



21 March 2023

Tēnā koe

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

*I request, under the Official Information Act the following information:*

- *The number of Funeral Grants provided in each of the last five calendar years, broken down by geographic region*
- *The average amount of Funeral Grants provided in each of the last five calendar years, broken down by geographic region*
- *The maximum Funeral Grant amount someone can receive, specified by the date at which the maximum grant value changed, since 1 January 2018.*

The Ministry provides funeral grants to help those who have no other means to meet the costs of a funeral. A funeral grant assists people with actual and reasonable funeral costs and is not designed to cover all funeral expenses. It is income and asset tested and eligibility takes into consideration whether the deceased person has a surviving partner or dependent child, or if the deceased is a child.

Expenses that can be met through a funeral grant include:

- professional services with regard to preparing the body for cremation or burial (for example, embalming)
- cost of a casket
- newspaper notice costs
- hearse fees
- compulsory fees for the purchase of a burial plot
- cremation fees

Further information on the eligibility criteria for a funeral grant can be found on the Work and Income website, here:

[www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/funeral-grant.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/funeral-grant.html)

In response to your questions, please see the attached **Appendix**, with three tables:

**Table One** which shows the number of funeral grants and the amount granted from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2022, broken down by region.

**Table Two** which shows the average amount granted for funeral grants from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2022, broken down by region.

**Table Three** which shows the maximum grant rates from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2022.

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 attachments 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, 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**