



18 May 2022

Tēnā koe

On 18 March 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *How many people are in the (estimated 30-35) motels that have emergency housing in them in Rotorua?*
- *How many of those people are children?*
- *How many people are in emergency housing in Rotorua that is not motels?*
- *How many people currently in emergency housing motels in Rotorua came from Rotorua immediately before needing emergency housing. Please ensure it's Rotorua, not Bay of Plenty.*
- *Please provide a breakdown of where all the people living in emergency housing motels have come from immediately before needing emergency housing in Rotorua.*

On 19 April 2022, the Ministry emailed you to advise that more time was required to respond to your request due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on the request.

Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNG) are available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. The Ministry pays EH SNGs directly to the accommodation supplier and assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights but can be extended dependant on individual circumstances.

After these seven nights, Work and Income arrange another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation and if another grant is required. The Ministry works hard to support people in emergency housing to secure a long-term housing solution, either through public housing or private rental accommodation. Other options including transitional housing can also

be explored as an option depending on availability and the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution or the solution that we want to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. They provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html).

Please see **Table One**, within the attached Excel spreadsheet, which outlines the number of adults and children in households who were in receipt of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants in Rotorua District Territorial Local Authority (TLA) as at 31 December 2021.

Please see **Table Two**, within the attached Excel spreadsheet, which outlines the number of adults and children in households who were in receipt of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants in Rotorua District TLA as at 31 December 2021, broken down by accommodation type.

The Ministry is providing you with data to 31 December 2021 as that was the most recent quarter reported on at the time of your request.

The Ministry acknowledges that there is a shortage of housing throughout the country. The increased demand for emergency housing in Rotorua is a symptom of an ongoing shortage of affordable housing in the region, and New Zealand in general. Rotorua is recognised as one of nine key areas of severe housing deprivation under the Public Housing Plan initiative, announced in January 2021 with the goal of increasing housing supply in areas of greatest need. More information on the Public Housing Plan can be found here: <https://www.hud.govt.nz/community-and-public-housing/increasing-public-housing/public-housing-plan/>.

I understand that you have been provided with a copy of **Rotorua Emergency Housing Demand – an analysis** on 6 May 2022. This document contains a breakdown of whether EH occupants in Rotorua were living in Rotorua before moving into EH, and demonstrates the overwhelming majority of people receiving Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants in Rotorua over the period were from Rotorua, neighbouring territorial authorities or had a prior connection to the city.

The information contained within this document is a bespoke piece of analysis that cannot be repeated for this Official Information Act request. In order to provide you with a breakdown of where clients in EH in Rotorua were living directly before moving into EH, the Ministry would need to divert personnel from their core duties and allocate extra time to complete this task. The diversion of these resources would impair the Ministry's ability to continue standard operations and would be an inefficient use of the Ministry's

resources. As such, the final part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as it requires substantial manual collation. 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.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

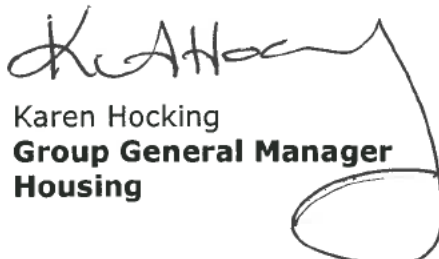
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding EH SNGs in Rotorua, 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



Karen Hocking  
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Housing**