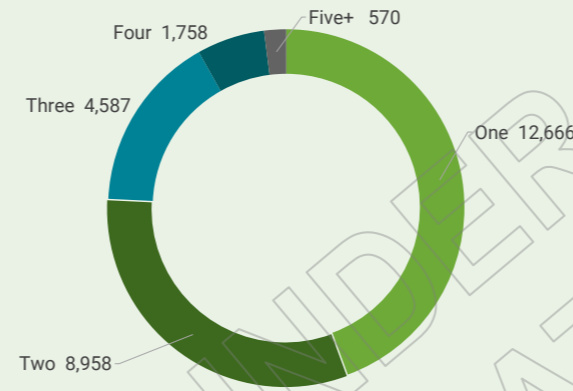
369 fewer than July

Public housing – Register numbers

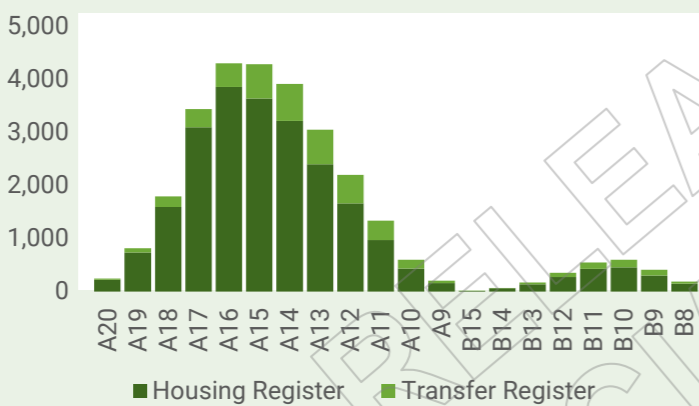
8 Applications live on the Public Housing Register – at the end of each month



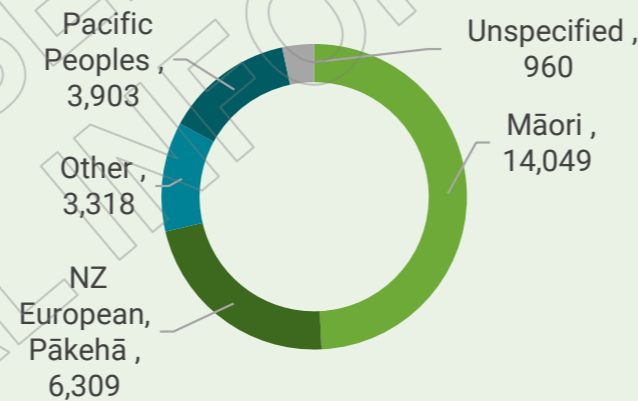
11 Number of applications by bedrooms required – as at 31 Aug 2021



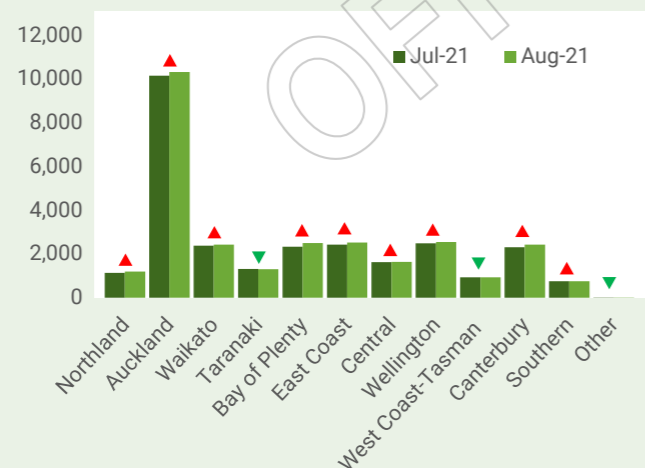
9 Applications by priority* – as at 31 Aug 2021



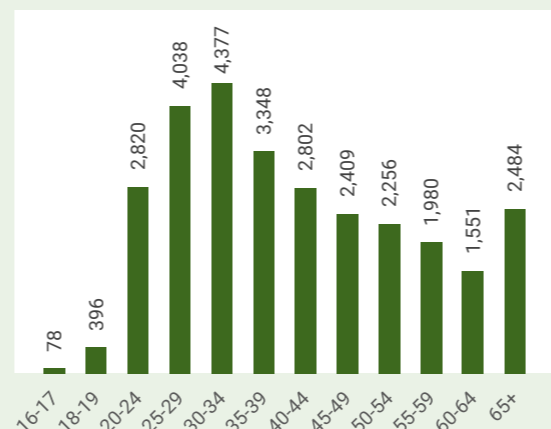
12 Ethnicity of main applicant – as at 31 Aug 2021



