

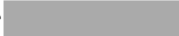


**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

14 SEP 2018



Dear 

On 12 June 2018, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information on Special needs grants for food, 70A sanctions and documents on food grants.

For clarity each of your questions is addressed in turn below:

- *The number of people that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months. If possible, by age, gender and/or ethnicity.*
- *The number of people that have been denied food grants in the last 12 months. If possible, by age, gender and/or ethnicity.*

Please find enclosed Table One outlining the number of applications, grants and declines for Special Needs Grants (SNGs) for food for the past 12 months ending March 2018, broken down by gender, ethnicity, and age group.

- *A regional breakdown of people that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months. If possible, by ethnicity, age and gender.*

Please find enclosed Table Two outlining the number of applications for SNGs for food for the past 12 months ending March 2018, broken down by gender, ethnicity, age group, and region.

- *The number of women that have applied for food grants that are in current receipt of the sole parent benefit in the last 12 months. If possible, by age and ethnicity.*
- *The number of women that have been granted food grants that are in current receipt of the sole parent benefit in the last 12 months. If possible, by age and ethnicity.*

Please find enclosed Table Three outlining the number of applications, grants and declines for SNGs for food applied for by female clients on sole parent benefits for the past 12 months ending March 2018, broken down by ethnicity and age group.

- *The number of women with a 70A sanction against them, by age and ethnicity if possible.*

Please find enclosed Table Four outlining the number of female clients as at the end of March 2018 with a Section 70A deduction in place.

Section 70A of the Social Security Act requires the Ministry to reduce a client's benefit if a client fails or refuses to apply for Child Support for each dependent child, fails or refuses to identify the paying parent(s) in law of each dependent child or fails or refuses to attend a departure or appeal hearing and give evidence against paying parent(s) in accordance with section 122 Child Support Act 1991. They may qualify for an exemption to the reduction.

Further information on applying section 70A reductions can be found here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/child-support/applying-section-70a-reductions.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/child-support/applying-section-70a-reductions.html).

- *The number of women that have applied for food grants that have a 70A sanction against them, in the last 12 months. If possible, by age and ethnicity.*

Please find enclosed Table Five outlining the number of applications, grants and declines for SNGs for food applied for from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 by female clients subject to a section 70A reduction, broken down by ethnicity, age group, and benefit type.

- *The number of 16-17 year olds that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months that live in Auckland. If possibly by ethnicity and gender.*

Please find enclosed Table Six outlining the number of applications grants and declines for SNGs for food applied for by clients aged 16 to 17 years old in the Auckland region for the past 12 months ending March 2018, broken down by gender and ethnicity.

- *Known family status of women that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months. (ie, family, size of family/household.) If possible, by age.*
- *Known relationship status of women that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months. If possible, by age.*
- *Known number of children that women whom have applied for food grants in the last 12 months have in their care. If possible, by age of the women and ethnicity.*

It is not a requirement to be receiving a benefit to qualify for a SNG for food. As such the Ministry cannot fully report on the family status, relationship status or number of children of all women who have applied for SNGs for food because this information is not collected for every SNG. As such I am refusing your requests for this information under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as the information 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.

This information may be held for those who are already clients but is not held in a reportable manner. As such, I am unable to provide you with this information as if it is held it 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. As such I also refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. 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.

- *Documents and/or a breakdown of the known kinds of housing of women that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months (ie emergency housing, private rentals, State homes). If possible by age and ethnicity.*

The Ministry has not created any documents relating to the known kinds of housing that women who have applied for SNGs for food reside in. As such your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as this information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

The Ministry is unable to provide a breakdown of the known kinds of housing of women who have applied for SNGs for food 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. As such I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. 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.

- *The number of people that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months that are known to be students. If possible, by age and gender and ethnicity.*
- *Breakdown of the known kinds of service quotes women have brought to access emergency grants in the last 12 months. If possible, by age, ethnicity and gender.*

To provide you with the number of people that have applied for food grants in the last 12 months that are known to be students, the Ministry would need to undertake significant data matching between different databases that hold information relating to SNGs and student loans and divert personnel from their core duties and allocate extra time to complete this task. The diversion of these resources would impair the Ministry's ability to continue standard operations and would be an inefficient use of the Ministry's resources.

Clients may be required to provide quotes when applying for emergency assistance to verify the amount required to meet their immediate need. This could be for any number of items or services depending on their particular need. As an example, the following links provide a list of the various payment categories which a client may be required to provide a quote for: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/emergency-needs-01.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/emergency-needs-01.html) and [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/recoverable-assistance-payment/payment-categories-01.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/recoverable-assistance-payment/payment-categories-01.html) I am unable to provide you with this information as the types of service quotes which have been requested are 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.

As such, your requests are refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act, as they require substantial collation. 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 requests 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.

- *Documents relating to the known kinds of costs women are having to meet that means they need to access food grants, from the last 12 months.*
- *Documents relating to noticed trends in the age or ethnicity or gender of people accessing food grants and/or emergency grants, from the last 12 months.*

No documents specifically relating to the known kinds of costs women are having to meet that means they need to access food grants or the noticed trends in the age or ethnicity or gender of people accessing food grants and/or emergency grants have been created. As such, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as this information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

However, the Ministry examines data and trends in relation to the volume of hardship. The Ministry provides quarterly statistics on the data publically through the Benefit Fact Sheets and analyses how hardship affects clients so the Ministry can respond to these needs as people ask for assistance. Please find attached the Benefit Fact Sheets for the June 2018 quarter. The Ministry does not track the reasons for which people apply for hardship assistance in a way that allows us to report this without substantial manual collation. However the Ministry does note that housing costs are a significant cost to people in receipt of a benefit.

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 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).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding food grants, 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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kay Read', with a long, sweeping underline.

