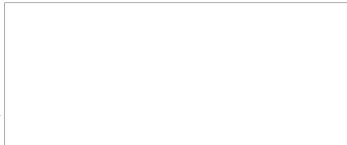




**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

18 OCT 2016



Dear

On 2 September 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Details of how many applications for funeral grants have been received in the last four years, broken down by year?*
- *How many claims were accepted – and what was the average grant?*
- *How many fell into each category: single person (16-17 y/o and 18 yo +), in a marriage/relationship, sole parent one child, sole parent, two or more children?*
- *What was the total amount paid out in each year?*

On 7 September 2016, you were contacted by a Ministry official via a phone call and advised that the Ministry is unable to provide you with the information you have requested broken down into the categories outlined above. However, the Ministry is able to provide you with the information broken down by the categories outlined in the enclosed tables.

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](http://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 2015, 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)

Please find enclosed three tables that will provide you with the number of funeral applications processed from January 2012 to June 2016 broken down by category, percentage and the total amount paid for each category.

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 and attached tables available to the wider public after ten working days. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments 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.

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).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Ruth Bound  
**Deputy Chief Executive, Service Delivery**

**Table one: Number of Funeral Grant applications processed (granted and declined) in the calendar years 2012 to 2015 and up to June 2016, broken down by deceased persons who were either married, single or a child.**

Year	Total Applications Processed				Granted				Declined			
	Married	Single	Child	Total Processed	Married	Single	Child	Total Granted	Married	Single	Child	Total Declined
2012	2,202	3,824	355	6,381	1,711	3,392	322	5,425	491	432	33	956
2013	2,222	3,574	305	6,101	1,659	3,049	271	4,979	563	525	34	1,122
2014	2,170	3,610	264	6,044	1,583	3,096	237	4,916	587	514	27	1,128
2015	2,128	3,578	242	5,948	1,562	3,035	218	4,815	566	543	24	1,133
2016 (to June)	999	1,601	104	2,704	699	1,321	96	2,116	300	280	8	588

**Notes:**

- This table represents a count of applications (granted or declined), and may include applications from more than one person for the deceased.

**Table two: Percentage of funeral grants to applications processed (granted and declined) in the calendar years 2012 to 2015 and up to June 2016, broken down by deceased persons who were either married, single or a child.**

Year	Percentage of grants to applications processed			
	Married	Single	Child	Total Processed
2012	78%	89%	91%	85%
2013	75%	85%	89%	82%
2014	73%	86%	90%	81%
2015	73%	85%	90%	81%
2016 (to June)	70%	83%	92%	78%

**Table three: Amount paid for Funeral Grants in the calendar years 2012 to 2015 and up to June 2016, broken down by deceased persons who were either married, single or a child.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Married</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>Child</b>	<b>Total</b>
2012	\$3,176,405.91	\$6,257,005.53	\$437,664.09	<b>\$9,871,075.53</b>
2013	\$3,065,565.61	\$5,662,022.59	\$362,174.70	<b>\$9,089,762.90</b>
2014	\$2,947,988.92	\$5,777,732.61	\$312,356.35	<b>\$9,038,077.88</b>
2015	\$2,932,187.39	\$5,691,620.12	\$312,364.16	<b>\$8,936,171.67</b>
2016 (to June)	\$1,304,286.21	\$2,497,297.38	\$139,780.65	<b>\$3,941,364.24</b>