



2 September 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email dated 13 August 2025 in which you requested data showing the number of hardship grants for emergency housing the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) has paid within the last ten years, by regional council area.

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

Please see **Appendix 1** which contains the data you have requested, for the period 1 October 2016 to 31 July 2025.

The Ministry approves hardship grants for emergency housing for periods as short as 3 days and as long as 21 days. A client can have multiple grants in a single period. The data provided is not representative of the number of households, clients, or children who received emergency housing assistance in a calendar year.

I am refusing your request for data for the numbers of hardship grants for emergency housing the Ministry paid between 13 August 2015 and 1 October 2016 under section 18(f) of the Act. If held, this information would be contained within thousands of individual client files, each of which would require manual review by Ministry staff to identify and extract the relevant data. 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 negatively impacted.

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) was introduced on 1 July 2016 to fund temporary accommodation at places such as hostels and motels to meet people's immediate housing needs. Prior to the 2016 December quarter, hardship grants for emergency housing were coded in the Ministry's IT system as 'other emergency grants', which also includes hardship grants for other emergency reasons. The Ministry cannot readily disaggregate emergency housing hardship

payments from other types of assistance granted under the 'other emergency grants' category.

I will publish 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Graham', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services