



18 November 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 21 October 2025, requesting the average length of future time on a main benefit for individuals under age 25 who do and do not receive Jobseeker Support.

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.

- *Could you please confirm if the statistic in the screenshot attached is correct? Regarding National Party claiming that people under 25 who go on Jobseeker Support will spend an average of 18 years on a benefit over their lifetime. Please also confirm what the average would be both including and excluding New Zealand Superannuation.*

The statistic referenced in the screenshot is from 2024 modelling conducted by the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry). This estimated that as of 30 September 2023, young people under the age of 25 and supported by Jobseeker Support would spend an average of 18.2 future years supported by a working-age main benefit over their remaining lifetimes to age 65.

The estimate relates to future time on a working-age (18 – 64 years old) main benefit — it does not count time that people have already spent supported by a working-age main benefit. Also, it excludes future time supported by New Zealand Superannuation (NZS). We do not have information available on estimated future time spent supported by NZS, so cannot provide estimates that include this.

In 2025 we updated our modelling to give estimates as of 30 September 2024. The updated modelling estimates that young people under the age of 25 and supported by Jobseeker Support will spend an average of 20.0 future years supported by a working-age main benefit over their remaining lifetimes to age 65. This result is available in Table 4 on page 32 of the 2025 Benefit System Report, which can be downloaded from the Ministry's website at: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/benefit-system/benefit-system-report-2025.html.

- *Also, could you please confirm what the statistic would be for people who did not receive Jobseeker Support while under the age of 25, both including and excluding New Zealand Superannuation.*

Young people who were under the age of 25 and were not supported by Jobseeker Support as of 30 September 2024 are estimated to spend an average of 6.2 future years supported by a working-age main benefit over their remaining lifetimes to age 65.

Note that this estimate includes both young people supported by main benefits, such as Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payment, as well as young people not supported by any benefits.

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