



19 NOV 2020

On 29 September 2020, you emailed Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *Money spent on external lawyers (separated out into workplace bullying, personal grievances and other), for the entire Oranga Tamariki Auckland region, year by year, for the last 5-years, to be broken down into office by office, i.e. National Contact Centre, Manurewa, Pukekohe etc.*

On 1 October 2020, Oranga Tamariki contacted you advising that they were not able to provide information about external legal costs for employment-related matters by site and/or region, or break the information down by workplace bullying, personal grievances and other. Oranga Tamariki provided you with the following refinement;

- *The total amount spent on external legal costs for employment-related matters, broken down by year, for the past five years.*

On 1 October 2020, you advised Oranga Tamariki that you were happy to proceed with the refined official information request.

On 13 October 2020, Oranga Tamariki partially transferred your request to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) as some of the information requested is not held by Oranga Tamariki.

The Ministry is responding to your request for the following information, under the Act:

- *The total amount spent on external legal costs for employment-related matters, broken down by year, for the period 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2017.*

In July 2006, Child, Youth and Family (CYF) became an agency that the Ministry was responsible for. The Ministry supported CYF up until 1 April 2017, when the new Ministry for Vulnerable Children was implemented to replace CYF. In October 2017, the Ministry for Vulnerable Children was renamed to the Ministry for Children – Oranga Tamariki. Oranga Tamariki is a Ministry dedicated to supporting any child in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm, now or in the future. They also assist with children that have offended or are at risk to offend.

The Ministry has endeavoured to gather the information requested; however, we cannot be certain that the amount spent on external legal costs are specifically in respect of payment solely to CYF. We can confirm that we have cross checked the data with various combinations and to the best of our knowledge only CYF spend is included.

The Ministry is releasing the data requested by month, for the time period of 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2017. This is to ensure consistency within the data, if the Ministry was to release the data by financial years, we would be releasing two incomplete financial years.

Please refer to the table below for the total amount spent by the Ministry on external legal costs for Child, Youth and Family employment-related matters for the time period 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2017, broken down by month.

Table One: The total amount spent on external legal costs for Child, Youth and Family employment-related matters for the period 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2017, broken down by month.

Month and year	Total amount spent per Month on External Legal Fees
October 2015	\$1,520.00
November 2015	\$2,560.00
December 2015	\$0
January 2016	\$3,190.00
February 2016	\$11,974.00
March 2016	\$1,960.00
April 2016	\$75,105.38
May 2016	\$0
June 2016	\$6,778.06
July 2016	\$17,939.04
August 2016	\$5,178.00
September 2016	\$32,228.81
October 2016	\$7,753.00
November 2016	\$11,264.00
December 2016	\$10,949.00
January 2017	\$13,780.17
February 2017	\$0
March 2017	\$0

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 in regard to the total amount spent on external legal costs for employment-related matters, 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.

Ngā mihi nui


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