



25 August 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 25 July 2025, regarding the data breach notification you received from the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry).

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 separately below.

How many people had their data exposed, how did this occur, what information exactly was exposed and to who, what if something happens from the data loss

When the Ministry becomes aware that a client's information may have been compromised, appropriate measures are taken to minimise any risk of further disclosure.

Of the recent security incident reported to the Ministry, involving the potential exposure of personal information, a total of 135 people were affected.

The Ministry and New Zealand Police are continuing to investigate the source of the data breach. There is no evidence the Ministry's systems were compromised or responsible for the incident.

The only personal information exposed appears to be clients' first and last names, SWN (client) numbers and email addresses.

The Ministry does not know the identity of the person in possession of the information. To minimise any potential impact, the Ministry has advised affected clients to update their Ministry-related account passwords, security questions and contact information. Where available, clients can also turn on multi-factor authorisation to provide extra security to their online accounts.

The Ministry does not expect the data breach to have any impact on clients if they follow the advice provided to update their Ministry security information and take normal steps and precaution to protect themselves while online/against identity theft.

How does this effect my relationship with winz

The Ministry takes the responsibility of protecting the privacy and security of client's information very seriously. Protecting the information of New Zealanders from unauthorised access, use, manipulation, and theft is a priority.

Your relationship with Work and Income, which is part of the Ministry, remains unchanged. The Ministry has taken steps to minimise any risk resulting from the

data breach, including notifying affected individuals and recommending updates to account security settings.

There is currently no evidence the exposed information has been misused, and the Ministry does not expect the breach to impact your entitlements, services, or interactions with Work and Income. You can continue to access support and services as usual – if you do have concerns about your personal information or would like help updating your account security settings, please contact us on 0800 559 009.

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
General Manager
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