Kay Read  
**Group General Manager Client Service Delivery**

**Notes for tables one to six:**

- SNG is Special Needs Grants
- This data represents a count of grants not individuals as the same client may have been granted an SNG more than once.
- It cannot be assumed that the ethnicity classification used to construct these tables necessarily aligns neatly with the current Statistics New Zealand classification of ethnicity. Ethnicity details recorded in MSD's systems have been gathered under a variety of classification schemes as clients came into contact with the Ministry.
- Some numbers are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

**Table One: The number of applications for SNGs for food from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 by gender, ethnic group, and age group**

		<b>Decline</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gender	<b>Female</b>	11,718	333,111	<b>344,829</b>
	<b>Male</b>	8,123	185,212	<b>193,335</b>
	<b>Unspecified</b>	5	1	<b>6</b>
<hr/>				
Ethnic Group	<b>Maori</b>	10,260	248,055	<b>258,315</b>
	<b>Pacific Island</b>	2,621	54,990	<b>57,611</b>
	<b>NZ European</b>	5,089	156,578	<b>161,667</b>
	<b>Other</b>	1,499	47,106	<b>48,605</b>
	<b>Unspecified</b>	377	11,595	<b>11,972</b>
<hr/>				
Age Group	<b>&lt; 16</b>	0	S	<b>S</b>
	<b>16</b>	S	S	<b>353</b>
	<b>17</b>	104	936	<b>1,040</b>
	<b>18-19</b>	698	14,959	<b>15,657</b>
	<b>20-24</b>	2,728	69,729	<b>72,457</b>
	<b>25-29</b>	3,367	86,500	<b>89,867</b>
	<b>30-34</b>	2,920	73,035	<b>75,955</b>
	<b>35-39</b>	2,481	60,794	<b>63,275</b>
	<b>40-44</b>	1,987	51,883	<b>53,870</b>
	<b>45-49</b>	1,933	50,015	<b>51,948</b>
	<b>50-54</b>	1,565	40,505	<b>42,070</b>
	<b>55-59</b>	1,035	31,138	<b>32,173</b>
	<b>60-64</b>	662	21,826	<b>22,488</b>
	<b>65+</b>	340	16,671	<b>17,011</b>
<b>Unspecified</b>	S	S	<b>S</b>	
<hr/>				
<b>Total applications</b>		<b>19,846</b>	<b>518,324</b>	<b>538,170</b>

**Table Two: The number of applications for SNGs for food from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 by gender, ethnic group, age group, and region (Northland to East Coast. The table is continued on the next page with all other regions)**

	Region						
	Northland	Auckland Metro	Waikato	Taranaki	Bay of Plenty	East Coast	
Gender	Female	11,802	79,687	16,923	6,831	16,259	10,959
	Male	6,648	45,729	9,036	4,693	8,846	6,767
	Unspecified	0	2	1	0	0	0
Ethnic Group	Maori	13,762	58,222	15,347	6,348	17,512	11,860
	Pacific Island	380	28,133	761	194	726	574
	NZ European	3,335	21,627	7,036	4,169	5,202	4,061
	Other	699	14,532	2,317	578	1,144	860
	Unspecified	274	2,904	499	235	521	371
Age Group	< 16	0	0	0	0	0	0
	16	S	42	6	S	8	10
	17	S	84	17	S	14	16
	18-19	397	2,797	671	333	660	513
	20-24	2,030	14,525	3,543	1,511	3,233	2,375
	25-29	2,751	19,789	4,300	1,936	4,155	2,943
	30-34	2,429	17,618	3,671	1,697	3,728	2,515
	35-39	2,027	15,806	3,179	1,312	3,182	2,133
	40-44	1,946	13,499	2,621	1,230	2,649	1,920
	45-49	2,000	13,354	2,758	1,022	2,483	1,715
	50-54	1,706	10,681	1,913	899	2,180	1,362
	55-59	1,466	7,887	1,396	720	1,411	1,049
	60-64	879	5,391	1,079	535	948	703
	65+	813	3,943	805	321	454	472
	Unspecified	0	2	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,450</b>	<b>18,450</b>	<b>125,418</b>	<b>25,960</b>	<b>11,524</b>	<b>25,105</b>	

**Table Two: The number of applications for SNGs for food from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 by gender, ethnic group, age group, and region (continued)**

	Region							Total
	Central	Wellington	Nelson	Canterbury	Southern	Other		
Gender	Female	11,320	14,779	5,708	8,857	11,894	149,810	344,829
	Male	6,702	10,486	3,834	6,304	7,873	76,417	193,335
	Unspecified	0	0	0	2	0	1	6
Ethnic Group	Maori	8,032	10,180	2,791	4,122	5,273	104,866	258,315
	Pacific Island	539	3,509	209	590	627	21,369	57,611
	NZ European	7,699	7,151	5,345	8,566	11,944	75,532	161,667
	Other	1,425	3,691	942	1,450	1,487	19,480	48,605
	Unspecified	327	734	255	435	436	4,981	11,972
Age Group	< 16	0	0	0	0	0	0	S
	16	S	S	S	S	0	276	353
	17	S	S	S	S	S	859	1,040
	18-19	446	663	279	498	554	7,846	15,657
	20-24	2,437	3,206	1,294	1,972	2,748	33,583	72,457
	25-29	3,081	3,747	1,457	2,318	3,578	39,812	89,867
	30-34	2,465	3,442	1,299	2,075	2,730	32,286	75,955
	35-39	2,102	3,065	1,039	1,732	2,462	25,236	63,275
	40-44	1,793	2,738	1,029	1,489	1,900	21,056	53,870
	45-49	1,810	2,495	1,023	1,658	1,844	19,786	51,948
	50-54	1,421	2,153	798	1,191	1,462	16,304	42,070
	55-59	1,137	1,594	635	949	1,137	12,792	32,173
	60-64	793	1,198	395	643	829	9,095	22,488
	65+	531	950	284	S	S	7,296	17,011
	Unspecified	0	0	0	S	0	0	S
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,022</b>	<b>25,265</b>	<b>9,542</b>	<b>15,163</b>	<b>19,767</b>	<b>226,228</b>	<b>538,170</b>	

**Notes:**

- Grants included in the "other" region are those which have been processed through centralised services such as call centres and MyMSD.



**Table Three: The number of applications for SNGs for food from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 by female clients on Sole Parent Support by ethnic group, and age group**

		Decline	Grant	Total
Ethnic Group	Maori	1,874	67,124	68,998
	Pacific Island	477	13,885	14,362
	NZ European	506	31,889	32,395
	Other	157	8,552	8,709
	Unspecified	37	1,744	1,781
Age Group	18-19	S	S	S
	20-24	565	22,656	23,221
	25-29	835	34,022	34,857
	30-34	707	26,245	26,952
	35-39	455	17,885	18,340
	40-44	242	11,772	12,014
	45-49	172	7,069	7,241
	50-54	48	2,501	2,549
	55-59	20	686	706
	60-64	S	S	225
	65+	0	S	S
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,051</b>	<b>123,194</b>	<b>126,245</b>

**Notes:**

- Sole parent benefits here consists of Sole Parent Support clients only.

