



13 FEB 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

On 15 January 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *How many individuals have been booked into the Wairoa Motel since September 2019?*
- *How much money has the Ministry spent on Emergency Housing in Wairoa in that period?*

On 22 January 2020 you also clarified your request to include the following:

- *The total amount spent on Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants at the Wairoa Motel.*

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. The Ministry pays EH SNGs directly to the accommodation supplier and assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights but can be extended dependant on individual circumstances.

After these seven nights Work and Income arrange another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation and if another grant is required. The Ministry works hard to support people in emergency housing to secure a long-term housing solution, either through public housing and private rental accommodation. Other options including transitional housing can also be explored as an option depending on availability and the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution or the solution that it wants to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. Emergency Housing suppliers provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available here: [www.housing.msd.govt.nz/housing-options/emergency-housing.html](http://www.housing.msd.govt.nz/housing-options/emergency-housing.html).

It is important to note that over 50 percent of people accessing EH SNGs only need between one and three grants before securing more suitable accommodation.

Some people may struggle to access suitable housing due to a lack of available supply or they simply may not be able to meet the high cost of housing which may result in them receiving EH SNG support for an extended period of time.

There are also a distinct group of people that face a range of complex issues that are a barrier, such as mental health and addictions, criminal history, or family violence. There are still others that need to live in a specific area, due to the need to access specialist care or educational needs for them or their family.

For people with high and complex needs, it can sometimes be challenging to identify suitable long-term housing, which can lead to longer stays in emergency housing. Work and Income work closely with these people to see what can be done to ensure that once they have a home of their own, they have the skills to sustain it, and the support they need to keep it.

Please find attached Table One. Table One provides the number of distinct clients, EH SNGs, and the amount granted for EH SNGs to Wairoa Motel from 1 September 2019 to 31 December 2019.

**Table One: Number of distinct clients, Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants and the total amount granted on Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants to Wairoa Motel from 1 September 2019 to 31 December 2019**

Number of distinct Clients	Number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants to Wairoa Motel	Amount Granted
23	81	\$112,935.00

Notes:

- Some Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants to Wairoa Motel were granted from Service Centres located outside the Wairoa region.
- All these figures apply to the Wairoa Motel.
- The EH SNG figures are different from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's quarterly Housing Regional Fact Sheets for this period. This is because the Housing Regional Factsheets report on Emergency Housing by Territorial Local Authority region, based on the clients registered address. This is not the same as reporting based on a specific Emergency housing provider which is provided in this table.

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 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 in Wairoa, 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 

Karen Hocking  
**General Manager Housing**