



30 OCT 2020

Tēnā koe

On 6 October 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information in relation to the Westport Holiday Park & Motels for the last two years:

- *The amount of money received for emergency housing at this address*
- *The amount of "bond money" received at this location*
- *The amount of "bond money" claimed for damages and losses*

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and who 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 dependent on individual circumstances.

After these seven nights, Work and Income arrange another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation, and to determine 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 or private rental accommodation. Other options, including transitional housing, can also be explored depending on availability and the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution or the solution that we want to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. However, motels provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available on the Ministry's website at the following link: www.housing.msd.govt.nz/housing-options/emergency-housing.html.

The Ministry reports on the amount granted in EH SNGs, rather than the amount received by a motel. The following EH SNGs have been granted to Westport Holiday Park & Motels in the last two years, broken down by quarter ending:

Quarter Ending	Number of Grants	Amount Granted
December 2018	5	\$4,506.00
March 2019	39	\$39,547.20
June 2019	17	\$14,642.00
September 2019	29	\$20,167.00
December 2019	38	\$22,945.00
March 2020	40	\$22,440.00
June 2020	39	\$44,376.00
September 2020	33	\$38,813.00

This is a count of grants, and a client may have more than one grant in each time period. Please also note that the amount granted may not be the amount spent.

In order to protect client privacy, one value is suppressed and is represented by an 'S'. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in the information.

I have interpreted your second and third questions about bond payments to be in relation to emergency housing security deposits.

Emergency housing suppliers may require a security deposit to provide security against loss or damage to their property (whether intentional or unintentional), before they will allow clients to move into their accommodation.

More information about security deposits can be found at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/security-deposit-required-by-the-emergency-housing-provider.html.

Westport Holiday Park & Motels does not require a security deposit from the Ministry prior to a client staying there, and therefore this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as it does not exist. However, I can confirm that where damages have occurred, clients have been granted recoverable SNGs to pay for the damages. Within the last two years, a total of \$1,079.79 has been granted for this purpose. The details of these payments are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. The need to protect the privacy of those individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

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. 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 about Westport Holiday Parks & Motels, 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



Karen Hocking
General Manager, Housing