



21 JUN 2016



Dear

On 3 May 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

1. *The number of beneficiaries who received advance payments of benefits in the following areas each calendar year for the past three calendar years.*
 - *Northland*
 - *Rotorua*
 - *Bay of Plenty*
 - *Hawke's Bay*
 - *Wairarapa*
 - *Whanganui*
 - *New Zealand-wide*
2. *The total value of those advance payments in each area each year.*
3. *The three most common reasons for receiving an advance payment in each separate area last calendar year.*
4. *The number of beneficiaries who requested advance payments of benefits in each of the same areas.*
5. *The most common reason requests were unsuccessful in each area last calendar year.*

The Ministry of Social Development through Work and Income may provide an Advance Payment of Benefit to people receiving a benefit who have an immediate need for essential items such as food, health costs (including medical and dental costs), power and other costs. To qualify for an Advance Payment of Benefit, applicants must meet qualifying criteria and applications may be granted or declined depending on whether they meet this criteria. For further information on the criteria for an Advance Payment of Benefit please see the link below:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/advance-payment-of-benefit/qualifications.html

Please find attached a series of tables in response to your request for information.

Tables one to three provide the number of grants, declines and applications processed for Advance Payments of Benefit for the three calendar years from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2015, broken down by region. Please note that data can only be broken down to a regional level, and as such your request for data specifically relating to Rotorua, Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa and Whanganui is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act as this information is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. The greater public interest is in

the effective and efficient administration of the public service. However, data relating to those locations is included in the relevant regional data. Further, all regions nation-wide have been included, as well as total national figures, to provide you with context for this data.

Table four provides the number of Advance Payments of Benefit granted and declined, by top three Advance types, by region from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015.

Table five provides the number of Advance Payments of Benefit declined, by reason for decline, by region from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015. You will note that the reason for a decline will be different to the type of Advance applied for. For example, an application for an Advance for school education costs may be declined because the need can be met in another way. The Ministry works with clients to help them manage their finances, and this may include negotiating payment of accounts by instalments.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the wider public after ten working days. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

I hope you find this information 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



Ruth Bound
Deputy Chief Executive Service Delivery

Table One: The number of grants, declines and applications processed for Advance Payments of Benefit from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013

Region	Declined	Number of grants	Amount granted	Applications processed
Auckland Metro	7,733	97,546	\$40,193,732.57	105,279
Bay of Plenty	4,657	22,704	\$9,787,498.75	27,361
Canterbury	2,555	15,955	\$6,610,588.31	18,510
Central	1,481	19,805	\$7,971,537.89	21,286
East Coast	1,637	19,480	\$7,996,928.42	21,117
Nelson	738	9,596	\$3,843,107.95	10,334
Northland	1,018	21,167	\$8,702,657.31	22,185
Southern	980	16,059	\$5,795,704.14	17,039
Taranaki	1,629	14,554	\$5,583,371.00	16,183
Waikato	2,561	23,980	\$9,752,709.89	26,541
Wellington	1,742	22,997	\$8,815,760.44	24,739
Other	1,751	22,775	\$11,796,235.57	24,526
Total (national)	28,482	306,618	\$126,849,832.24	335,100

Note:

"Other" refers to those service centres that do not represent a geographic location such as Contact Centres. This is a count of applications granted and declined, not clients. Clients may be counted twice in a period.

Table Two: The number of grants, declines and applications processed for Advance Payments of Benefit from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014

Region	Declined	Number of grants	Amount granted	Applications processed
Auckland Metro	5,984	94,134	\$39,452,114.62	100,118
Bay of Plenty	3,640	23,914	\$9,753,451.75	27,554
Canterbury	1,842	15,016	\$6,259,106.08	16,858
Central	1,221	19,690	\$7,864,202.04	20,911
East Coast	1,346	18,440	\$7,461,160.04	19,786
Nelson	547	9,593	\$3,768,960.07	10,140
Northland	777	21,216	\$8,308,205.09	21,993
Southern	710	15,582	\$5,388,477.75	16,292
Taranaki	931	16,039	\$6,053,825.89	16,970
Waikato	1,985	24,949	\$9,951,959.07	26,934
Wellington	1,450	22,218	\$8,108,422.49	23,668
Other	1,899	34,053	\$14,564,283.20	35,952
Total (national)	22,332	314,844	\$126,934,168.09	337,176

Note:

"Other" refers to those service centres that do not represent a geographic location such as Contact Centres. This is a count of applications granted and declined, not clients. Clients may be counted twice in a period.

Table Three: The number of grants, declines and applications processed for Advance Payments of Benefit from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015

Region	Declined	Number of grants	Amount granted	Applications processed
Auckland Metro	4,976	96,546	\$42,928,421.99	101,522
Bay of Plenty	3,064	24,674	\$9,982,334.67	27,738
Canterbury	1,785	16,658	\$7,562,262.50	18,443
Central	1,173	19,811	\$8,048,367.45	20,984
East Coast	1,058	18,936	\$7,619,591.54	19,994
Nelson	487	9,933	\$3,925,399.55	10,420
Northland	765	21,242	\$8,550,352.89	22,007
Southern	708	15,406	\$5,522,872.31	16,114
Taranaki	724	17,795	\$6,824,776.68	18,519
Waikato	1,464	27,215	\$11,105,865.30	28,679
Wellington	1,104	22,240	\$8,521,590.06	23,344
Other	879	22,878	\$7,164,429.84	23,757
Total (national)	18,187	313,334	\$127,756,264.78	331,521

Note:

"Other" refers to those service centres that do not represent a geographic location such as Contact Centres. This is a count of applications granted and declined, not clients. Clients may be counted twice in a period.

