



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

15 JUL 2016

Dear

On 5 May 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *The number of funeral grant applications received and granted by region, by year, by average amount applied for and paid, from 2010-2015.*

The Ministry provides Funeral Grants to help those who have no other means to meet the costs of a funeral. A Funeral Grant assists people with actual and reasonable funeral costs only and is not designed to cover all funeral expenses. It is income and asset tested and eligibility depends on and takes into consideration whether the deceased person has a surviving partner or dependent child or if the deceased is a child. Further information on the eligibility criteria for a Funeral Grant can be found on Work and Income's website: www.workandincome.govt.nz/individuals/a-z-benefits/funeral-grant.html

In some instances the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) or Veterans Affairs will meet the costs of a funeral. This depends on the circumstances and in these cases a person would be ineligible to receive assistance through Work and Income.

As at 1 April 2016, the maximum amount that Work and Income is able to grant to meet funeral expenses is \$2,008.76. These expenses include any reasonable costs associated with the professional services to prepare the body for cremation or burial such as embalming, the cost of a casket, newspaper notice costs, hearse fees, compulsory fees for the purchase of the burial plot and cremation fees.

Procedures on the payment of Funeral Grants are publicly available on the Work and Income website at: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/manuals-and-procedures/income support/extra help/funeral grant/content.htm](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/manuals-and-procedures/income-support/extra-help/funeral-grant/content.htm)

You will note a decrease in the number of applications received at NZ Super sites between 2014 and 2015. The administration of New Zealand Superannuation clients was moved to Work and Income service centres from February 2015. As a result, reporting by NZ Super sites does not exist from the March 2015 quarter onwards.

Please find attached a table providing the number of funeral grants that were granted and declined, the total number of applications processed and the average and total amounts granted by Work and Income region and year between 2010 and 2015.

I hope you find this information regarding funeral grants helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruth Bound', written in a cursive style.

Ruth Bound
Deputy Chief Executive

Table One: The number of Funeral Grants that were granted and declined, the total number of applications processed and the average and total amounts granted by Work and Income region and year between 2010 and 2015.

Region	Year	Grant	Decline	Total applications processed	Sum of Grants	Average of Grants
Northland	2010	247	32	279	\$431,495.26	\$1,746.94
	2011	213	39	252	\$379,897.08	\$1,783.55
	2012	S	S	150	\$266,577.10	\$1,813.45
	2013	S	S	144	\$254,741.56	\$1,832.67
	2014	115	9	124	\$216,537.16	\$1,882.93
	2015	255	33	288	\$477,674.37	\$1,873.23
Auckland Metro	2010	1,203	223	1,426	\$2,060,676.90	\$1,712.95
	2011	1,153	153	1,306	\$2,033,284.28	\$1,763.47
	2012	1,035	74	1,109	\$1,868,792.00	\$1,805.60
	2013	864	82	946	\$1,572,418.41	\$1,819.93
	2014	796	77	873	\$1,477,900.45	\$1,856.66
	2015	1,167	177	1,344	\$2,185,737.85	\$1,872.95
Waikato	2010	334	47	381	\$543,344.07	\$1,626.78
	2011	398	36	434	\$703,509.75	\$1,767.61
	2012	277	18	295	\$491,420.98	\$1,774.08
	2013	161	13	174	\$288,434.26	\$1,791.52
	2014	168	15	183	\$289,057.88	\$1,720.58
	2015	406	94	500	\$740,550.26	\$1,824.02
Taranaki	2010	195	53	248	\$333,086.54	\$1,708.14
	2011	160	32	192	\$268,424.32	\$1,677.65
	2012	144	12	156	\$256,106.94	\$1,778.52
	2013	106	19	125	\$190,855.62	\$1,800.52
	2014	94	9	103	\$181,173.60	\$1,927.38
	2015	232	63	295	\$433,339.82	\$1,867.84
Bay of Plenty	2010	316	80	396	\$537,843.21	\$1,702.04
	2011	376	67	443	\$671,249.43	\$1,785.24
	2012	277	25	302	\$502,895.89	\$1,815.51
	2013	248	38	286	\$456,345.90	\$1,840.10
	2014	249	25	274	\$459,395.28	\$1,844.96
	2015	531	127	658	\$966,302.75	\$1,819.78
East Coast	2010	291	43	334	\$507,941.50	\$1,745.50
	2011	240	20	260	\$437,893.83	\$1,824.56
	2012	163	10	173	\$301,922.55	\$1,852.29
	2013	157	10	167	\$300,015.42	\$1,910.93
	2014	140	13	153	\$260,985.90	\$1,864.19
	2015	232	57	289	\$438,311.41	\$1,889.27
Central	2010	244	38	282	\$426,158.48	\$1,746.55
	2011	192	20	212	\$343,830.49	\$1,790.78
	2012	126	9	135	\$236,067.03	\$1,873.55
	2013	121	10	131	\$215,754.18	\$1,783.09
	2014	133	12	145	\$248,792.67	\$1,870.62
	2015	301	72	373	\$548,953.86	\$1,823.77

