



[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

On 9 July 2019, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Recently MSD and the Minister has said that the approval rates for hardship grants at the Manurewa Work and Income office are 98 percent – for the week of 1 July to 5 July inclusive. I am seeking the following details for the same Manurewa Work and Income office for the same week.*
- *Can you please provide:*
  1. *comparable details of how many people are declined or turned away at a reception before getting in front of a case manager. I am seeking a day by day break down for the week for all information requested.*
  2. *details of what was granted versus what was requested and details of what the grants were generally for example food, power, clothing for this week.*
  3. *details of whether people at the Manurewa office who were granted assistance in any form during this week had gone to another office previously and were denied assistance before coming to the Manurewa office.*
- *The exact same details for the week prior (24-28th of June) with a day by day break down.*

The Ministry, through Work and Income, provides recoverable and non-recoverable financial assistance to help people meet an immediate need for essential items including food, health costs and power. We are committed to ensuring that people who qualify for financial support receive all the help they can get.

You requested comparable details of how many people are declined or turned away at a reception before seeing a case manager, seeking a day by day break down for the weeks ending 29 June 2019 and 6 July 2019. You also requested details of whether people at Manurewa Community Link who were granted assistance in any form during these weeks had gone to another office previously and were denied assistance before coming to Manurewa Community Link.

People who present to a Work and Income service centre needing assistance are not turned away. They are screened and, depending on the need and urgency, they may be redirected to the Contact Centre or booked into a future appointment. It is not

Ministry practice for a client to be declined at reception and therefore the Ministry does not record these actions.

As such, I am refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 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.

You also requested details of what assistance was granted at Manurewa Community Link versus what was requested and details of what the grants were approved for, for example food, power, or clothing for the weeks ending 29 June 2019 and 6 July 2019.

The Ministry cannot compare a person's original request to what was granted because we do not monitor that information. This information is discussed with the case manager at the appointment, rather than being held in our central database. A person may also change their request after reassessing their situation with a case manager. For example, a person may apply for a grant for clothing, which would be a recoverable grant that would need to be paid back. It may help the client more for the Ministry to provide a food grant, which would not need to be paid back, so they can use that payment to buy food, and then use their own money to buy clothes. Staff work within the legislation that sets out what assistance can be provided to best help a client.

As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 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 first point of your request relates to the Regional Commissioner for Auckland's statement on 5 July 2019, *'we have high rates of approval for hardship grants – the percentage approved at Manurewa on a Thursday when AAAP is present is the same as any other day: 98%'*.

This figure refers to the average grant approval rate on Thursdays for the 2018/2019 Financial Year, 98.9%. As such, this rate of approval also relates to the week prior. Please note the average grant rate over 2019 for all days is 98.1%.

Auckland Action Against Poverty (AAAP) create a one-day demand at Manurewa through weekly 'Impact Days' that is not experienced at any of our other service centres. We guarantee Auckland Action Against Poverty 65 appointment slots, and this number is set at AAAP's request.

There are about 50 staff at the Manurewa site. This is bolstered by eight to ten extra staff on Impact Days and an additional 120 phone appointments are available. The Manurewa Community Link looks after roughly 5500 clients and they see more than 220 people a day on average. On Impact Days the Manurewa Community Link sees more than 300 people.

Please see below a table showing the number and percentage of hardship application grants and declines processed at Manurewa Community Link between July 2016 and June 2019, broken down by day of the week and financial year.

Day of Week and Financial Year		Number of applications		Percentage of applications		Total Applications
		Declines	Grants	Declines	Grants	
Monday	2016/17	160	5,647	2.8%	97.2%	5,807
	2017/18	135	8,271	1.6%	98.4%	8,406
	2018/19	143	10,747	1.3%	98.7%	10,890
Tuesday	2016/17	187	5,689	3.2%	96.8%	5,876
	2017/18	107	7,909	1.3%	98.7%	8,016
	2018/19	142	10,332	1.4%	98.6%	10,474
Wednesday	2016/17	190	5,447	3.4%	96.6%	5,637
	2017/18	119	7,846	1.5%	98.5%	7,965
	2018/19	114	9,049	1.2%	98.8%	9,163
Thursday	2016/17	180	6,438	2.7%	97.3%	6,618
	2017/18	141	10,032	1.4%	98.6%	10,173
	2018/19	183	15,859	1.1%	98.9%	16,042
Friday	2016/17	204	8,796	2.3%	97.7%	9,000
	2017/18	157	13,340	1.2%	98.8%	13,497
	2018/19	212	13,800	1.5%	98.5%	14,012
Saturday	2016/17	0	93	0.0%	100.0%	93
	2017/18	0	S	0.0%	100.0%	S
	2018/19	8	155	4.9%	95.1%	163

**Notes:**

- Hardship includes Special Needs Grants, Advance Payments of Benefit and Recoverable Assistance Payments.
- The table is a count of applications processed not clients. Clients may have multiple applications processed.
- Small numbers are suppressed with an "S" to protect client privacy.

