



27 September 2024

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 30 August 2024, requesting information about the value of benefit fraud for the last three reporting periods.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out below.

#### ***Question 1 The value of benefit fraud for the last three reporting periods.***

Please find attached Appendix One that addresses this part of your request.

- **Appendix One:** Number of successful prosecutions and overpayment value in the financial years 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24, by financial year.

Please note we have provided prosecution numbers to address this request.

Please also find information about the Ministry of Social Development's (the Ministry's) Wage Subsidy Integrity and Fraud Programme, here: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/wage-subsidy-integrity/index.html#WageSubsidycasesinthecourts5](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/wage-subsidy-integrity/index.html#WageSubsidycasesinthecourts5)

You will see the information includes a link to Wage Subsidy cases in the courts.

#### ***Question 2 The value of any fraud associated with COVID-19 payments for the last three reporting periods.***

Table One below provides information on Wage Subsidy prosecutions by the Ministry. Note the period covered is from the beginning of COVID-19 on 1 March 2020 to 30 August 2024.

**Table One: COVID-19 Economic Support – enforcement activity for period 1 March 2020 to 30 August 2024**

<b>Wage Subsidy Scheme enforcement activity</b>		
Prosecution	Charges filed in court (individuals)	77
	Charges being prepared for filing (individuals)	16
	<b>Total prosecution decisions taken</b>	<b>93</b>
	<b>Total value of offending where charges have been filed in Court for COVID-19 economic support fraud</b>	<b>\$4.73 million</b>

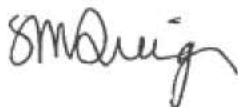
Note: Decisions to prosecute are taken for each individual involved in a case. A case may involve more than one individual.

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.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

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