



25 October 2022

Tēnā koe

On 27 September 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *A simple data series displaying the maximum possible entitlement to:*
 - *Student allowance*
 - *Living costs*
 - *Accommodation supplement*
- *From 2012 – 2022 on an annual basis.*
- *While the number of recipients, total amount paid and average amount paid for these benefits is available online this doesn't necessarily translate to the above due to:*
 - *differences in the length of time these benefits are collected for (i.e some students don't sit the full academic year so average payout/max weeks entitled will be less than the max payout)*
 - *People receiving less than the maximum – particularly for living cost and accommodation supplement.*

On 3 October 2022, the Ministry emailed you to clarify whether you would like the information on Accommodation Supplement provided as an overall maximum rate for the whole of New Zealand, or if you would prefer to have this broken down to the maximum rate per region. On the same day, you confirmed that the national level breakdown was preferred.

Please find attached **Appendix One** containing the following data tables:

- **Table One:** The maximum rate for Accommodation Benefit from 2012 to 2022

- **Table Two:** The maximum rate for Sole Parent of Accommodation Benefit from 2015 to 2022
- **Table Three:** The maximum rate for Living Costs for 2012 to 2022
- **Table Four:** The maximum rate for Student Allowance from 2012 to 2022 broken down by Student Allowance type.
- **Table Five:** Table Five: The maximum entitlement for Accommodation Supplement from 2012 to 2022 broken down by Accommodation Supplement type.

Please note, for **Table Two**, the Sole Parent rate of Accommodation Benefit was first payable for study starting on or after 1 July 2015.

Please note, for **Table Five**, this table provides a general maximum rate for all clients receiving Accommodation Supplement. Whilst students can access the Accommodation Supplement in certain circumstances, where their Student Allowance would be declined for reasons other than income, the Ministry is unable to break down the maximum rate specific to students.

As you may be aware, maximum rates and thresholds are available on the Ministry's Manuals and Procedures (MAP) website at the following links:

Accommodation Supplement –

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/extra-help-information/accommodation-supplement-tables/entry-thresholds-and-maximum-rates.html.

Accommodation Benefit:

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/student-support-tables/accommodation-benefit-rates/index.html.

Student Allowance:

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/student-support-tables/student-allowance-rates-and-thresholds/index.html.

Student loan:

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/student-support-tables/student-loan-rates-and-thresholds/index.html.

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

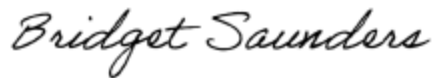
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

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 attachment 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



Bridget Saunders
**Manager Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**