



17 December 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 27 November 2024, requesting data on benefit sanctions for October and November 2024. I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

The traffic light system was introduced as a result of decisions by the Minister for Social Development Hon Louise Upston and announced here: www.beehive.govt.nz/release/green-light-welfare-works.

The obligations for those on benefit haven't changed. What has changed is how we communicate with clients, so that it is clearer how they are tracking with meeting their obligations. The traffic lights system is focussed on clients with work and work preparation obligations, along with social obligations.

If they get off track, we'll explain their responsibilities, and support them to get back on track. This helps to set clear expectations up front. Most clients do the right thing and are on green.

You can find more information on work obligations and the traffic lights system on the Work and Income website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/news/2024/traffic-light-system.html.

Please refer to the attached **Appendix** which provides two tables in response to your request.

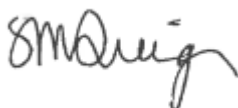
Please also note, we have provided you with the number of sanctions imposed, rather than distinct clients. Clients may be reflected more than once in the data depending how many sanctions they have received. Please contact the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) if you would like this information and we will process it as a new request.

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

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Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services



Appendix

Table 1: The number of work test sanctions applied for working age main benefit clients from 1 October 2024 to 31 October 2024 by benefit type, reason for sanction and children indicator.

Benefit Type / Reason for Sanction		Clients with children		Total
		No	Yes	
Emergency Benefit	Failed to attend appointment(s)	3	0	3
	Total	3	0	3
Jobseeker Support - Health Condition or Disability	Failed to attend appointment(s)	18	3	18
	Failed to prepare for work	21	3	24
	Failed to participate in work	3	0	3
	Other reasons	3	0	3
	Total	42	6	48
Jobseeker Support - Work ready	Failed to attend appointment(s)	2,940	285	3,225
	Failed to prepare for work	1,029	78	1,110
	Failed to participate in work	315	36	351
	Other reasons	36	3	39
	Total	4,320	405	4,725
Sole Parent Support	Failed to attend appointment(s)	0	24	24
	Failed to prepare for work	0	21	21
	Failed to participate in work	0	6	6
	Other reasons	0	3	3
	Total	0	48	51
Young Parent Payment	Failed to prepare for work	0	9	9
	Other reasons	0	3	3

	Total	0	12	9
Youth Payment	Failed to prepare for work	3	0	3
	Other reasons	3	0	3
	Total	3	0	3
Total		4,365	474	4,836

Table 2: The number of work test sanctions applied for working age main benefit clients from 1 November 2024 to 30 November 2024 by benefit, reason for sanction and children indicator.

Benefit / Reason for sanction		Clients with children		Total
		No	Yes	
Jobseeker Support - Health Condition, Injury or Disability	Failed to attend appointment(s)	18	3	21
	Failed to prepare for work	27	3	30
	Failed to participate in work	6	0	3
	Other reasons	3	0	3
	Total	51	3	54
Jobseeker Support - Work ready	Failed to attend appointment(s)	2,910	291	3,198
	Failed to prepare for work	1,059	99	1,158
	Failed to participate in work	342	45	387
	Other reasons	18	3	24
	Total	4,329	435	4,767
Sole Parent Support	Failed to attend appointment(s)	0	15	12
	Failed to prepare for work	0	24	24
	Total	0	36	36
Young Parent Payment	Failed to prepare for work	0	9	9
	Other reasons	0	15	15
	Total	0	27	27
Youth Payment	Failed to prepare for work	3	0	3

	Other reasons	3	0	3
	Total	6	0	6
Total		4,386	501	4,887

Table Notes:

- The table includes working age only (18 to 64 years).
- Main benefits exclude New Zealand Superannuation, Veteran's Pension, Non-Beneficiary assistance, Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit.
- This is a count of sanctions, not clients. A client can have more than one sanction within the time period.
- To protect confidentiality the Ministry of Social Development uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- These data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table.
- Random rounding does not round down to zero, a value of one or two will be rounded to three.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.