



27 March 2026

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 27 January 2026, requesting information about data on applications to the Extraordinary Care Fund (ECF) for 2025.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

An individual can apply for the ECF if they are receiving the Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit, and they have additional costs because the child they support is either excelling in an extracurricular activity or experiencing difficulties in development that is impacting their development (eg a child with learning or behavioural challenges). More information about the criteria and the application process is publicly available on the Ministry's Work and Income website:

- Extraordinary Care Fund: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/extraordinary-care-fund.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/extraordinary-care-fund.html)
- Eligibility: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/orphans-benefit-and-unsupported-childs-benefit-products/extraordinary-care-fund/eligibility.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/orphans-benefit-and-unsupported-childs-benefit-products/extraordinary-care-fund/eligibility.html)

In the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025, the Ministry made 1,971 ECF payments. As this is a count of ad-hoc payments, please note that a client can have more than one payment in a period.

To protect confidentiality, the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data. This data has had random rounding to base three applied. The published counts will not differ by more than two counts.

The part of your request that asks for the number of applications to the ECF in the year 2025, and for these to be broken down into categories is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. Where 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.

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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp.



Anna Graham  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**