**Table Four: The number of current female clients as at the end of March 2018 with a Section 70A reduction in place.**

		Count of clients
Ethnic Group	Maori	6,507
	Pacific Island	1,600
	NZ European	3,077
	Other	917
	Unspecified	271
Age Group	17-19	45
	20-24	2,219
	25-29	3,203
	30-34	2,536
	35-39	1,863
	40-44	1,263
	45-49	769
	50-54	305
	55-59	130
	60 +	39
<b>Total count of clients</b>		<b>12,372</b>

**Table Five: The number of applications for SNGs for food from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 by female clients subject to a Section 70A reduction broken down by ethnic group, benefit group, and age group.**

		Decline	Grant	Total
Ethnic Group	Maori	495	17,091	17,586
	Pacific Island	132	3,472	3,604
	NZ European	108	5,955	6,063
	Other	26	1,381	1,407
	Unspecified	10	405	415
Age Group	17	S	S	S
	18-19	S	S	S
	20-24	131	5,226	5,357
	25-29	202	7,763	7,965
	30-34	201	6,347	6,548
	35-39	136	4,293	4,429
	40-44	58	2,636	2,694
	45-49	26	1,343	1,369
	50-54	10	442	452
	55-59	S	S	149
	60-64	0	32	32
Benefit Group	Emergency benefit	S	S	14
	Emergency Maintenance Allowance	S	S	130
	Jobseeker Support related	68	2,310	2,378
	Supported Living Payment related	29	749	778
	Sole Parent Support	666	25,063	25,729
	Youth Payment/Young Parent Payment	S	S	46
<b>Total</b>		<b>771</b>	<b>28,304</b>	<b>29,075</b>

**Table Six: The number of applications for SNGs for food from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 by clients aged 16 - 17 in the Auckland Region broken down by gender and ethnicity**

		Decline	Grant	Total
Gender	Female	6	71	77
	Male	S	S	49
Ethnic Group	Maori	S	S	53
	Pacific Island	S	S	S
	NZ European	S	S	14
	Other	0	S	S
	Unspecified	S	S	43
<b>Total</b>		<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>126</b>



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MAHATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA



**Ministry of Social Development**

# **Benefit Fact Sheets**

**June 2018 Quarter**

The Benefit Fact Sheets provide a high-level view of trends in benefit receipt. The Benefit Fact Sheets are published quarterly and contains information on the benefit support provided by the Ministry.

**New Zealand Government**

# In the Benefit Fact Sheets

## Benefit Fact Sheets

Benefit Fact Sheets overview	2
<b>Main benefit assistance</b>	
Main benefit assistance overview	3
Jobseeker Support (JS)	3
Sole Parent Support (SPS)	4
Supported Living Payment (SLP)	4
<b>Supplementary benefit assistance</b>	
Accommodation Supplement (AS)	5
Disability Allowance (DA)	5
Temporary Additional Support/Special Benefit (TAS/SPB)	5
<b>Hardship assistance</b>	
Hardship assistance overview	6
Special Needs Grants (SNG)	7
Benefit Advances (ADV)	7
<b>Grants and cancellations</b>	
Grants	8
Cancellations	8
<b>Benefit sanctions</b>	
Benefit sanctions	9

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Published July 2018  
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## Key facts

There are **277,410 working age people in receipt of a main benefit** as at the end of June 2018. This is **more** than a year ago. Despite this increase, **benefit numbers as a proportion of the working age population decreased** relative to June 2017.

There are **under 60,000 people** receiving **Sole Parent Support**, with **58,558** working age people, or **2.0 percent** of the working age population as at the end of June 2018.

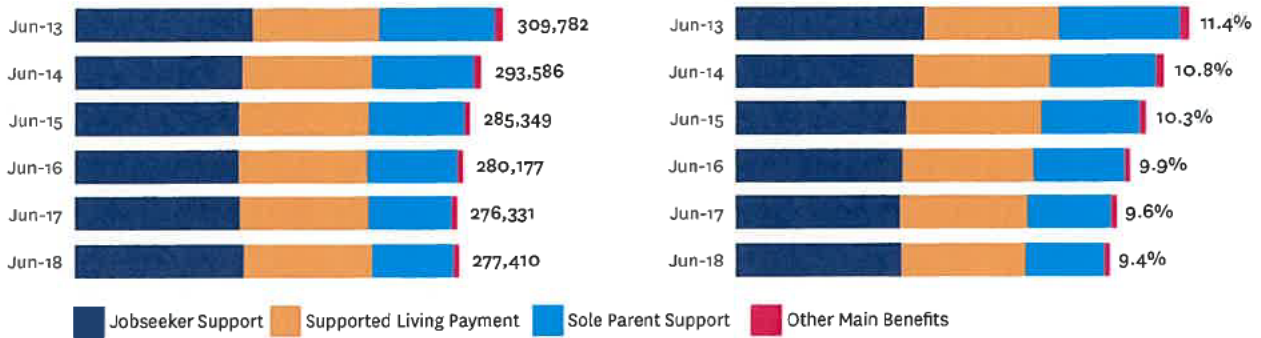
Due to the Families Package, the number of people receiving **Temporary Additional Support or Special Benefit** has decreased. **60,945 people** are receiving this assistance as at the end of June 2018, a **decrease** from **67,317** a year ago.

**321,244 hardship assistance grants** were made over the June 2018 quarter. These were worth **\$88.1 million**. This is an increase from the June 2017 quarter.



# Benefit Fact Sheets

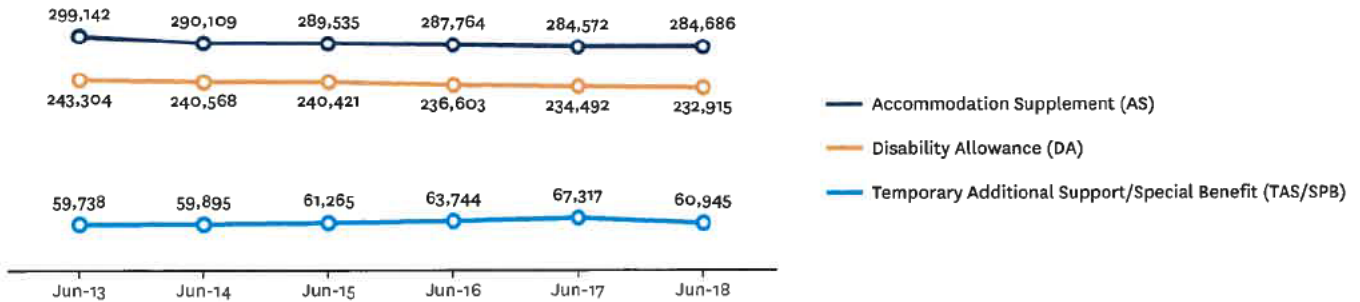
## Main benefits



There are **277,410 working age people in receipt of a main benefit** as at the end of June 2018. This is **more** than a year ago. Despite this increase, **benefit numbers as a proportion of the working age population decreased** relative to June 2017.

