



14 March 2022

Tēnā koe

On 8 February 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Number of grants, Number of Distinct Clients, and Total amount granted for Special Needs Grants, broken down by ethnicity - European, Maori and Pacific, for the period September 2020 to September 2021*
- *Number of grants, Number of Distinct Clients, and Total amount granted for Advances to NZ Super/Veteran's pension broken down by ethnicity - European, Maori and Pacific, for the period September 2020 to September 2021*
- *Number of Distinct Clients, and Total amount granted for Accommodation Supplement broken down by ethnicity - European, Maori and Pacific, for the period September 2020 to September 2021*
- *The percentage of the population aged 65 and over in households experiencing material hardship (households under 50% median income after deducting housing costs) for the September quarter 2020 and September quarter 2021.*
- *The number of people aged 65 and over dependent solely on their superannuation (no other source of income) for the September quarter 2020 and September quarter 2021.*

On 16 February 2022, you were advised that the part of your request regarding the fourth and fifth points above has been transferred to Stats NZ for response, as this information is not information held by the Ministry but is believed to be held by Stats NZ.

Please find the following tables in the attached spreadsheet:

- **Table One:** The number of Special Needs Grants (SNGs) and Advance Payment of Benefit (ADV) and amounts paid for clients aged 65 and

over during the period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021, broken down by type of grant and benefit group.

- **Table Two:** Consolidated data of Table One, broken down by benefit groups, number of grants, and amount granted.
- **Table Three:** The number of SNG and ADV and amounts paid for clients aged 65 and over during the period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021, broken down by type of grant and ethnicity.
- **Table Four:** Consolidated data from Table Three, broken down by ethnicity, total amount, and total number of grants.
- **Table Five:** The number of current clients aged 65 and over receiving Accommodation Supplement (AS) as at end of September 2020 and September 2021, broken down by month and benefit type.
- **Table Six:** The number of current clients aged 65 and over receiving AS as at end of September 2020 and September 2021, broken down by ethnicity.

Please note, it is not standard reporting for the Ministry to report the distinct clients in SNG or ADV when broken down into categories as the same client may be counted more than once in cases where they change their benefit during the reporting period. Information on distinct clients also does not align with ethnicity breakdowns as clients may identify with more than one ethnicity and may appear more than once in the data. This information is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. 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. I believe the information that has been provided to you satisfies the intent of your request.

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'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 regarding supplementary assistance for recipients aged 65 and over, 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

Bridget Saunders

Bridget Saunders
**Manager, Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**