10 Register applications by region – as at 31 Aug 2021

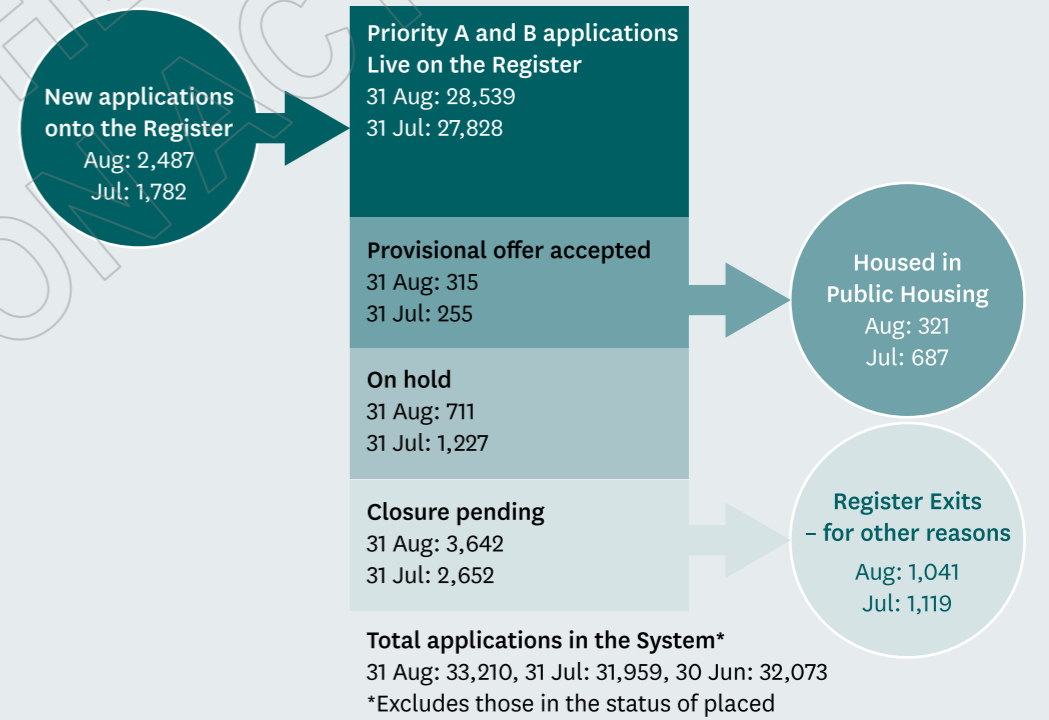


13 Age of main applicant – as at 31 Aug 2021



Public housing – Register flow

14 Register flow data – 31 July to 31 August



Commentary

Register management

Register management is the outbound calling of applicants on the Public Housing Register to:

- check their circumstances haven't changed
- determine any on-going eligibility to public housing
- promote self-help options (where appropriate).

Phase 2 (contacting those with priority ratings of A12 and A13) of the Register Management restart continued in August. Outbound calling was temporarily paused between 18 and 25 of August to pivot resources to assist in increased volumes of inbound calls.

A total of 2,151 applicants were contacted in August, with around 15% of applicants exiting the register either due to client request or the applicant no longer being eligible for Public Housing.

Public housing Register

We are continuing to see the flow on effects of the June and July Register management with an increase in applications moving into the closure pending status. The pause in Register management over lockdown saw a decrease in the number of applications on hold compared to July.

There has been a significant decrease in the number of applications that were housed in the month of August compared to the previous three months. There was also a decrease in the number of vacancies listed for applications to be matched against (from around 801 a month to 600 in August); this combined with the restrictions on moving into new properties under lockdown level 4 can explain this decrease.

There was an increase in the number of applications entering the Register as operational decisions were made, to clear work on hand through the use of overtime and the pivoting of resources away from activities that could not be delivered during Alert levels 3 and 4.

*People who already live in public housing, but have applied and are eligible to transfer to another property are placed on the Transfer Register.

*Graph 9 – Info on the SAS criteria used to determine eligibility and priority can be found here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility

Random Rounding has been applied to these figures. Figures in tables may not add up to the total due to random rounding.