



13 March 2024

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 19 February 2024, requesting information about Ministry clients staying at Spa Lodge.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decisions set out below, along with some general information about redirections at the end of this letter.

I have refused your request for information about whether any of the nine clients staying at Spa Lodge on 22 November 2023 included family members or dependents, under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. This refusal is to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

I can advise that the redirection payments made to the supplier registered to 1221 Amohau Street Rotorua on 17 November 2023, which as noted in my previous response includes four different premises, is a weekly amount. Any payments made to the supplier outside of a benefit redirection, such as a private bank transaction between a client and the supplier, would not be reflected in the figure in my previous response.

Finally, these redirections are a part of a client's total benefit payments, of which any supplementary payments are included. As noted in our response of 29 January 2024, clients were primarily supported with Accommodation Supplement and Temporary Additional Support if they qualified.

### **General information about redirections**

A redirection of benefit payment means part or all of a client's benefit payment is paid directly to another person or organisation instead of to a client. Redirection of benefit to private landlords can only be done at the request of the client and where there is good cause, such as to ensure payment of essential services such as rent or electricity. You can read more about how the Ministry administers redirection of benefit payments at the following link:

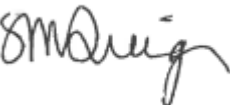
- [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/redirection-of-benefit-payment/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/redirection-of-benefit-payment/index.html)

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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

pp. 

Magnus O'Neill  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**