



18 April 2023

Tēnā koe

On 21 March 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry), requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 the following information:

- *could I please request any data, analysis, or reports (draft or otherwise) MSD has on what happens to people once they exit the benefit system, between 2020 and the present date.*

It is acknowledged that you have asked specifically about what happens to people once they exit the benefit system between 2020 and the present date, which we have defined as being the date we received your request.

In your original contact with the Ministry's Media team, you were advised that the Ministry periodically reports on what happens to people once they exit the benefit system. You were also provided with a link to the most recent report, for the year to June 2020 at: msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/benefit-system/what-happened-to-people-who-left-the-benefit-system.html.

Ministry officials are currently working on the next update of this report for the year ended June 2021, with a copy due to the Minister for Social Development and Employment later this month. You will have noted that the report is detailed and provides links to additional data and information. Some collaboration between Ministry officials and the Minister responsible for the Ministry of Social Development will occur prior to its release for publication. It is anticipated that the report will be published in May/June this year and will be published on the Ministry's website.

Your request for information to the end of June 2021 is therefore refused under section 18(d) of the Act on the basis that the information requested will soon be publicly available.

For information for the period July 2021 to 21 March 2023, your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry. At this time, we intend to start working on the next

update of "What Happened to People Who Left the Benefit System" later this year. I also have no grounds to believe that the information is either held by or closely connected to the functions of another department, Minister of the Crown or organisation.

Some helpful information can be found in the Ministry's Benefit Fact Sheets that provide an overview of trends in benefits, including exits. For the quarter ending December 2022, the fact sheet is available here: msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/2022/benefit-fact-sheets-snapshot-december-2022.pdf. Benefit Fact Sheets for the March 2023 quarter will be published on 20 April 2023.

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 regarding what happens to people once they exit the benefit system, 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



Gareth Williams
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System Performance