



21 August 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 3 July 2024 to Kāinga Ora's media team requesting information about the number of Māori and Pacific Islander families in New Zealand on the Social Housing Register (the Register) who require a house with five or more bedrooms.

As you are aware, your email was referred to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) and Senior Media Advisor, Bernie Whelan, contacted you to refine your information request. A summary of the information you have requested is as follows:

- Number of Pacific families on the Register
- Number of families who require a house with five or more bedrooms on the Register
- Number of a) Māori and b) Pacific Islander families on the Register who require a house with five or more bedrooms
- Wait time for a) Māori and b) Pacific Islander families on the Register who require a house with five or more bedrooms
- The longest period of time a: a) a Māori family and b) a Pacific Islander family who require a house with five or more bedrooms have been on the Register.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) and my decision is set out below.

Please refer to Tables 1-5 of **Appendix 1**, which is a spreadsheet setting out the data you have requested. As you will see, we have provided data for the Register and the Transfer Register separately.

There are notes included on the spreadsheet to assist with interpreting the data. I would also like to add the following information:

- The mean and median data is provided as a measure for 'wait time'.
- Data referred to in the mean, median and maximum columns in the spreadsheet refer to number of days.

- The mean and median data provided for Māori and Pacific Island families is based on a relatively small sample size (less than 30 families). Therefore, the sample size is too small to produce statistically valid mean and median data.

When New Zealanders are eligible for social housing, their needs are recorded on either the Register or the Transfer Register. The Register is made up of people who are not currently in social housing, but who have been assessed as being eligible for it. The Transfer Register consists of people who want to move from one social housing property to another, generally due to a change in circumstances prompting a move to somewhere more appropriate to their needs. The data in **Appendix 1** includes families on both the Register and the Transfer Register.

The Ministry's role is to assess Social Housing applications and manage both the Register and the Social Housing Transfer Register (the Transfer Register). The Ministry also refers social housing applicants to Kāinga Ora and other social housing providers, and these agencies match applicants to available properties.

Clients with the most urgent housing needs at any given time are matched to a property first, rather than based on how long they have been waiting on the Register. There is also currently a shortage of social housing properties available through Kainga Ora and other community housing providers. Getting matched to a house will depend on how quickly a suitable property becomes available and how many other people with urgent needs are also waiting.

Please note that the Ministry does not record the longest duration of an applicant on the Register. "Time to house" refers to the number of calendar days between the date an application is first confirmed on the Register as an 'A' or 'B' priority applicant and the date a tenancy is activated for that application. The Ministry considers 'Priority A' applicants to be 'at risk' and include households that have a severe and persistent housing need that must be addressed immediately. 'Priority B' applicants are considered to have a 'serious housing need' and include households with a significant and persistent need.

The length of time an application remains on the Register can depend on several reasons. For example, an applicant may remain on the Register for a longer period when they have specific preferences or requirements about where they need to be housed, they have a change in circumstances while on the Register or are seeking housing in areas of high demand. I am therefore providing you with data on "time to house", which is the standard time measure the Ministry reports on.

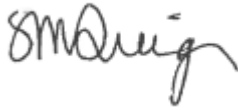
It is important to note that the ethnicity data the Ministry uses in reporting is self-identified and multiple ethnicities may be chosen by an individual as fits their preference or self-concept. Total response ethnicity means that if a person identifies with more than one ethnic group, they are counted in each applicable group. Because a client can choose more than one ethnicity response, the total number of ethnicity responses will be greater than the number of clients.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

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 my decision on your request, 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

pp. 

Magnus O'Neill

General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services