



28 October 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 15 October 2025, requesting information about pregnant women who have been declined emergency housing in the past four years and related policies.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

- 1. The number of pregnant women who have been refused emergency housing in each of the past four years (1 January 2022 – October 15, 2025),*
- 2. A regional breakdown of these figures by MSD region or territorial authority area.*
- 3. Any available information on the reasons for refusal (for example, ineligibility, lack of available accommodation, other).*

This information is not requested as part of assessing an emergency housing need, and if it is held, this information would only be contained within individual client files, which would each require manual review to respond to your request.

As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. 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.

- 4. Any MSD policy or guidance documents currently in force that set out the criteria for assessing emergency housing applications from pregnant women.*

There is no specific policy or guidance about assessing emergency housing applications from people who are pregnant. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

Where Ministry staff are forced to make the difficult decision to decline emergency housing assistance to vulnerable people, including whanau with children, that decision is immediately escalated to a senior regional leader for review.

It seems likely your request follows recent reporting that a woman who was in late pregnancy had been declined emergency housing in the Wairarapa area.

The Ministry of Social Development provided a media response on that matter. It said that no final decision had been made in that case. Our staff have worked closely with this person over a long period of time and that support continues. We have a range of housing assistance and support we can offer in these situations.

Most people who apply for emergency housing receive it. Most people that are not eligible for emergency housing receive some other form of assistance.

We continue to approve applications for emergency housing, and we provide alternative support to most people who are not eligible for emergency housing, such as the Accommodation Supplement or a Housing Support Product.

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