Table Four: The number of Advance Payments of Benefit granted and declined, by top three Advance types, by region from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015

Region	Reason Code	Grants	Declines
Auckland Metro	Medical and associated costs	7,559	202
	School education costs	13,241	4,443
	Other emergency situations	73,645	159
	All other needs granted	2,101	172
Bay of Plenty	Medical and associated costs	2,346	80
	School education costs	1,786	2,858
	Other emergency situations	20,089	56
	All other needs granted	453	70
Canterbury	Medical and associated costs	1,830	66
	School education costs	941	125
	Other emergency situations	13,492	1,555
	All other needs granted	395	39
Central	Medical and associated costs	1,838	40
	School education costs	845	1,096
	Other emergency situations	16,731	22
	All other needs granted	397	15
East Coast	Medical and associated costs	1,430	36
	School education costs	1,279	984
	Other emergency situations	15,945	19
	All other needs granted	282	19
Nelson	Medical and associated costs	981	28
	School education costs	466	440
	Other emergency situations	8,292	9
	All other needs granted	194	10
Northland	Medical and associated costs	1,364	26
	School education costs	1,635	693
	Other emergency situations	17,762	19
	All other needs granted	481	27
Southern	Medical and associated costs	1,427	32
	School education costs	810	654
	Other emergency situations	12,712	12
	All other needs granted	457	10
Taranaki	Medical and associated costs	1,538	45
	School education costs	1,689	644
	Other emergency situations	14,188	13
	All other needs granted	380	22
Waikato	Medical and associated costs	2,376	68
	School education costs	1,435	28
	Other emergency situations	22,948	1,330

Region	Reason Code	Grants	Declines
	All other needs granted	456	38
Wellington	Medical and associated costs	2,178	39
	School education costs	997	24
	Other emergency situations	18,387	1,002
	All other needs granted	678	39
Other	Medical and associated costs	1,677	62
	School education costs	531	16
	Other emergency situations	20,373	782
	All other needs granted	297	19
National	Medical and associated costs	26,544	724
	School education costs	25,655	456
	Other emergency situations	254,564	16,481
	All other needs granted	6,571	526
Total		313,334	18,187

Notes:

"Other" refers to those service centres that do not represent a geographic location such as Contact Centres. This is a count of applications granted and declined, not clients. Clients may be counted twice in a period.

Table Five: The number of Advance Payments of Benefit declined, by reason for decline, by region from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015

Region	Reason for decline	Declines
Auckland Metro	Cash assets/Income exceed limit	451
	Need can be met in another way	920
	Not a qualifying need	439
	All other reasons declined	3,166
Bay of Plenty	Need can be met in another way	619
	Not an economic purchase	305
	Not an emergency situation	315
	All other reasons declined	1,825
Canterbury	Need can be met in another way	219
	Not an emergency situation	183
	All other reasons declined	1,156
	Outstanding balance exceeds 6 week limit	227
Central	Circumstances could have been reasonably foreseen	122
	Need can be met in another way	222
	Not an emergency situation	149
	All other reasons declined	680
East Coast	Circumstances could have been reasonably foreseen	121
	Need can be met in another way	206
	Not an economic purchase	118
	All other reasons declined	613
Nelson	Cash assets/Income exceed limit	56
	Circumstances could have been reasonably foreseen	62
	Not an emergency situation	59
	All other reasons declined	310
Northland	Need can be met in another way	113
	Not a qualifying need	69
	Not an economic purchase	90
	All other reasons declined	493
Southern	Circumstances could have been reasonably foreseen	84
	Need can be met in another way	130
	Not a qualifying need	68
	All other reasons declined	426
Taranaki	Need can be met in another way	102
	Not a qualifying need	80
	Not an economic purchase	89
	All other reasons declined	453
Waikato	Circumstances could have been reasonably foreseen	143
	Need can be met in another way	227
	Not an emergency situation	133
	All other reasons declined	961

Region	Reason for decline	Declines
Wellington	Circumstances could have been reasonably foreseen	97
	Need can be met in another way	159
	Not an essential need	114
	All other reasons declined	734
Other	Cash assets/Income exceed limit	129
	Need can be met in another way	93
	Not a qualifying need	72
	All other reasons declined	585
National	Need can be met in another way	3,061
	Not an emergency situation	1,558
	Not an economic purchase	1,494
	All other reasons declined	12,074
Total		18,187

Notes:

"Other" refers to those service centres that do not represent a geographic location such as Contact Centres. This is a count of applications granted and declined, not clients. Clients may be counted twice in a period.