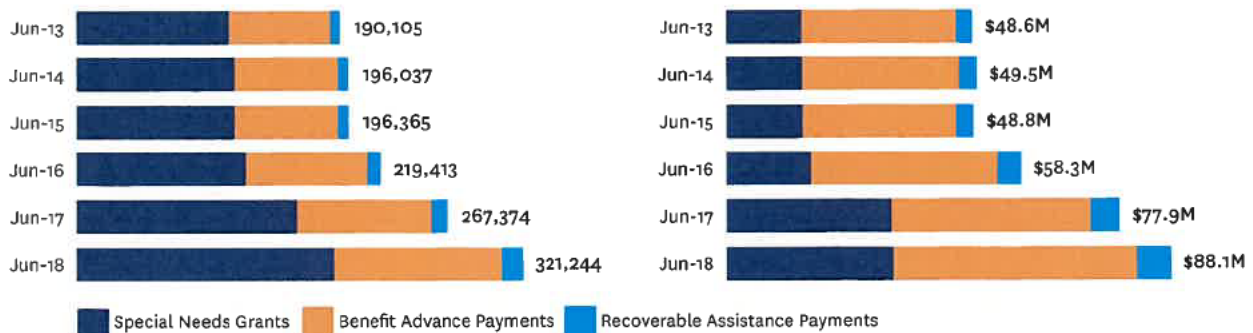
Additionally, there are **under 60,000 people** receiving **Sole Parent Support**, with **58,558** working age people, or **2.0 percent** of the working age population as at the end of June 2018.

## Supplementary benefits



Due to the Families Package, the number of people receiving **Temporary Additional Support or Special Benefit** has decreased. **60,945 people** are receiving this assistance as at the end of June 2018, a **decrease** from **67,317** a year ago.

## Hardship assistance



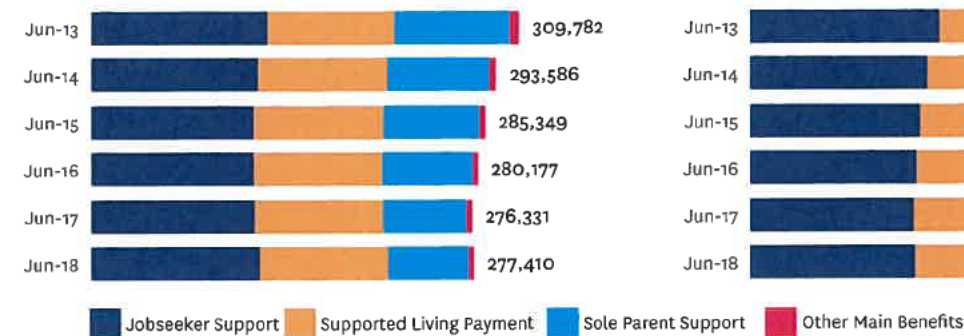
**321,244 hardship assistance grants** were made over the June 2018 quarter. These were worth **\$88.1 million**. This is an increase from the June 2017 quarter.

# Main benefit assistance

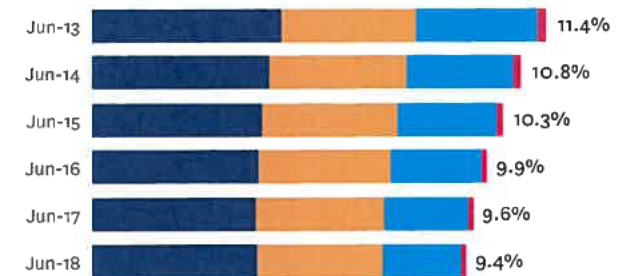
The number of working age people receiving main benefits as at the end of June 2018 was higher than as at the end of June 2017. Despite this, benefit numbers as a proportion of the working age population decreased relative to June 2017.

Main working age benefits include: Jobseeker Support (JS), Sole Parent Support (SPS), Supported Living Payment (SLP), Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment (YP/YPP), Emergency Benefit (EB), Emergency Maintenance Allowance (EMA), Jobseeker Support Student Hardship (JSSH), Widow's Benefit Overseas (WBO), and Sole Parent Support Overseas (SPSO).

**Figure 1a: Number of working age people receiving main benefits, broken down by main benefit type**



**Figure 1b: Proportion of working age population receiving main benefits, broken down by main benefit type**



**277,410** – working age people receiving a main benefit at the end of June 2018  
(276,331 – end of June 2017)

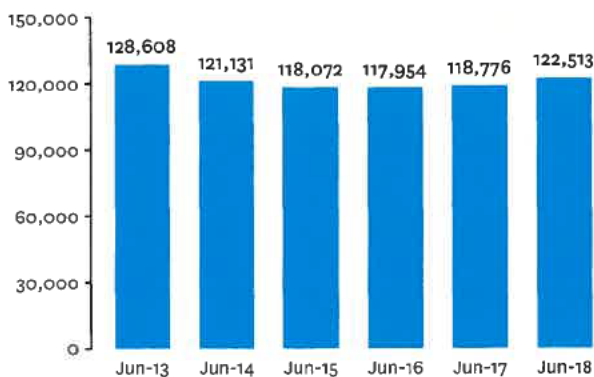
**9.4 percent** – of the working age population receiving a main benefit at the end of June 2018  
(9.6 percent – end of June 2017)

## Jobseeker Support (JS)

The number of working age people on Jobseeker Support has increased when compared to 30 June 2017, increasing by 3,737, to 122,513 as at 30 June 2018.

