



24 APR 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

On 26 February 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *The number of benefit recipients whose partners are receiving Student Loan Living Costs or a Student Allowance, by year and benefit type from 2013 to current date.*

A Student Allowance is a weekly payment that can help students with their living expenses while they are studying. In most cases, eligible students do not have to pay the money back.

A Student Loan helps to pay for students' course fees (the compulsory fees charged by their education provider), study materials (e.g. books, computer, travel) and living costs. The loan has to be paid back. The Living Costs component of a Student Loan provides assistance towards students' living expenses. It is available for full-time students undertaking an approved course or programme.

Please note that for Student Allowance purposes, relationships are not recognised in most cases where either party is under 24 years old. While a young couple might be living in a relationship, it is possible for them to individually be receiving different assistance.

Students over the age of 24 are not eligible for Student Allowance if their partner receives a main benefit, New Zealand Superannuation or Veterans Pension.

More information about this can be found at the following link:

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/students/student-allowance/student-with-a-partner-01.html>

If a student's spouse or partner is granted a benefit, New Zealand Superannuation or Veteran's Pension, the student may access the living costs component of a Student Loan. More information about this can be found at the following link:

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/students/student-loan/beneficiaries-01.html>

Please find the data requested in the table below.

**Number of benefit recipients with partners receiving Student Allowance or Student Loan Living Costs, as at 30 September for each year from 2013 to 2019, broken down by benefit type.**

Year ending	Partner benefit type			Total
	Job Seeker related benefit	New Zealand Superannuation and Veteran's and Transitional Retirement benefit	Other benefit	
<b>30 September 2013</b>	108	20	29	<b>157</b>
<b>30 September 2014</b>	154	23	29	<b>206</b>
<b>30 September 2015</b>	106	19	34	<b>159</b>
<b>30 September 2016</b>	109	24	23	<b>156</b>
<b>30 September 2017</b>	78	19	28	<b>125</b>
<b>30 September 2018</b>	91	21	20	<b>132</b>
<b>30 September 2019</b>	90	12	18	<b>120</b>

**Notes:**

- Data shows benefit recipients whose partners are not on the benefit.
- In certain circumstances low numbers may potentially lead to individuals being identified. Due to these privacy concerns, numbers for some benefit categories of clients have aggregated and shown under the "other benefit" category.
- Other Benefit includes: Supported Living Payment, Emergency Maintenance Allowance, Youth Payment, Young Parent Payment

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. 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 benefit recipients whose partners are receiving Student Loan Living Costs or Student Allowance, 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

PP 

Bridget Saunders  
**Manager Issue Resolution**  
**Service Delivery**