



21 February 2023

Tēnā koe

On 23 January 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. How much Work and Income has paid out in Funeral Grant payments over the past 3-5 years*
- 2. The total number of Funeral Grant applications Work and Income has received in the past 3-5 years and the number of Funeral Grant applications that Work and Income have approved. Could the number of approved applications be broken down by each region as well please.*
- 3. Does Work and Income against how much funerals cost in different NZ regions*

For clarity, each of your questions will be responded to in-turn.

- 1. How much Work and Income has paid out in Funeral Grant payments over the past 3-5 years*
- 2. The total number of Funeral Grant applications Work and Income has received in the past 3-5 years and the number of Funeral Grant applications that Work and Income have approved. Could the number of approved applications be broken down by each region as well please.*

In response to these two questions, please see the **Appendix**, with two tables:

**Table One** showing the number of Funeral Grant applications processed between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2022.

**Table Two** showing the number and amount granted of Funeral Grants approved between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2022, by region.

Please note the following regarding all data provided in the Appendix:

- To protect confidentiality the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data
  - The data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table
  - Random rounding does not round down to zero, a value of one or two will be rounded to three
  - The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals
  - The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.
3. *Does Work and Income against how much funerals cost in different NZ regions*

This question has been interpreted as does the Ministry compare against how much funerals cost in different New Zealand regions when assessing the amount payable for a Funeral Grant. The Funeral Grant helps with actual and reasonable funeral costs and is not intended to cover the total cost of the funeral. There is a maximum amount that can be paid. The maximum allowable payment for all funeral grants is \$2,280.72, as at 1 April 2022, regardless of the region in New Zealand.

You can find more information regarding Funeral Grants at: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/funeral-grant/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/funeral-grant/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 about funeral grant applications 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response about The Ministry's Funeral Grant assistance, 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

*Bridget Saunders*

Bridget Saunders  
**Manager Issue Resolution  
Service Delivery**

## Appendix: Funeral Grant assistance

**Table One:** Number of Funeral Grant applications processed between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2022, broken down by calendar year

Calendar Year / Outcome		Number of Applications
<b>2018</b>	Decline	1,470
	Grant	4,794
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>6,261</b>
<b>2019</b>	Decline	1,584
	Grant	5,235
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>6,819</b>
<b>2020</b>	Decline	1,497
	Grant	4,740
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>6,237</b>
<b>2021</b>	Decline	1,371
	Grant	4,644
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>6,015</b>
<b>2022</b>	Decline	1,803
	Grant	4,965
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>6,768</b>

**Table Two:** Number and amount granted of Funeral Grants approved between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2022, broken down by calendar year and region

Calendar Year / Region <sup>1</sup>		Number of Grants	Amount Granted
<b>2018</b>	Northland	255	\$491,577.44
	Auckland Metro	1,215	\$2,355,160.34
	Waikato	285	\$536,539.95
	Taranaki	183	\$338,834.74
	Bay of Plenty	465	\$889,150.21
	East Coast	201	\$381,206.24
	Central	291	\$551,444.44
	Wellington	303	\$587,400.83
	Nelson	180	\$347,958.65
	Canterbury	405	\$749,052.17
	Southern	255	\$461,672.29
	Other	762	\$1,419,568.91
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>4,794</b>	<b>\$9,109,566.21</b>
<b>2019</b>	Northland	270	\$516,985.92
	Auckland Metro	1,332	\$2,630,176.38
	Waikato	429	\$822,137.80
	Taranaki	273	\$521,652.10
	Bay of Plenty	480	\$919,158.61
	East Coast	240	\$462,897.62
	Central	375	\$721,585.69
	Wellington	366	\$721,535.61
	Nelson	159	\$292,620.33
	Canterbury	525	\$1,011,362.61
	Southern	336	\$613,028.06
	Other	453	\$856,288.92
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>5,235</b>	<b>\$10,089,429.65</b>

<sup>1</sup> The Region is based on the recommending staff member at the time of the grant. The region 'Other' represents those service centres that do not represent a geographic location such as call centres and processing units.

Calendar Year / Region		Number of Grants	Amount Granted
2020	Northland	207	\$416,195.02
	Auckland Metro	1,233	\$2,474,727.17
	Waikato	315	\$628,946.36
	Taranaki	201	\$399,841.24
	Bay of Plenty	405	\$805,539.11
	East Coast	210	\$426,527.45
	Central	324	\$640,100.79
	Wellington	243	\$489,476.69
	Nelson	303	\$584,525.14
	Canterbury	591	\$1,142,699.43
	Southern	144	\$276,645.44
	Other	561	\$1,096,029.37
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>4,740</b>	<b>\$9,381,253.21</b>
2021	Northland	183	\$367,707.30
	Auckland Metro	1,257	\$2,551,704.33
	Waikato	303	\$606,141.96
	Taranaki	222	\$437,319.14
	Bay of Plenty	471	\$947,395.91
	East Coast	207	\$419,543.47
	Central	303	\$609,378.37
	Wellington	231	\$459,453.21
	Nelson	147	\$285,766.30
	Canterbury	405	\$816,057.51
	Southern	180	\$363,525.84
	Other	735	\$1,462,737.59
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>4,644</b>	<b>\$9,326,730.93</b>
2022	Northland	198	\$429,508.61
	Auckland Metro	1,065	\$2,262,549.33
	Waikato	345	\$717,226.79
	Taranaki	252	\$521,680.24
	Bay of Plenty	504	\$1,062,065.61
	East Coast	213	\$454,748.28
	Central	273	\$571,269.00
	Wellington	246	\$517,695.43
	Nelson	144	\$304,150.32
	Canterbury	423	\$861,535.96
	Southern	174	\$367,737.43
	Other	1,125	\$2,314,674.21
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>4,965</b>	<b>\$10,384,841.21</b>