Region	Year	Grant	Decline	Total applications processed	Sum of Grants	Average of Grants
Wellington	2010	327	38	365	\$590,826.73	\$1,806.81
	2011	242	20	262	\$442,681.87	\$1,829.26
	2012	210	16	226	\$396,433.02	\$1,887.78
	2013	177	14	191	\$337,102.92	\$1,904.54
	2014	147	10	157	\$275,624.41	\$1,875.00
	2015	290	35	325	\$552,885.07	\$1,906.50
Nelson	2010	124	19	143	\$214,313.58	\$1,728.34
	2011	117	18	135	\$206,460.51	\$1,764.62
	2012	65	7	72	\$118,280.84	\$1,819.71
	2013	72	6	78	\$136,009.27	\$1,889.02
	2014	5	5	57	\$104,693.15	\$1,938.76
	2015	171	37	208	\$319,670.14	\$1,869.42
Canterbury	2010	277	64	341	\$469,004.86	\$1,693.16
	2011	229	51	280	\$410,571.18	\$1,792.89
	2012	200	25	225	\$370,297.80	\$1,851.49
	2013	160	17	177	\$303,912.01	\$1,899.45
	2014	168	17	185	\$324,360.39	\$1,930.72
	2015	413	188	601	\$778,327.44	\$1,884.57
Southern	2010	187	17	204	\$315,169.34	\$1,685.40
	2011	132	13	145	\$236,749.91	\$1,793.56
	2012	94	9	103	\$169,169.43	\$1,799.67
	2013	105	10	115	\$190,417.83	\$1,813.50
	2014	118	23	141	\$211,100.95	\$1,788.99
	2015	298	81	379	\$548,269.81	\$1,839.83
NZ Super Bay of Plenty	2010	144	69	213	\$236,833.79	\$1,644.68
	2011	186	78	264	\$349,930.63	\$1,881.35
	2012	262	90	352	\$464,697.09	\$1,773.65
	2013	210	97	307	\$378,511.40	\$1,802.44
	2014	264	108	372	\$464,015.39	\$1,757.63
	2015	54	24	78	\$102,743.66	\$1,902.66
NZ Super Central/Hawkes Bay	2010	159	81	240	\$273,528.19	\$1,720.30
	2011	210	81	291	\$376,452.07	\$1,792.63
	2012	284	70	354	\$515,789.19	\$1,816.16
	2013	323	101	424	\$596,468.82	\$1,846.65
	2014	283	108	391	\$521,267.38	\$1,841.93
	2015	38	17	55	\$67,636.08	\$1,779.90
NZ Super Christchurch Metro	2010	216	45	261	\$369,341.54	\$1,709.91
	2011	118	37	155	\$206,373.29	\$1,748.93
	2012	236	88	324	\$427,449.88	\$1,811.23
	2013	213	87	300	\$380,636.11	\$1,787.02
	2014	272	116	388	\$497,378.33	\$1,828.60
	2015	48	14	62	\$84,512.45	\$1,760.68
NZ Super Cntrl/East Akld/Corom	2010	208	68	276	\$365,754.70	\$1,758.44
	2011	328	73	401	\$589,636.72	\$1,797.67
	2012	309	64	373	\$574,714.68	\$1,859.92
	2013	263	118	381	\$476,287.54	\$1,810.98
	2014	238	98	336	\$429,506.78	\$1,804.65
	2015	38	18	56	\$73,095.34	\$1,923.56

