



30 JAN 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

On 30 October 2018, you emailed Housing New Zealand (HNZ) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information regarding emergency accommodation.

On 13 November 2018, the following questions were partially transferred to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry).

- *How many motel rooms or units is HNZ currently housing people in in Auckland and Northland?*
- *How much has HNZ spent housing tenants in emergency accommodation at the Awanui Hotel and Motel?*

I understand that the Ministry for Housing and Urban Development has responded to your queries regarding the Social Housing Register and Transitional Housing places, and Housing New Zealand has responded to your queries as they relate to Housing New Zealand properties.

The Ministry is able to respond to your request in relation to Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (SNGs).

When someone comes to the Ministry for help we will, in the first instance, try to match them to a transitional housing provider. Where transitional housing places are fully subscribed we can help to meet the cost of short-term accommodation through payment of an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant. Ultimately, we want to ensure families in need of safe, secure housing have somewhere to stay.

On 1 July 2016, the Ministry introduced a non-recoverable Emergency Housing SNG. The Ministry pays Emergency Housing SNGs directly to the accommodation provider. This grant is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. Assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights, but can be extended dependent on individual circumstances. In most cases this grant does not need to be repaid.

The Ministry is unable to provide you with information regarding the number of motel rooms or units currently housing people in Auckland and Northland as this is held in notes in individual case files. In order to provide you with this information Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

It has been considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. It has been

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concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

Please find enclosed the following two tables:

- Table one shows the Emergency Housing SNGs granted in the Auckland region during the December 2016 to September 2018 quarters broken down by number of grants, amount granted, and number of clients.
- Table two shows the Emergency Housing SNGs granted in the Northland region during the December 2016 to September 2018 quarters broken down by number of grants, amount granted, and number of clients.

Please note that the number of grants reflects the demand for Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants in that region. For example, if the number of Transitional Housing places in the region has increased, the demand for Emergency Housing SNGs is likely to decrease. Ministry staff work with clients individually to make sure they receive the support they're entitled to.

The Ministry has paid a total of \$2,450.00 in relation to Emergency Housing SNGs for Awanui Hotel and Motel between the December 2016 and September 2018 quarters, inclusive. The final payment was made in the December 2017 quarter. The Ministry does not actively refer clients to this motel.

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 regarding Emergency Housing Special Needs 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



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

**Table One: Emergency Housing SNGs granted in the Auckland region during December 2016 to September 2018 quarters**

Quarter ending	Auckland region		
	Number of grants	Amount granted	Number of clients
<b>December 2016</b>	3,969	\$4,065,970.10	1,123
<b>March 2017</b>	4,276	\$4,702,575.88	1,104
<b>June 2017</b>	5,015	\$6,954,088.43	1,340
<b>September 2017</b>	4,233	\$5,002,238.81	1,267
<b>December 2017</b>	3,133	\$4,198,278.44	972
<b>March 2018</b>	3,096	\$4,053,527.54	946
<b>June 2018</b>	4,001	\$5,855,346.00	1,115
<b>September 2018</b>	5,725	\$7,910,253.84	1,445

**Notes:**

- For the count of grants, the same client may have had more than one payment during each quarter, or between quarters of the entire period.
- The count of clients is the count of individuals receiving at least one payment during the specified quarter. A client can be counted in multiple quarters.
- The amount granted may not be the total amount spent.

**Table Two: Emergency Housing SNGs granted in the Northland region during December 2016 to September 2018 quarters**

Quarter ending	Northland region		
	Number of grants	Amount granted	Number of clients
<b>December 2016</b>	597	\$478,972.68	157
<b>March 2017</b>	477	\$377,343.76	130
<b>June 2017</b>	323	\$261,476.49	95
<b>September 2017</b>	332	\$230,541.65	113
<b>December 2017</b>	284	\$190,771.24	74
<b>March 2018</b>	273	\$187,506.48	91
<b>June 2018</b>	393	\$280,770.76	125
<b>September 2018</b>	335	\$226,605.43	115

**Notes:**

- For the count of grants, the same client may have had more than one payment during each quarter, or between quarters of the entire period.
- The count of clients is the count of individuals receiving at least one payment during the specified quarter. A client can be counted in multiple quarters.
- The amount granted may not be the total amount spent.