In order to protect client privacy, some values are suppressed and are represented by 'S'. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs and public interest in the information.

The tables at the end of this document provide further contextual information about hardship application grants and declines:

- Table One: The number of hardship applications processed nationally between July 2016 and June 2019, broken down by financial year and assistance type.

- Table Two: The number and percentage of hardship applications granted and declined between July 2016 and June 2019, broken down by region and financial year.
- Table Three: The number and percentage of hardship applications granted and declined in the Auckland Region between July 2016 and June 2019, broken down by Service Centre and financial year.

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



Kay Read  
Group General Manager, Client Service Delivery

**Table One: The number of hardship applications processed nationally between July 2016 and June 2019, broken down by financial year and assistance type.**

Financial Year	Declines			Grants			Total Applications		
	SNG	ADV	RAP	SNG	ADV	RAP	SNG	ADV	RAP
<b>2016/17</b>	21,204	14,746	4,191	628,963	380,677	46,346	<b>650,167</b>	<b>395,423</b>	<b>50,537</b>
<b>2017/18</b>	25,739	16,299	4,609	728,903	437,136	55,715	<b>754,642</b>	<b>453,435</b>	<b>60,324</b>
<b>2018/19</b>	24,615	19,636	4,931	1,005,594	611,784	72,152	<b>1,030,209</b>	<b>631,420</b>	<b>77,083</b>

**Notes:**

- Hardship includes Special Needs Grants (SNG), Advance Payments of Benefit (ADV) and Recoverable Assistance Payments (RAP).
- The table is a count of applications processed not clients. Clients may have multiple applications processed.

**Table Two: The number and percentage of hardship applications granted and declined between July 2016 and June 2019, broken down by region and financial year.**

Region and Financial Year		Number of applications		Percentage of applications		Total Applications
		Declines	Grants	Declines	Grants	
Northland	<b>2016/17</b>	1,434	57,201	2.4%	97.6%	<b>58,635</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	1,530	51,731	2.9%	97.1%	<b>53,261</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	2,323	55,714	4.0%	96.0%	<b>58,037</b>
Auckland Metro	<b>2016/17</b>	10,219	316,441	3.1%	96.9%	<b>326,660</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	10,736	354,292	2.9%	97.1%	<b>365,028</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	11,708	447,033	2.6%	97.4%	<b>458,741</b>
Waikato	<b>2016/17</b>	2,805	80,979	3.3%	96.7%	<b>83,784</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	3,254	75,890	4.1%	95.9%	<b>79,144</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	3,381	95,801	3.4%	96.6%	<b>99,182</b>
Taranaki	<b>2016/17</b>	1,441	40,858	3.4%	96.6%	<b>42,299</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	1,383	41,598	3.2%	96.8%	<b>42,981</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	1,162	52,766	2.2%	97.8%	<b>53,928</b>
Bay of Plenty	<b>2016/17</b>	4,485	77,357	5.5%	94.5%	<b>81,842</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	4,636	78,224	5.6%	94.4%	<b>82,860</b>

Region and Financial Year		Number of applications		Percentage of applications		Total Applications
		Declines	Grants	Declines	Grants	
	<b>2018/19</b>	4,751	94,809	4.8%	95.2%	<b>99,560</b>
<b>East Coast</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	1,645	55,155	2.9%	97.1%	<b>56,800</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	1,704	53,565	3.1%	96.9%	<b>55,269</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	1,926	60,456	3.1%	96.9%	<b>62,382</b>
<b>Central</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	1,727	52,474	3.2%	96.8%	<b>54,201</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	1,639	53,973	2.9%	97.1%	<b>55,612</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	2,149	62,089	3.3%	96.7%	<b>64,238</b>
<b>Wellington</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	2,042	65,832	3.0%	97.0%	<b>67,874</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	1,843	68,316	2.6%	97.4%	<b>70,159</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	2,096	81,720	2.5%	97.5%	<b>83,816</b>
<b>Nelson</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	978	30,115	3.1%	96.9%	<b>31,093</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	894	28,454	3.0%	97.0%	<b>29,348</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	840	31,836	2.6%	97.4%	<b>32,676</b>
<b>Canterbury</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	3,414	48,841	6.5%	93.5%	<b>52,255</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	3,589	51,989	6.5%	93.5%	<b>55,578</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	3,448	59,527	5.5%	94.5%	<b>62,975</b>
<b>Southern</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	1,810	45,190	3.9%	96.1%	<b>47,000</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	2,491	44,934	5.3%	94.7%	<b>47,425</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	1,828	48,109	3.7%	96.3%	<b>49,937</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	8,141	185,543	4.2%	95.8%	<b>193,684</b>
	<b>2017/18</b>	12,948	318,788	3.9%	96.1%	<b>331,736</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	13,570	599,670	2.2%	97.8%	<b>613,240</b>

