



25 November 2022

Tēnā koe

On 30 October 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Number of deaths that have occurred in emergency housing since 2016, broken down by year, region and cause of death (EG: suicide, homicide, accident etc) and age and ethnicity of person who died*

Number of deaths that have occurred in transitional housing since 2016, broken down by year, region and cause of death (EG: suicide, homicide, accident etc) and age and ethnicity of person who died

Reports, memos or briefings (or other communications) into deaths at emergency and transitional housing facilities since 2016

*Reports, memos or briefings (or other communications) into this particular death at an emergency housing facility:
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/124765625/wellington-babys-death-at-emergency-housing-site-being-treated-as-unexplained>*

On 7 November 2022, the Ministry transferred part of your request to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The remaining parts of your request will be responded to in-turn:

- *Number of deaths that have occurred in emergency housing since 2016, broken down by year, region and cause of death (EG: suicide, homicide, accident etc) and age and ethnicity of person who died;*
- *Reports, memos or briefings (or other communications) into deaths at emergency and transitional housing facilities since 2016*

The Ministry cares deeply about the welfare and safety of all of our clients. Any event that results in the death of a person living in emergency housing is investigated where appropriate, alongside pastoral care and support being made available to those affected.

Any risks, incidents or deaths occurring in Emergency Housing (EH) brought to the Ministry's attention are managed on a case-by-case basis by staff and managers within each region. This information would be recorded on individual client and supplier files. Regional staff manage any incidents as they arise, with the relevant authorities. All deaths should also be referred directly to the New Zealand Police. I am unable to provide you with this information as it is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review a substantial number of files. As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the 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.

Finally, HUD will be responding to you regarding the transitional housing aspect of this particular query.

- *Reports, memos or briefings (or other communications) into this particular death at an emergency housing facility:*
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/124765625/wellington-babys-death-at-emergency-housing-site-being-treated-as-unexplained>

Please see the **Appendix** which provides the Ministry's media responses for 7 April 2021 and 8 April 2021 regarding this incident. Please note that some information has been withheld as it is deemed out of scope of your request. Furthermore, some information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

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.

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 or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



Karen Hocking
Group General Manager
Housing

Appendix

Out of Scope



From: (9)(2)(a)

Sent: Wednesday, 7 April 2021 5:27 PM

To: Media (MSD) <media@msd.govt.nz>

Subject: MSD Media and Social Media Log - Wednesday, 07 April 2021

MSD Media and Social Media Log

Wednesday, 07 April 2021

Out of Scope



Media responses:

- Death at Emergency Housing provider – Stuff / RNZ / Newstalk ZB

Out of Scope



Media responses:**Death at Emergency Housing provider – Stuff / RNZ / Newstalk ZB**

Query: Sophie Cornish (Stuff), Ruth Hill (RNZ) and Kasharn Rao (Newstalk ZB) asked about what support MSD is providing following the death of a baby in Emergency Housing.

Response: We provided the following response Attributed to Gagau Annadale-Stone, Regional Commissioner

We would like to express our deepest sympathies to the whānau affected by this tragedy.

One of our contracted Social Service providers is on site providing pastoral care and support.

We will be checking-in on all our clients at The Setup on Manners today to ensure they are OK.

Editors Notes

We can confirm that the Setup on Manners is a supplier of emergency housing.

Sign off: Gagau Annadale-Stone / OCE

Out of Scope



From: (9)(2)(a)
To: (9)(2)(a)
Subject: FW: MSD Media and Social Media Log - Thursday, 08 April 2021
Date: Tuesday, 1 November 2022 11:45:05 am
Attachments: [image012.png](#)
[image013.png](#)
[image014.png](#)
[image015.png](#)
[image016.png](#)

From: (9)(2)(a)
Sent: Thursday, 8 April 2021 4:44 PM
To: Media (MSD) <media@msd.govt.nz>
Subject: MSD Media and Social Media Log - Thursday, 08 April 2021

MSD Media and Social Media Log

Thursday, 08 April 2021

Out of Scope

Media responses:

- Baby death in Emergency Housing - Stuff

Out of Scope

Media responses:

Baby death in Emergency Housing - Stuff

Query: Reporter Sophie Cornish got in touch following the tragic death of a baby in emergency housing and our earlier comments regarding support. She has had comment from a local councillor and Wellington City Missioner saying there is a lack of support for emergency housing clients, and that the model needed to change. She asked for our response.

Response: Please attribute to Gagau Annandale-Stone, Regional Commissioner

We're very conscious that those in emergency housing may need additional wrap-around support, which we provide.

We are in contact with clients and work with them to identify where we can provide extra help and refer them to specialist support.

In Wellington we fund a number of social services providers like Downtown Community Ministry and Kahungunu Whanau Services to work closely with our clients who require that extra layer of support, including those at the Setup.

We help clients navigate the different services available to them to ensure they have all the assistance they need to empower them to move forward.

We have integrated services case managers, as well as navigators who are a single point of contact, providing support for people living in emergency housing.

Further intensive support is available through community navigators that work with our clients to understand their circumstances and take a holistic approach to identify the support they require. These community navigators work to address the barriers our clients face in accessing and sustaining long-term housing.

The Wellington City Mission were at The Setup where their transitional housing is located at the time of incident as part of their contract with Te Tāūpapa Kura Kāinga - Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

We face high and ongoing demand for emergency housing, and we are committed to ensuring that people who come to us in urgent need have somewhere to stay.

We continue to work with partner agencies, including the Wellington City Council and the Wellington City Mission, on how to improve our support for those in emergency housing.

Across government, there is a wider programme of work underway aimed at increasing the supply of public housing and improving housing affordability and supply.

Te Tāūpapa Kura Kāinga leads the programme of work on New Zealand's housing and urban development. This includes planning, and with Kāinga Ora, delivering more public housing, transitional housing, and services to tackle homelessness. HUD is also working to improve housing affordability and supply for aspiring homeowners.

Editor's note:

In 2019 the Government invested \$16.1 million over four years to provide wrap-around support to families with children and people with mental health needs in emergency housing.

A further \$31.28 million over four years was invested in intensive case managers and navigators to provide a single point of contact for families and

individuals.

Navigators assist where people need more support than an intensive case manager can offer. Navigators co-ordinate services and provide on-going support for people with housing needs. Navigators will work with providers, health professionals, and government agencies and community organisations.

Navigators will be from a local community organisation contracted by MSD.

Sign off: Gagau Annandale-Stone / OCE

Additional Query: The reporter asked us to confirm that the mother of the child who died was an emergency housing client.

Response: We told her that due to privacy concerns we could not help her further.

Sign off: N/A

Out of Scope

