



4 May 2023

Tēnā koe

On 3 April 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *I want to know how many single New Zealanders have been housed in motels accommodation. Work and Income says they don't put singles in motel accommodation but that can't be true*
- *I want the information of how many single people applied for Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant and stayed in motel accommodation not backpackers or lodges.*
- *The time-line and days from October 11th 2021 to Monday April the 3th 2023*
- *The amount of singles living in motels using Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant*

Demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and many people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is generated by a shortage of affordable housing driving up house prices and rents. People on low incomes are most affected by rising housing costs and many seek financial help through the Ministry.

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. The Ministry pays EH SNGs directly to the accommodation supplier and assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights but can be extended dependant on individual circumstances.

After these seven nights Work and Income arrange another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation and if another grant is required.

The Ministry works hard to support people in emergency housing to secure a long-term housing solution, either through public housing or private rental accommodation. Other options including transitional housing can also be explored as an option depending on availability and the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution or the solution that we want to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. They provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available at the following link: [//www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html)

Some people may struggle to access suitable housing due to a lack of available supply or they simply may not be able to meet the high cost of housing which may result in them receiving EH SNG support for an extended period of time.

For people with high and complex needs, it can sometimes be challenging to identify suitable long-term housing, which can lead to longer stays in emergency housing. Work and Income work closely with these people to see what can be done to ensure that once they have a home of their own, they have the skills to sustain it, and the support they need to keep it.

You may be interested in a joint release from Hon Dr Megan Wood and Hon Carmel Sepuloni regarding an Emergency Housing Review – Next Steps, at: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/emergency-housing-review-next-steps>.

Please find attached, as an **APPENDIX**, a table showing the number of 'single no children' households and the number of grants in Motel/Hotel accommodation (Emergency Housing), paid from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2023. This is based on the number of adults and children declared at the time of each grant.

For the table, we have included notes of explanation to assist you in reading the data.

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 attachment 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 about emergency housing and special needs grants for single people, 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



Karen Hocking
**Group General Manager
Housing**