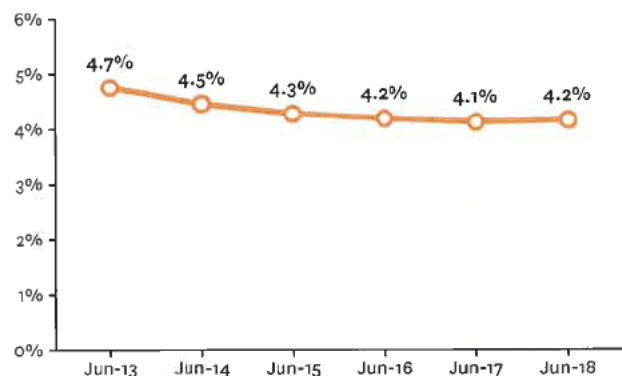
Jobseeker Support is for people who can usually look for or prepare for work. It also includes people who can only work part-time or cannot look for work at the moment (eg because they have a health condition, injury or disability).

**Figure 2a: Number of working age people receiving Jobseeker Support**



**122,513** – working age people receiving JS at the end of June 2018  
(118,776 – end of June 2017)

**Figure 2b: Proportion of working age population receiving Jobseeker Support**



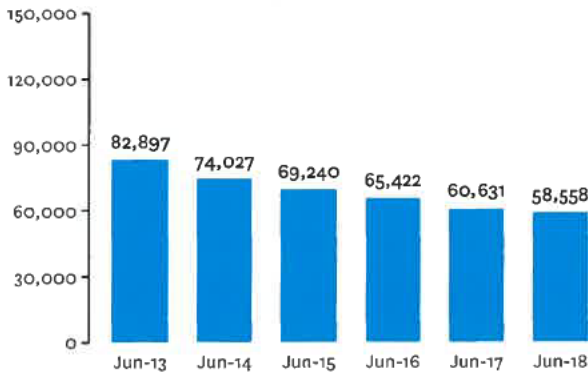
**4.2 percent** – of the working age population receiving JS at the end of June 2018  
(4.1 percent – end of June 2017)

## Sole Parent Support (SPS)

The number of working age people on Sole Parent Support has decreased by 2,073 since the end of June 2017, to 58,558 at the end of June 2018. The proportion of working age people has also been decreasing consistently over the past five years.

Sole Parent Support is for sole parents with at least one dependent child under 14 years who can look for or prepare for part-time work.

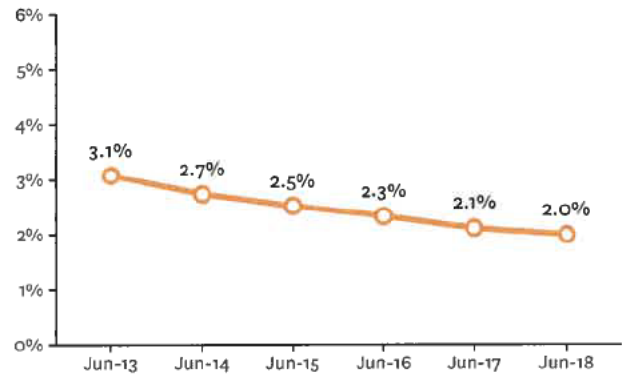
**Figure 3a: Number of working age people receiving Sole Parent Support**



**58,558** – working age people receiving SPS at the end of June 2018

(60,631 – end of June 2017)

**Figure 3b: Proportion of working age population receiving Sole Parent Support**



**2.0 percent** – of the working age population receiving SPS at the end of June 2018

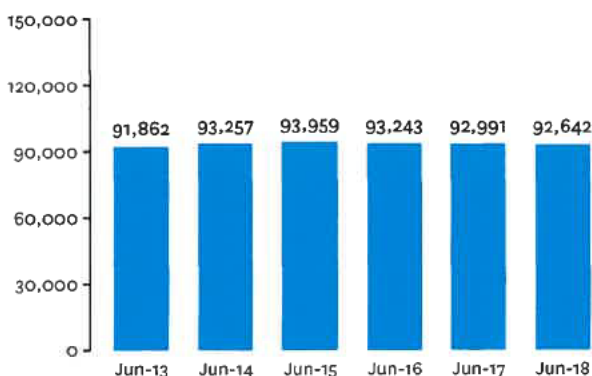
(2.1 percent – end of June 2017)

## Supported Living Payment (SLP)

The number of working age people on Supported Living Payment has remained relatively stable when compared to the end of June 2017, decreasing by 349, to 92,642 at the end of June 2018.

Supported Living Payment is for people who have, or care for someone with, a health condition, injury or disability that severely limits their ability to work on a long-term basis. The long-term nature of conditions for people on Supported Living Payment mean that very few people move from Supported Living Payment into paid work or on to another benefit.

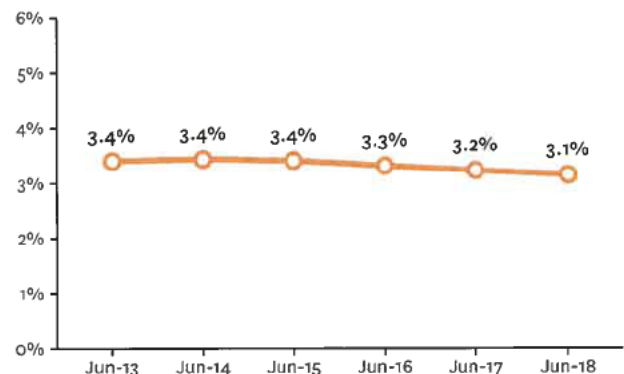
**Figure 4a: Number of working age people receiving Supported Living Payment**



**92,642** – working age people receiving SLP at the end of June 2018

(92,991 – end of June 2017)

**Figure 4b: Proportion of working age population receiving Supported Living Payment**



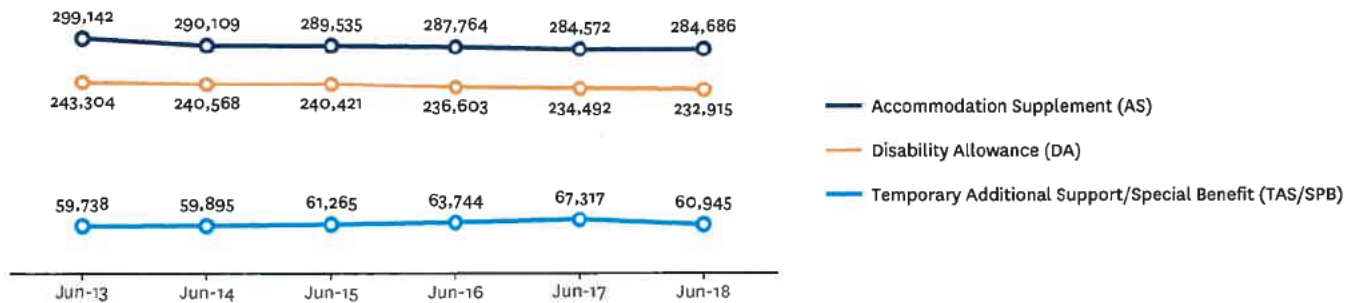
**3.1 percent** – of the working age population receiving SLP at the end of June 2018

(3.2 percent – end of June 2017)

# Supplementary benefit assistance

The number of supplementary benefits paid out at the end of June 2018 was lower than at the end of June 2017. This was mostly due to a reduction in the number of people receiving Temporary Additional Support or Special Benefit.

