MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

6 August 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 10 June 2025, requesting information about debt owed to the Ministry as at 30 June 2024, including residency status and type of debt.

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

Please refer to the attached **Appendix** which provides the number of clients and amount of debt owing to the Ministry as at 30 June 2024, by debt category.

Please note that penalty debts are sanctions in lieu of prosecution and are not due to late or non-payment of benefit (as is the case with Inland Revenue). Only a small number of clients have a penalty added each year. The penalty debts are included in the fraud debt balance.

Please note that we are unable to report a penalty debt category and debtor residency/non-residency categories because this information is not centrally recorded. This part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. Where this information is held, it would be contained within individual client files, which would each require manual review to respond to your request. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

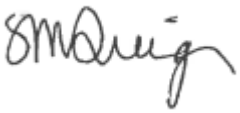
I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

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. 

Anna Graham
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