Region	Year	Grant	Decline	Total applications processed	Sum of Grants	Average of Grants
NZ Super Lower North Island	2010	153	40	193	\$265,712.21	\$1,736.68
	2011	293	67	360	\$527,593.61	\$1,800.66
	2012	374	55	429	\$703,794.12	\$1,881.80
	2013	297	52	349	\$546,321.70	\$1,839.47
	2014	281	73	354	\$510,807.75	\$1,817.82
	2015	65	10	75	\$114,414.23	\$1,760.22
NZ Super Nelson/Canterbury	2010	51	34	85	\$82,703.96	\$1,621.65
	2011	83	58	141	\$138,668.77	\$1,670.71
	2012	125	38	163	\$207,454.03	\$1,659.63
	2013	149	54	203	\$262,235.00	\$1,759.97
	2014	144	40	184	\$264,607.73	\$1,837.55
	2015	24	11	35	\$44,111.91	\$1,838.00
NZ Super Northland	2010	156	53	209	\$277,905.89	\$1,781.45
	2011	194	64	258	\$340,887.38	\$1,757.15
	2012	230	73	303	\$416,190.01	\$1,809.52
	2013	229	63	292	\$422,658.28	\$1,845.67
	2014	264	79	343	\$491,305.08	\$1,861.00
	2015	50	22	72	\$93,662.45	\$1,873.25
NZ Super South/West/Auckland	2010	296	93	389	\$508,395.91	\$1,717.55
	2011	278	104	382	\$498,621.95	\$1,793.60
	2012	450	83	533	\$837,076.50	\$1,860.17
	2013	362	109	471	\$658,832.72	\$1,819.98
	2014	289	93	382	\$542,306.26	\$1,876.49
	2015	51	15	66	\$89,757.42	\$1,759.95
NZ Super Southern	2010	151	27	178	\$250,217.84	\$1,657.07
	2011	212	38	250	\$376,076.85	\$1,773.95
	2012	207	69	276	\$369,390.14	\$1,784.49
	2013	297	82	379	\$549,954.86	\$1,851.70
	2014	312	85	397	\$577,129.35	\$1,849.77
	2015	52	9	61	\$91,024.59	\$1,750.47
NZ Super Taranaki/Waikato	2010	85	65	150	\$135,581.34	\$1,595.07
	2011	140	73	213	\$229,691.37	\$1,640.65
	2012	189	82	271	\$343,744.69	\$1,818.75
	2013	250	99	349	\$435,831.20	\$1,743.32
	2014	290	88	378	\$515,239.47	\$1,776.69
	2015	46	18	64	\$83,551.48	\$1,816.34
Other	2010	14	8	22	\$24,377.29	\$1,741.24
	2011	18	8	26	\$32,307.99	\$1,794.89
	2012	S	S	57	\$32,811.62	\$1,562.46
	2013	S	S	112	\$136,017.89	\$1,789.71
	2014	S	S	124	\$174,892.52	\$1,803.02
	2015	53	11	64	\$101,639.28	\$1,917.72
Total	2010	5,378	1,237	6,615	\$9,220,213.13	\$1,714.43
	2011	5,512	1,150	6,662	\$9,800,793.28	\$1,778.08
	2012	5,425	956	6,381	\$9,871,075.53	\$1,819.55
	2013	4,979	1,122	6,101	\$9,089,762.90	\$1,825.62
	2014	4,916	1,128	6,044	\$9,038,077.88	\$1,838.50
	2015	4,815	1,133	5,948	\$8,936,171.67	\$1,855.90

Note:

'S' represents a suppressed cell to protect clients' privacy

This represents a count of grants approved/declined and not the number of clients as the same person may have been declined a funeral grant more than once during this period.

Funeral Grants includes Funeral Grant - Married, Funeral Grant - Single, and Funeral Grant - Child

The Funeral Grant is generally recorded against the deceased person. A Funeral Grant application type 'Married' generally indicates the application was lodged by the spouse of the deceased. Grants are usually paid directly to the funeral home.

Administration of New Zealand Superannuation was moved to Work and Income service centres in February 2015. As a result, reporting by NZ Super sites is not possible from the March 2015 quarter onwards.