



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

- 3 JUL 2017

Dear

On 2 June 2017 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information regarding sole parents in receipt of main benefits and child support payments transferred between Inland Revenue and the Ministry.

As per correspondence from 16 June 2017, eleven of your fourteen questions were transferred to Inland Revenue. For clarity your three remaining questions are addressed in turn.

- *In the past 12 months what was the total monetary amount paid out to sole parents in the form of a main benefit?*

I am unable to provide you with this information as it is held in notes on individual case files. Sole parents may move between multiple benefits and in order to collate the total of all main benefits paid sole parents Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. As such I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service. However, information regarding the total monetary amount paid to sole parents in the form of a Sole Parent Support is publicly available under the Appropriation on page 140 of the Ministry of Social Development Annual report which is available at: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications/resources/corporate/annual-report/2015-2016/annual-report-2015-2016.pdf.

- *What is this number as a proportion of sole parents receiving main benefit payments from W&I.*

This question has been interpreted as the proportion of sole parents who have their benefit payments offset by child support payments which are paid to Inland Revenue and then transferred to Work and Income. This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982. The information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation. However, the Ministry publishes data about sole parents on its website at: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/

- *Based on data MSD has access to, in the past 12 months what proportion of sole parents were not receiving a W&I main benefit? Please break this down by age, gender, and ethnicity.*

While the Ministry records and reports on the number of people in receipt of a benefit, it is not able to report the number of sole parents who are not in receipt of a

benefit or have not applied. Your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

The Statistics New Zealand website holds information from the 2013 Census regarding households with sole parents which you may find helpful, This is available at: www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/qstats-families-households.aspx

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 any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. 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.

If you wish to discuss this response regarding section 70A of the Social Security Act with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, 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.

Yours sincerely



Elisabeth Brunt
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