



0:9 SEP 2019



Dear 

On 18 July 2019, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- 1. What are the names of the five motels/hotels/lodges (all businesses) who have received the highest payments from MSD for emergency housing?*
- 2. How much have the above motels/hotels/lodges (all businesses) been paid for emergency housing?*
- 3. How many people have the above motels/hotels/lodges (all businesses) accommodated?*
- 4. What was the name of the motels/hotels/lodges (all businesses) they stayed at?*
- 5. What was the total cost for the above – please also include the timeframe for the accommodation provided.*
- 6. What is the longest period a family has been accommodated in emergency housing? – What was the name of the motels/hotels/lodges (all businesses) they stayed at?*
- 7. What was the total cost for the above – please also include the timeframe for the accommodation provided.*

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place or 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 dependant on individual circumstances.

Work and Income provide ongoing support to help people secure a long-term housing solution, including looking into public housing and private rental accommodation as an option depending on the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that emergency housing is not a long-term solution, particularly for vulnerable people with complex needs. It provides a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. It is important that those who would otherwise be homeless have somewhere warm and dry to stay.

More information about EH SNGs is available here: www.housing.msdf.govt.nz/housing-options/emergency-housing.html.

Please see below a table showing the number of EH SNGs granted to the five EH SNG suppliers by the largest amount granted, during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2019.

Provider name	Number of distinct clients	Number of grants	Amount granted
Auckland Astro Residences Limited	907	3,537	\$6,173,820.07
Silverfern Property Services Limited	329	2,328	\$4,622,202.82
540 Motel Limited	585	2,052	\$4,085,958.70
Goldpoint Motel Ltd	318	1,751	\$3,441,322.36
Grange NZ Limited	420	1,548	\$3,383,474.75

Notes:

- The amount granted is not the amount spent.
- This is a count of grants. A client can have more than one grant per provider.
- A client can be counted to more than one supplier if they have had grants with multiple suppliers.

It is worth noting that some of these suppliers, such as Auckland Astro Residences Limited, no longer provide Emergency Housing assistance. The supplier name is the name of the company or individuals that own or provide the accommodation, and not necessarily the name of the accommodation.

The Ministry records EH SNGs against the record of the client who applies for the grant. Grants may be for accommodation for families or individuals. Any additional people included in the grant amount are recorded on client files. As such, I am unable to provide the longest period a family has been accommodated or the total cost of such accommodation under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

Please note, the urgent nature of emergency housing means that the Ministry's first priority when providing assistance is to help people with nowhere to stay find accommodation. Records of the number of people included in quotes provided for Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants may therefore differ from the number of people who end up staying in the accommodation due to a range of factors.

I can advise that the highest number of nights granted to a distinct client during the period 1 October 2016 to 30 June 2019 was 615 nights, through 93 EH SNGs, which may or may not have been granted consecutively. The total amount granted was \$126,709, which was paid to more than one supplier. The names of the businesses this client stayed at over this period is 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.

A small number of people have exceptional circumstances, which makes accessing suitable and affordable accommodation more difficult and may result in them receiving EH SNG support for an extended period. These people may have mental health issues, criminal convictions, or need to live in a specific location to access a specific school or

health services. Work and Income work closely with these people to ensure that any potential housing arrangements are well suited to their needs.

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.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding EH SNGs, 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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Hocking', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karen Hocking
General Manager, Housing, Service Delivery