Figure 5: Trends over time of selected supplementary benefit receipt, all ages



**284,686** – people receiving AS at the end of June 2018  
(284,572 – end of June 2017)

**232,915** – people receiving DA at the end of June 2018  
(234,492 – end of June 2017)

**60,945** – people receiving TAS/SPB at the end of June 2018  
(67,317 – end of June 2017)

## 1 April Families Package impacts

The introduction of the Families Package as of 1 April 2018 has resulted in various impacts on Accommodation Supplement and Temporary Additional Support/Special Benefit receipt.

The introduction of the Families Package saw the AS regional boundaries and maximum payment rates changed. This did not result in a noticeable change in the number of Accommodation Supplement recipients, but did result in increased weekly expenditure relative to the June 2017 quarter. It also led to a decrease in the number of people receiving TAS/SPB. This is due to some people receiving a large enough increase to their Accommodation Supplement, which meant they no longer were eligible for TAS/SPB.

## Accommodation Supplement (AS)

The number of people receiving the Accommodation Supplement remained stable when compared to the end of June 2017, increasing by 114, to 284,686 at the end of June 2018.

The Accommodation Supplement is a weekly payment to assist people with low incomes who are not in public housing with their rent, board, or the cost of owning a home. The number of people receiving an Accommodation Supplement tends to follow trends around broader benefit numbers.

## Disability Allowance (DA)

The number of people receiving the Disability Allowance has decreased by 1,577 since the end of June 2017, to 232,915 at the end of June 2018.

The Disability Allowance is a weekly payment to assist people who have on-going, additional costs because of a disability. A person does not need to be receiving a main benefit in order to qualify for the Disability Allowance. The number of people receiving a Disability Allowance tends to follow trends around broader benefit and New Zealand Superannuation numbers.

## Temporary Additional Support/Special Benefit (TAS/SPB)

The number of people receiving Temporary Additional Support/Special Benefit has decreased by 6,372 since the end of June 2017, to 60,945 at the end of June 2018.

Temporary Additional Support is a weekly payment that helps people to cover essential living costs that cannot be met from their income and through other resources. A person does not have to be receiving a main benefit to qualify for Temporary Additional Support. Temporary Additional Support replaced the Special Benefit in 2006. Some people are still entitled to receive the Special Benefit, so therefore these are counted together.



# Hardship assistance

The number of grants and value of granted payments of hardship assistance in the June 2018 quarter was higher than in the June 2013 quarter. Most of this increase in the number of grants and value of grants provided has come in the last two years.

Hardship assistance includes (but is not limited to) Special Needs Grants (SNGs), Benefit Advance Payments (ADVs) and Recoverable Assistance Payments (RAPs). These forms of assistance are designed to help people who have immediate needs that cannot be met from their available income and assets. The numbers reported over the next two pages are for hardship assistance granted in the June quarter for the last six June quarters (ie 1 April to 30 June).

Figure 6a: Trends over time of hardship grant numbers

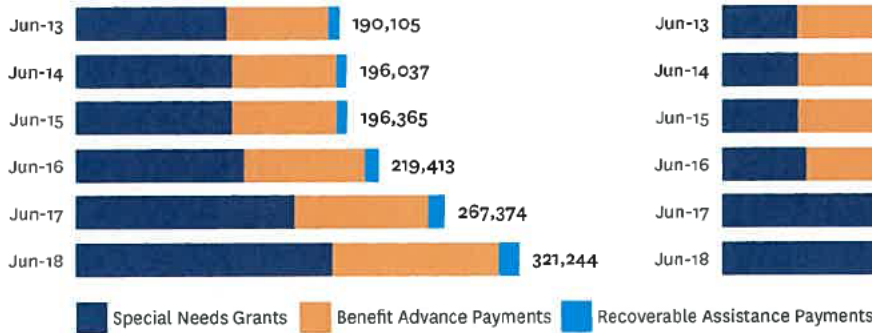
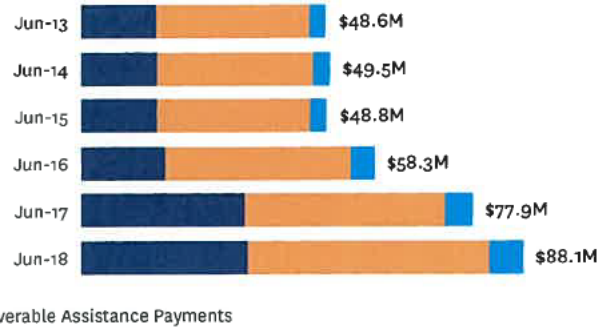


Figure 6b: Trends over time of the value of granted payments



**321,244** – payments granted in the June 2018 quarter  
(267,374 – June 2017 quarter)

**\$88,129,108** – value of grants provided in the June 2018 quarter  
(\$77,933,239 – June 2017 quarter)

Food has consistently remained the main reason for needing hardship assistance. The demand for food assistance has also been growing over the last few quarters, and has been one of the leading contributors to the growth in hardship assistance. Most of the value of grants provided is either for accommodation related costs (excluding Emergency Housing) or food assistance.

