



13 February 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 5 December 2024, requesting information on homeless clients supported by employment support programmes. Thank you for your patience and assistance in refining your request, most recently on 15 January 2025.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below. For the sake of clarity, I will respond to your request in parts.

Before responding to your questions, it may be helpful to explain the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry)'s Social Housing Function.

The Ministry is responsible for administering housing-related financial assistance, assessing eligibility for social housing, and managing the Social Housing Register.

When an applicant completes a Social Housing Register application, the Ministry records their living situation at the time of application. If someone reports that they are living in a car, this is recorded, and the Ministry considers what assistance can be provided. This may include helping to source private housing, referring them to a transitional housing provider, or assisting with emergency housing costs.

While the register provides insight into those seeking assistance, it captures only a moment in time, meaning it does not provide an exact count of people living in cars at any given moment. Information is updated when the Ministry is made aware of changes in an applicant's circumstances, with accommodation data reflecting what is held at the time of reporting.

The Ministry does not track the total number of adults or children living in cars at any one time but does record how many people have sought assistance. When parents apply for public housing and include their children in the application, the Ministry captures data on those children, including where the family was living at the time of application. However, this data does not confirm whether a child was in the custody of the applicant or if they were physically residing in a car at that time.

- 1. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Housing Support (including Accommodation Supplement,*

Emergency Housing, Transitional Housing, Social Housing and/or Referral to Housing Support NGO's), by month, by region since 2017?

Please find the information requested attached in **Appendix A**. It is not clear to the Ministry what 'referral to Housing Support NGO' refers to. As such, it has not been included in this response.

Your request for data on transitional housing has been interpreted as per the wording of your request as only being for those approaching the Ministry for support. This aspect of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. If held, this information would only 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.

If you would like data relating to individuals currently in transitional housing, please contact the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

Some information in the attached table has been marked as 'S'. This information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in the information.

- 2. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Employment Support, by month, by region since 2017?*
- 3. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Income Support or Financial Assistance, by month, by region since 2017?*
- 4. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Budgeting or Financial advice, by month, by region since 2017?*
- 5. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Food Support, by month, by region since 2017?*
- 6. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Disability Support, by month, by region since 2017?*
- 7. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Family Violence Support, by month, by region since 2017?*
- 8. What are the total numbers of people approaching MSD by accommodation type for Senior Citizen/Older Persons Support, by month, by region since 2017?*

The list of accommodation types provided as part of our refinement discussion on 15 January 2025 only related to the Public Housing Register, as this had been the scope of your request as per our previous discussions. Those accommodation types are not recorded for recipients of the types of support outlined in questions 2-8 of your request. As such, these parts of your request are refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. If held, this information would only be contained within

individual client files, which would each require manual review in order to respond to your request.

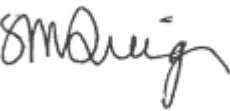
Data relating to these categories can be found in 'Benefit Fact Sheets' on our website here: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/. However, these are not broken down by accommodation type for the reason outlined above.

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
Ministerial and Executive Services