



22 AUG 2019

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

On 30 July 2019 in your telephone conversation with [REDACTED] Service Manager of Contact Centre Services, you requested under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

1. *What is the average call waiting time on Monday 29/07/2019 between 5pm to 6pm?*
2. *How does it look compared to the other Mondays in the last 6 months (5pm to 6pm)?*

The Ministry of Social Development delivers a wide range of services to hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders and it is important that people can easily access our products and services. Work and Income Contact Centre staff provide assistance to people needing support and receive as many as 5.9 million calls annually.

Contact Centre staff endeavour to answer every call as quickly as possible. While the Ministry does not have an exact wait time which is considered to be reasonable, you may be interested to know that in 2018, two-thirds of all calls were answered in less than five minutes. Wait times vary according to the time of year and the day of the week. For example, in 2018, average wait times on Mondays were just over six minutes while for the remainder of the week, average wait times were less than four minutes.

The Contact Centre is available from 7am to 6pm Monday-Friday, and from 8am to 1pm on Saturdays. Outside of these times, the Ministry's online service MyMSD is available at all times at the following website [www.my.msd.govt.nz](http://www.my.msd.govt.nz). While not all transactions can be completed through the online channel, some services are available including applying for a main benefit, one-off costs assistance, declaring wages, or checking payment details.

For the sake of clarity your questions are addressed in turn.

1. *What is the average call waiting time on Monday 29/07/2019 between 5pm to 6pm?*

24 minutes 59 seconds was the average wait time on Monday 29 July 2019 between 5:00pm and 6:00pm.

2. *How does it look compared to the other Mondays in the last 6 months (5pm to 6pm)?*

During the last six months, the average call waiting time on Monday 29 July 2019 between 5:00pm and 6:00pm was the eleventh highest during that time period. The average call wait time during that time and day of the week ranged between 2 minutes 47 seconds and 33 minutes 12 seconds.

Mondays between 5pm and 6pm consistently have high call volumes and therefore it can take longer for Customer Service Representatives to respond to calls. The Contact Centre is currently recruiting for staff which will assist in managing the high volumes of calls during this time period.

When there are longer than expected wait times, callers are greeted with an initial message advising them that there may be additional wait times.

The Ministry has progressively increased clients' ability to access services through a range of different channels to ensure they have the option to transact in a way that suits them best. This includes the ability to still access services face-to-face through our Service Centres where this is preferred.

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 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, 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



Cassandra Wise  
**Manager, Issue Resolution, Service Delivery**