**Notes:**

- Hardship includes Special Needs Grants, Advance Payments of Benefit and Recoverable Assistance Payments.
- The table is a count of applications processed not clients. Clients may have multiple applications processed.
- 'Other' Region includes grants made through centralised offices, including applications made online.

**Table 3: The number and percentage of hardship applications granted and declined in the Auckland Region between July 2016 and June 2019, broken down by Service Centre and financial year.**

Site and Financial Year		Number of applications		Percentage of applications		Total Applications
		Declines	Grants	Declines	Grants	
AK Childcare Processing Centre	2016/17	0	0	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	0
	2017/18	0	21	0%	100.0%	21
	2018/19	9	232	3.7%	96.3%	241
Albany	2016/17	122	2,002	5.7%	94.3%	2,124
	2017/18	98	2,878	3.3%	96.7%	2,976
	2018/19	183	4,805	3.7%	96.3%	4,988
Avondale	2016/17	268	7,108	3.6%	96.4%	7,376
	2017/18	295	7,525	3.8%	96.2%	7,820
	2018/19	313	7,124	4.2%	95.8%	7,437
Birkenhead District	2016/17	116	3,433	3.3%	96.7%	3,549
	2017/18	219	4,621	4.5%	95.5%	4,840
	2018/19	79	2,987	2.6%	97.4%	3,066
Browns Bay	2016/17	81	1,195	6.3%	93.7%	1,276
	2017/18	66	1,239	5.1%	94.9%	1,305
	2018/19	28	1,109	2.5%	97.5%	1,137
Clendon	2016/17	487	15,892	3.0%	97.0%	16,379
	2017/18	279	20,228	1.4%	98.6%	20,507
	2018/19	379	25,956	1.4%	98.6%	26,335
Glenfield	2016/17	165	5,325	3.0%	97.0%	5,490
	2017/18	145	4,473	3.1%	96.9%	4,618
	2018/19	174	6,081	2.8%	97.2%	6,255
Glenmall	2016/17	189	9,557	1.9%	98.1%	9,746
	2017/18	284	12,997	2.1%	97.9%	13,281
	2018/19	402	14,074	2.8%	97.2%	14,476
Grey Lynn	2016/17	286	5,563	4.9%	95.1%	5,849
	2017/18	123	4,855	2.5%	97.5%	4,978
	2018/19	134	5,469	2.4%	97.6%	5,603
Helensville	2016/17	24	2,090	1.1%	98.9%	2,114
	2017/18	47	1,814	2.5%	97.5%	1,861
	2018/19	101	2,044	4.7%	95.3%	2,145
Highland Park	2016/17	186	5,954	3.0%	97.0%	6,140
	2017/18	267	5,948	4.3%	95.7%	6,215
	2018/19	177	5,593	3.1%	96.9%	5,770

