



26 September 2023

Tēnā koe

On 15 August 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *How many settlements have been paid out to staff for complaints against the department/agency over the last year, the last five years and the last ten years?*
- *How many of those settlements included non-disclosure agreements?*

On 12 September 2023, the Ministry emailed you to advise that your request is granted in part. Upon further consideration, the Ministry has decided to grant your request in full. I apologise that the Ministry's decision was not communicated to you in a timely manner.

I have interpreted your request for settlement payments to refer to settlement agreements with a provision for payment under section 123(1)(c)(i) of the Employment Relations Act 2000.

In the last financial year, no such payments were made by the Ministry. In the last five financial years, two such payments were made by the Ministry. In the last ten financial years, nine such payments were made by the Ministry.

The nine settlement agreements in scope of your request include a standard confidentiality clause. This clause outlines the agreement between the two parties that the terms of the agreement remain confidential and undisclosed.

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.

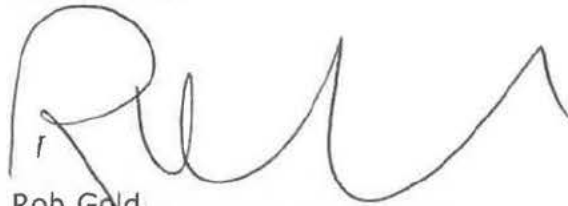
IN-CONFIDENCE

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 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 regarding settlement agreements between the Ministry and staff members, 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Gold', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rob Gold  
**Group General Manager**  
**People**