



27 April 2023

Tēnā koe

On 28 March 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *How many children were in emergency housing placements in the Bay of Plenty in each year for the 2020 and 2021 calendar years?*
  - *Can this please be broken down into numbers for each year in each of the TLAs.*
- *I would like the data broken down into each month, please, to get a proper look at the data.*

Your request follows on from the information the Ministry provided to you on 27 March 2023. The information provided in this response needs to be read in conjunction with the information about Emergency Housing (EH) you have from my 27 March 2023 letter.

Please find attached, a data table with the additional information you have requested. It provides a table setting out the number of Households, Households with Children in Emergency Housing in the Bay of Plenty region, by Territorial Local Authority, as at the end of each month from April 2020 to December 2021:

- **Table: Emergency Housing in the Bay of Plenty 2020 and 2021**

You are seeking an accurate number of how many children are in emergency housing in the Bay of Plenty area. However, as has been advised to you previously, there are limitations around the data as the Ministry does not capture unique data on children. This is qualified in the Notes provided with the data table, which clarify:

- Details of the children attached to each Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) are not recorded and as such we are unable to

count the number of unique children in EH across a period if their caregivers have had more than one grant in the period.

- Children are only attached to the file of the primary client making the EHSNG application.
- Children may also be counted more than once, as the Ministry is unable to verify if the child/children are included in more than one household living in emergency housing.
- In some cases, children may have alternative or alternating living arrangements and may not necessarily be living in emergency housing for the entire duration in EH.
- Territorial Local Authority (TLA) is based on the clients address at the time of the grant. It may not be the same as the address of the emergency housing provider.

Please note that the Table provides a view of the number of households with children in the Bay of Plenty over the period of 2021 to 2022. You will see there was a significant reduction in EH households with children from June to July 2021.

The explanation for this reduction is in 2021 Rotorua had been facing urgent housing pressures. In response to this situation the following actions occurred in June 2021:

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development contracted emergency housing motels with suitable facilities, along with wraparound support services for whānau with children. This saw the majority of households with children in EH in the Rotorua District relocated from EH to Contracted Emergency Housing during this period.
- At the same time, MSD expanded support services available to households remaining in EH which may also have contributed to the decline in the number of households with children in EH.

Note that the Table does not include numbers for Contracted Emergency Housing, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

The Ministry provides several forms of support for people in emergency housing including

- Flexible Funding Assistance
  - This is non-taxable and non-recoverable financial assistance for clients with dependent children staying in accommodation funded by the EH SNG.
  - Its purpose is to assist in meeting education, early childhood, and wellbeing needs of families with children when additional costs are incurred because they are staying in emergency housing.

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 attached data table 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 about further data the Ministry holds about numbers of emergency housing placements in the Bay of Plenty for the 2020 and 2021 calendar years, 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



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