



3 February 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 13 December 2024, requesting information relating to advance payments, food grants, and training for case managers. I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

- 1. A Data Table representing the number of requests for Advance Payments in total between 2010 - 2024 for each corresponding year*
- 2. A Data Table representing the number of request for Food Grants in Total between 2010 - 2024 for each corresponding year*
- 3. A Data Table representing the total \$ value that was approved in total in relation to Food Grants between 2010 - 2024 for each corresponding year*
- 4. A Data table representing the total \$ value that was approved in total in relation to food grants between 2010 - 2024 for each corresponding year*

I note the wording of question 4 of your request is the same as for question 3. We have interpreted question 4 of your request to be for data relating to advance payments, so that questions 3 and 4 correlate with questions 1 and 2.

Please find **Appendix A** attached in response to these parts of your request.

- 5. What initial training and requirements are Case Managers required to fulfill in relation to becoming a case manager*

Frontline staff within Service Delivery undergo Ministry training and induction which includes a combination of Ministry employee knowledge, role-specific responsibilities, and technical knowledge. This is complemented by modules and resources that support staff in building competency in understanding and working with a broad range of clients and their whanau.

Our training is centred around the following:

- "Understand me and my whanau" – teach staff to listen with empathy and inquire to understand what's important to whanau
- "Help me in the way that I need it" – help staff work with whanau to identify the right options for their situation to ensure full and correct entitlement
- "Do it" – help staff gain the technical knowledge and skill to be accurate

- 6. To what extent are Case Managers allowed to make discretionary decisions*

The use of discretion allows for flexible and individualised treatment; each person has different needs and lives are complex. It gives the decision-maker the ability to consider an individual's unique situation and circumstance to make a reasoned and sound decision within the parameters of legally acceptable options.

Discretion can only be used where policy and legislation allow for it. Many of the Ministry's policies and legislation do not allow for discretion, this can often be identified by the use of words such as 'shall' or 'must'. However, where discretion can be applied, this is identified by the use of words such as 'may'.

The extent to which case managers are allowed to make discretionary decisions therefore varies on a case-by-case basis. If you would like more specific information regarding discretion for specific policy, please let us know.

If a person disagrees with a decision, they can request for a Review of Decision (ROD) This right to review ensures decisions that are made with discretion have taken into account all factors that should be considered. More information on this can be found on our website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/feedback-and-complaints/review-of-decisions.html.

7. *A Data Table including the key performance indicators reflective of a case manager and/or confirming the estimated case load that a given case manager might have to deal with on an average day*

This aspect of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.

The Ministry does not currently use individual key performance indicators (KPIs) for case managers. The number of clients a case manager is able to see in a day varies depending on the number of clients in their caseload, the type of support they are providing, with the length of each appointment varying depending on the specific needs of the client.

Dedicated case management services are designed to handle caseloads ranging from 60 to 110 clients, depending on the client cohort being served.

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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Ministerial and Executive Services