



17 March 2023

Tēnā koe

On 7 February 2023 and 17 February 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. How many of your motels or travel accommodation providers are offering both discounts to Goldcard members while also being governmental emergency housing providers? I would like those motel or travel providers to be itemised.*
- 2. If this is occurring, an explanation if it's a safe environment to encourage Goldcard senior citizens to stay at these types of accommodation? This is particularly important when the Government has identified senior citizens are vulnerable and need protection especially when motel emergency housing accommodation can be problematic and unsafe at times?*
- 3. Are Goldcard members being or have been advised they are booking into this type accommodation? If they're not, they are being misled because Goldcard Services are failing in their governmental responsibility to this vulnerable sector*
- 4. When I repeatedly questioned the integrity of the discount system due to my problem with one accommodation discount member, there was a total refusal to acknowledge my concerns, thereby creating a bureaucratic wall of silence. That refusal by Goldcard Services to engage needs to be investigated to establish if mine was an isolated incident or a common occurrence. If I had the opportunity to speak earlier to Goldcard Services, we would have avoided this current escalation.*

As outlined to you in the Ministry's email of 24 February 2023, under section 18(A)(2)(b) your requests are being addressed together. This email also informed you that questions 2, 3 and 4 would be responded to by the Ministry's Correspondence Team. You can expect a response to this portion of your request in due course.

Alongside this request to the Ministry, this request was also made to the Office of Hon Carmel Sepuloni and the Office of Hon Ginny Andersen. Under section 14 of the Act they are required to officially transfer this request to the Ministry. As the information you have requested is believed to be more closely connected to the functions of the Ministry, the Ministry will solely be responding to your request.

I will now respond to the part of your request which has been considered under the Act:

*1. How many of your motels or travel accommodation providers are offering both discounts to Goldcard members while also being governmental emergency housing providers? I would like those motel or travel providers to be itemised.*

The current model of providing emergency accommodation that the Ministry is tasked with utilises Special Needs Grants (hardship payments) to pay for commercial accommodation options for people who are in urgent need of somewhere to stay. The Ministry does not contract motels to provide emergency housing. Businesses register with the Ministry for the sole purpose that the Ministry can pay the businesses directly. Registering as a supplier does not create a contractual relationship between the Ministry and the supplier.

As a commercial business, Moteliers make their own decisions about whether they wish to accept emergency housing clients.

As such, we are refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Act as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and we have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

We have provided a publicly available link on the SuperGold website where you can search by different accommodation types and see the discounts that each has on offer for SuperGold cardholders: [www.supergold.govt.nz/offers?filters%5Bregion\\_id%5D=&filters%5Bdistrict\\_id%5D=&filters%5Bcategory\\_id%5D=1&filters%5Bsubcategory\\_id%5D=11&ort\\_by=&text=motel](http://www.supergold.govt.nz/offers?filters%5Bregion_id%5D=&filters%5Bdistrict_id%5D=&filters%5Bcategory_id%5D=1&filters%5Bsubcategory_id%5D=11&ort_by=&text=motel).

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 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 SuperGold cardholders and emergency housing, 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**