Figure 7: Trends over time of hardship grant numbers broken down by reason

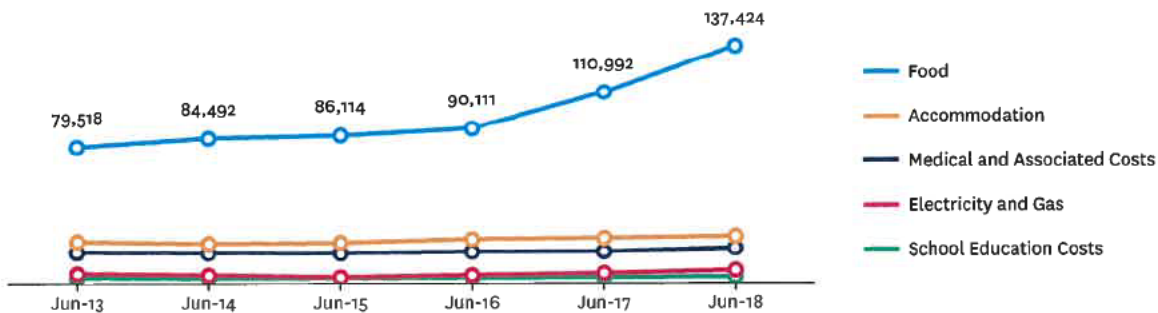


Figure 8: Trends over time of value of hardship grants broken down by reason

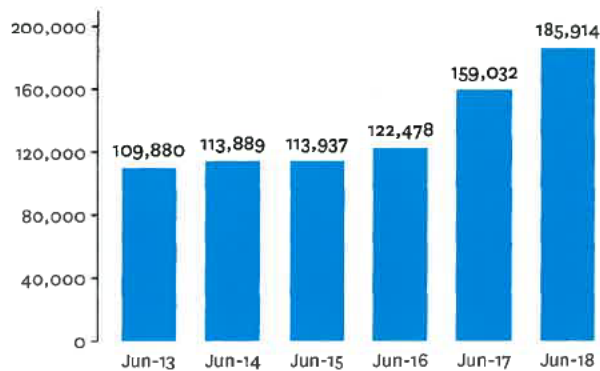


## Special Needs Grants (SNG)

The number of Special Needs Grants granted has increased by 26,882 since the June 2017 quarter, to 185,914 for the June 2018 quarter. Despite this large increase, the value of grants provided increased by a relatively small amount (\$541,801), to \$33,083,239 over the same period.

Special Needs Grants provides non-taxable, one-off recoverable or non-recoverable financial assistance to people to meet immediate needs. A person does not need to be receiving a main benefit in order to qualify for a Special Needs Grant.

**Figure 9a: Trends over time of the number of Special Needs Grants granted**



**185,914** – Special Needs Grants granted in the June 2018 quarter  
(159,032 – June 2017 quarter)

**Figure 9b: Trends over time of the value of payments of Special Needs Grants granted**



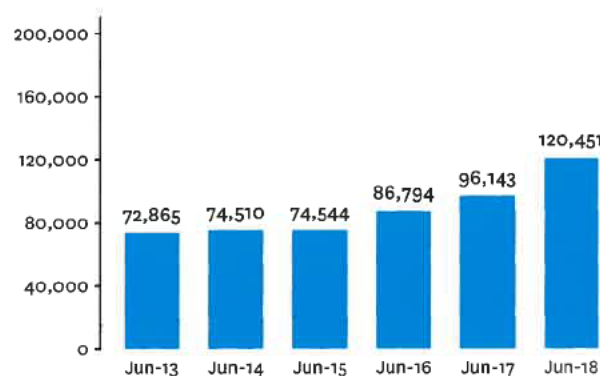
**\$33,083,239** – value of Special Needs Grants granted in the June 2018 quarter  
(\$32,541,438 – June 2017 quarter)

## Benefit Advances (ADV)

The number of Benefit Advances granted has increased by 24,308 since the June 2017 quarter, to 120,451 for the June 2018 quarter. This has resulted in the value of Benefit Advances granted increasing by \$8,510,072 to \$48,232,952.

All people receiving a main benefit and who require assistance to meet a particular immediate need for an essential item have access to an advance of up to six weeks of their net benefit entitlement.

**Figure 10a: Trends over time of the number of Benefit Advances granted**



**120,451** – Benefit Advances granted in the June 2018 quarter  
(96,143 – June 2017 quarter)

**Figure 10b: Trends over time of the value of payments of Benefit Advances granted**



**\$48,232,952** – value of Benefit Advances granted in the June 2018 quarter  
(\$39,722,880 – June 2017 quarter)

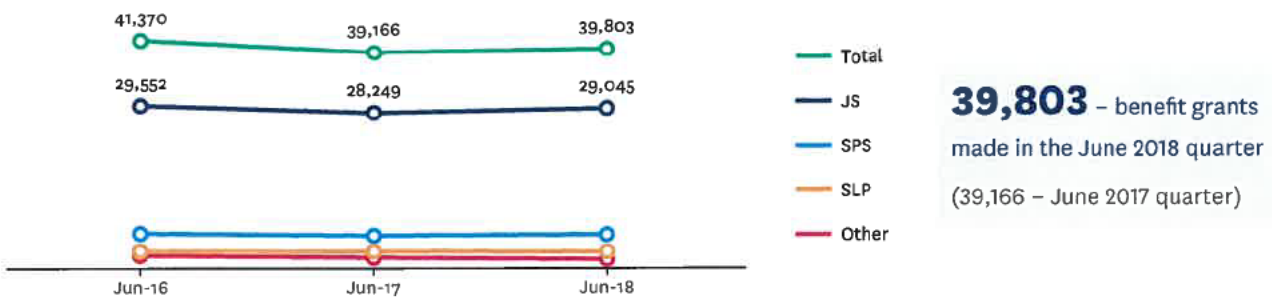
# Benefit grants and cancellations

## Grants

The number of benefits granted has increased by 637 since the June 2017 quarter to 39,803 for the June 2018 quarter. There was a rise in benefit grants for Jobseeker Support and Sole Parent Support and falls for Supported Living Payment and the Other Main Benefits category.

A grant is the formal acceptance of entitlement to a benefit. The numbers reported below are for benefits granted in the June quarter for the last three June quarters (ie 1 April to 30 June).

Figure 11: Trends over time of selected benefit grants



## Cancellations

The number of benefits cancelled has decreased by 4,866 from the June 2017 quarter, to 44,281 in the June 2018 quarter. Most of this decrease came from a decreased number of Jobseeker Support cancellations. Obtaining work continues to be the main reason for benefit cancellations, however this reason fell by 1,872 when compared to the June 2017 quarter.

A cancellation (cancel) is the formal process that stops the entitlement to a benefit. The numbers reported below are for benefits cancelled in the June quarter for the last three June quarters (ie 1 April to 30 June).

