



10 FEB 2020



Dear 

On 20 November 2019, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- I would like to know the number of single, able-bodied, people on Job Seeker support benefit in the latest numbers. By single people, I am not including single mothers. Within this number I would also like to know how many of them are 25 years or younger.*

The Ministry interpreted "able-bodied" as those who are physically ready to work when they apply for Jobseeker Support. This would categorise them as eligible for the Jobseeker Support - Work Ready benefit. Table One below shows the number of Work Ready clients on the Jobseeker Support benefit. The table is broken down by age to inform how many clients are under the age of 25.

Table One: Number of Jobseeker Support - Work Ready single clients with no dependent children as at the end of December 2019.

Age Group	Clients
18-25	21,978
26-64	42,897
Total	64,875

Please note that the December Quarterly figures are subject to seasonal variance. For example, Jobseeker Support Student Hardship numbers always increase significantly over the Christmas period as students require financial support over the study break, then reduce sharply in the New Year as students return to study (or find work).

Annual comparisons are less subject to seasonal influences. This makes them more useful as a guide to analyse trends in benefit numbers.

Additionally, please find the Ministry's Benefit Fact Sheets at the below link. The fact sheets provide a high-level view of trends in benefit receipt and provide breakdowns of overall numbers in a variety of categories: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/index.html>

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.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the number of individuals on the Jobseeker Support - Work Ready benefit, 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



Bridget Saunders

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