Site and Financial Year		Number of applications		Percentage of applications		Total Applications
		Declines	Grants	Declines	Grants	
Hunters Corner District	2016/17	292	7,419	3.8%	96.2%	7,711
	2017/18	294	8,601	3.3%	96.7%	8,895
	2018/19	420	11,601	3.5%	96.5%	12,021
Mangere	2016/17	1,260	26,683	4.5%	95.5%	27,943
	2017/18	1,415	30,735	4.4%	95.6%	32,150
	2018/19	1,415	38,092	3.6%	96.4%	39,507
Manukau District	2016/17	347	9,572	3.5%	96.5%	9,919
	2017/18	439	11,461	3.7%	96.3%	11,900
	2018/19	357	15,238	2.3%	97.7%	15,595
Manurewa	2016/17	921	32,110	2.8%	97.2%	33,031
	2017/18	659	47,402	1.4%	98.6%	48,061
	2018/19	802	59,942	1.3%	98.7%	60,744
Mt Albert	2016/17	196	3,320	5.6%	94.4%	3,516
	2017/18	172	3,653	4.5%	95.5%	3,825
	2018/19	146	5,163	2.8%	97.2%	5,309
Mt Eden	2016/17	227	4,795	4.5%	95.5%	5,022
	2017/18	125	4,961	2.5%	97.5%	5,086
	2018/19	150	5,229	2.8%	97.2%	5,379
New Lynn	2016/17	274	9,176	2.9%	97.1%	9,450
	2017/18	319	9,930	3.1%	96.9%	10,249
	2018/19	294	10,061	2.8%	97.2%	10,355
Onehunga	2016/17	229	8,216	2.7%	97.3%	8,445
	2017/18	196	7,502	2.5%	97.5%	7,698
	2018/19	262	10,967	2.3%	97.7%	11,229
Orewa	2016/17	264	6,432	3.9%	96.1%	6,696
	2017/18	266	6,882	3.7%	96.3%	7,148
	2018/19	205	9,283	2.2%	97.8%	9,488
Otahuhu	2016/17	286	9,723	2.9%	97.1%	10,009
	2017/18	265	9,700	2.7%	97.3%	9,965
	2018/19	254	12,299	2.0%	98.0%	12,553
Otara	2016/17	312	9,989	3.0%	97.0%	10,301
	2017/18	418	10,859	3.7%	96.3%	11,277
	2018/19	343	13,794	2.4%	97.6%	14,137
Papakura	2016/17	694	25,666	2.6%	97.4%	26,360
	2017/18	714	29,292	2.4%	97.6%	30,006
	2018/19	1,182	39,904	2.9%	97.1%	41,086
Papatoetoe	2016/17	207	5,981	3.3%	96.7%	6,188



Site and Financial Year	Number of applications		Percentage of applications		Total Applications	
	Declines	Grants	Declines	Grants		
2017/18	486	7,018	6.5%	93.5%	<b>7,504</b>	
	340	8,808	3.7%	96.3%	<b>9,148</b>	
Pukekohe	2016/17	307	11,021	2.7%	97.3%	<b>11,328</b>
	2017/18	243	11,524	2.1%	97.9%	<b>11,767</b>
	2018/19	458	15,281	2.9%	97.1%	<b>15,739</b>
Queen Street	2016/17	437	11,153	3.8%	96.2%	<b>11,590</b>
	2017/18	545	12,799	4.1%	95.9%	<b>13,344</b>
	2018/19	418	16,205	2.5%	97.5%	<b>16,623</b>
Takapuna	2016/17	272	5,624	4.6%	95.4%	<b>5,896</b>
	2017/18	267	5,349	4.8%	95.2%	<b>5,616</b>
	2018/19	241	8,125	2.9%	97.1%	<b>8,366</b>
Tamaki	2016/17	447	16,030	2.7%	97.3%	<b>16,477</b>
	2017/18	535	15,726	3.3%	96.7%	<b>16,261</b>
	2018/19	703	19,535	3.5%	96.5%	<b>20,238</b>
Three Kings	2016/17	173	11,881	1.4%	98.6%	<b>12,054</b>
	2017/18	390	11,648	3.2%	96.8%	<b>12,038</b>
	2018/19	498	11,986	4.0%	96.0%	<b>12,484</b>
Waiheke	2016/17	36	1,374	2.6%	97.4%	<b>1,410</b>
	2017/18	23	1,297	1.7%	98.3%	<b>1,320</b>
	2018/19	52	1,432	3.5%	96.5%	<b>1,484</b>
Waitakere	2016/17	522	25,890	2.0%	98.0%	<b>26,412</b>
	2017/18	630	22,843	2.7%	97.3%	<b>23,473</b>
	2018/19	585	34,846	1.7%	98.3%	<b>35,431</b>
Waiuku	2016/17	140	3,694	3.7%	96.3%	<b>3,834</b>
	2017/18	97	3,815	2.5%	97.5%	<b>3,912</b>
	2018/19	152	4,643	3.2%	96.8%	<b>4,795</b>
Warkworth	2016/17	123	3,411	3.5%	96.5%	<b>3,534</b>
	2017/18	124	3,589	3.3%	96.7%	<b>3,713</b>
	2018/19	170	5,305	3.1%	96.9%	<b>5,475</b>
Westgate	2016/17	329	9,162	3.5%	96.5%	<b>9,491</b>
	2017/18	291	11,107	2.6%	97.4%	<b>11,398</b>
	2018/19	282	13,820	2.0%	98.0%	<b>14,102</b>

**Notes:**

- Hardship includes Special Needs Grants, Advance Payments of Benefit and Recoverable Assistance Payments.
- The table is a count of applications processed not clients. Clients may have multiple applications processed.