



24 November 2022

Tēnā koe

On 28 October 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

I am writing to submit a request for information under the Official Information Act about social workers employed or contracted by the Ministry of Social Development and Work and Income.

- *How many social workers does MSD and WINZ employ right now (as of when this data is being collected please)?*
- *Since 2018, how many complaints have been laid against these staff and against how many staff? (by year and by worker type eg MSD social worker or WINZ staff)*
- *Can you please identify for each complaint the nature of the complaint or issue at the centre of it please? (by year and by worker type eg MSD social worker or WINZ staff)*
- *Since 2018, how many of these have been fired, suspended or put on some kind of disciplinary leave each year?(by year and by worker type eg MSD social worker or WINZ staff)*
- *Could you please provide each year's worth of cases by the problem that caused the disciplinary action? For example: number of people, action, reason (by year and by worker type eg MSD social worker or WINZ staff)*
- *Could you please note if any of these situations also resulted in Police involvement?*

To provide some background to your request, on 1 April 2017 the majority of the Ministry's social worker workforce moved from the Ministry as part of the transfer of Child Youth and Family to the agency that became Oranga Tamariki.

Accordingly, we emailed you to seek a part transfer of your request to Oranga Tamariki. On 11 November 2022, that part of your request was transferred to Oranga Tamariki.

After the social worker workforce transferred to Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry retained some employees that were registered social workers, however they were not employed as social workers. The Ministry currently does not have any specific social worker roles.

For any registered social workers that have remained with the Ministry, they have held roles with job titles such as Senior Social Work Advisor, Claims Advisor and Claimant Support Specialist.

We have interpreted your request as being for information about employees working as social workers. As these are not social worker roles, we have not included them within scope of your request, therefore all parts of your request are refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the information is not held.

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 or wish to seek further information about any interpretations used, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding complaints made about social workers, 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



Cain McLeod
Group General Manager
People and Capability