Figure 12: Trends over time of selected benefit cancellations

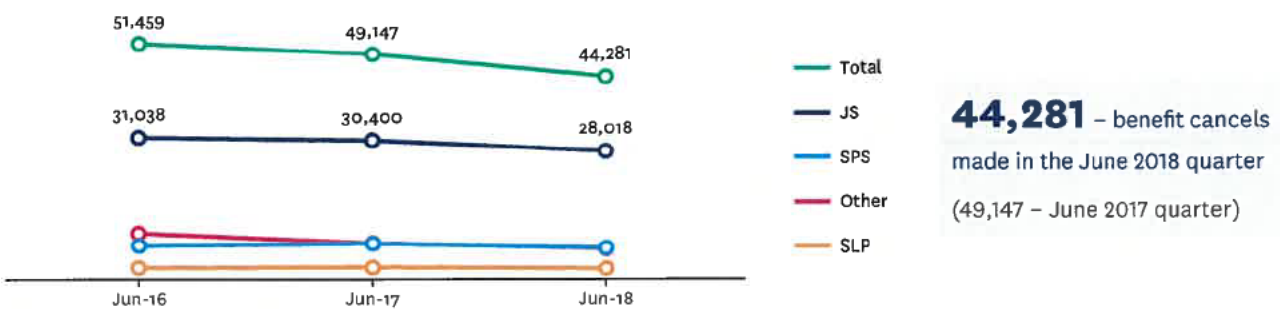
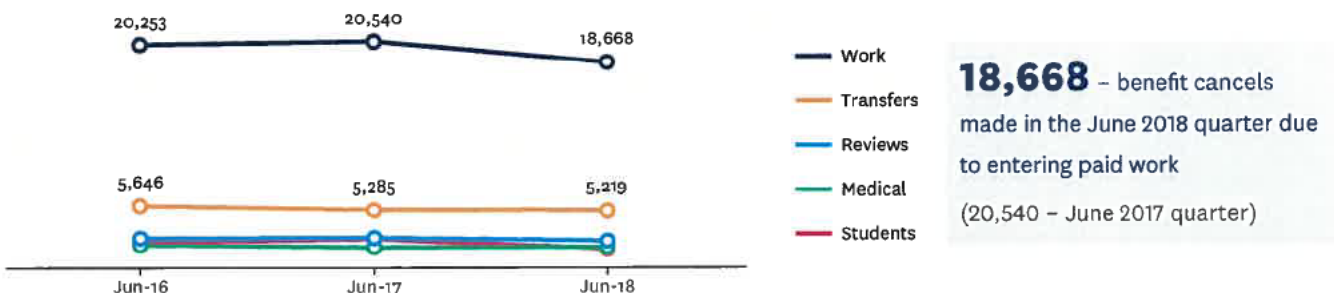


Figure 13: Trends over time of selected benefit cancellations by reason



# Benefit sanctions

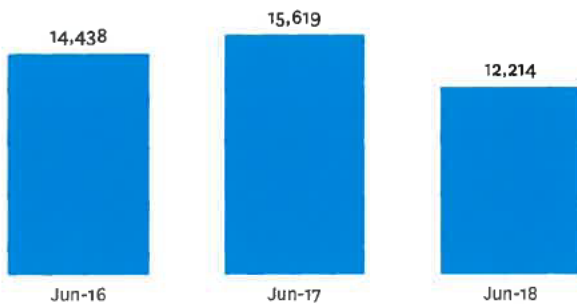
The number of sanctions issued in the June 2018 quarter was **12,214**. This was a decrease of 3,405 since the June 2017 quarter. The main reason for sanctions was due to the failure of people to attend arranged appointments. As at the end of June 2018, there were **1,601** sanctions that were actively in place.

A sanction is a penalty imposed on a person's benefit for failure to fulfill their work obligations. Sanctions can affect benefit recipients in a number of ways depending on their circumstances and the number of times they have had a sanction imposed over the last 12 months. There are three types of sanctions: graduated (ie percentage reduction in benefit amount), suspended and cancelled.

Sole parents and couples with dependent children face a maximum 50 percent reduction of their main benefit when sanctioned within a 12-month period. For single people with no dependent children, the first sanction is a maximum 50 percent reduction of their main benefit; for a second failure, they face a 100 percent suspension of their main benefit; and a third sanction will result in the main benefit being cancelled.

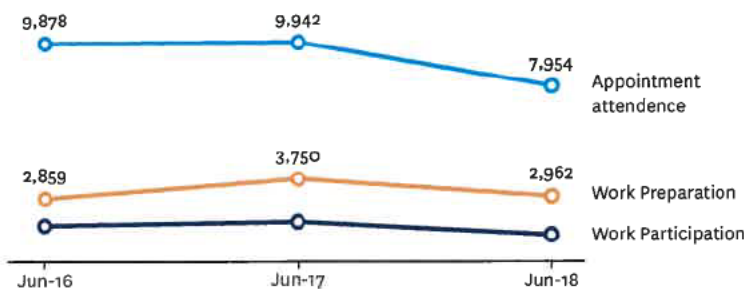
Not everyone who fails their obligations gets sanctioned; if benefit recipients reapply or provide additional information, their failure to fulfill their obligations can be withdrawn.

Figure 14: Trends over time of benefit sanctions (flow data)



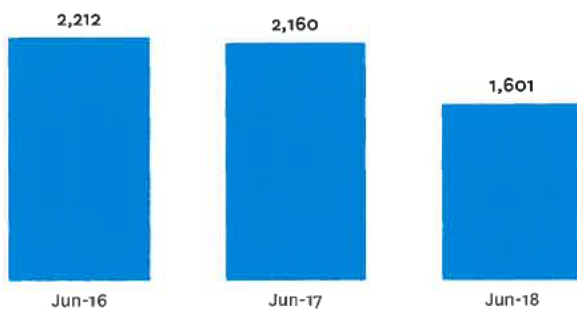
**12,214** – benefit sanctions made in the June 2018 quarter  
(15,619 – June 2017 quarter)

Figure 15: Trends over time of benefit sanctions by reason



**7,954** – benefit sanctions made in the June 2018 quarter for failing to attend appointments  
(9,942 – June 2017 quarter)

Figure 16: Trends over time of benefit sanctions (point-in-time data)



**1,601** – active benefit sanctions at the end of June 2018  
(2,160 – end of June 2017)