



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

13 December 2021

Dear

On 22 September 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *All advice, analysis, reports and assessments the Ministry of Social Development has produced regarding food security throughout New Zealand in the past three months (regardless of whether or not such documents have been provided to Government Ministers).*

On 2 November 2021 and 5 November 2021, you refined your request to the following:

- *All advice, analysis, reports and assessments the Ministry of Social Development has produced regarding food security throughout New Zealand, that has been provided to the MSD leadership team and Government Ministers in the past three months (regardless of whether or not such documents have been provided to Government Ministers).*

The Ministry has interpreted your request as to include papers that have been provided to Ministers or the Ministry's Leadership Team that mainly or briefly refer to food security issues, for example, the provision of food grants or the work of community groups in the food sector.

Please note, as the wording of your request is still very broad, the Ministry has refused your request for all further information, such as analyses or assessments the Ministry has produced regarding food security throughout New Zealand in the three months preceding your request. This aspect of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as substantial manual collation would be required to locate and prepare all documents within scope. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

The Ministry has considered whether it would be able to respond to this aspect of your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. The Ministry has concluded that, in either case, its ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

Please find below a list of papers in scope of your request. Most of these papers have been provided to you in previous responses under the Act. Some papers will be made publicly

available soon, and some will be provided to you soon, following other requests under the Act that the Ministry has received from you earlier.

No.	File number	Date	Document type	Title	Decision and OIA Section(s)
1.	REP/21/6/674	30/06/2021	Report	Supporting high users of hardship assistance	Has been released to you on 7 October 2021.
2.	REP/21/8/874	19/08/2021	Aide-memoire	Cabinet discussion on change in alert levels	Has been released to you on 1 December 2021.
3.	REP/21/8/875	19/08/2021	Aide-memoire	Ministerial meeting with Iwi chairs	Has been released to you on 1 December 2021.
4.	REP/21/8/881	23/08/2021	Aide-memoire	Discussion on access to food and other social services during lockdown	Has been released to you on 1 December 2021.
5.	REP/21/8/896	26/08/2021	Aide-memoire	Housing provider meeting, Thursday 26 August	Has been released to you on 2 December 2021.
6.	REP/21/8/902	26/08/2021	Cabinet paper	COVID-19: Proposed Community Response Package 2021	18(d). Will be made publicly available soon by the Ministry.
7.	REP/21/8/902	26/08/2021	Report	Draft Cabinet paper - COVID-19: Proposed Community Response Package 2021	Will be released to you as part of a request you made on 14 September 2021.
8.	REP/21/8/904	27/08/2021	Aide-memoire	COVID-19: Proposed Community Response Package 2021	Will be released to you as part of a request you made on 14 September 2021.
9.	REP/21/8/910	30/08/2021	Aide-memoire	Housing provider meeting, 31 August	Will be released to you as part of a request you made on 14 September 2021.
10.	REP/21/8/926	31/08/2021	Aide-memoire	Meeting with representatives of the National Beneficiaries Advocacy Consultative Group (NBACG)	Has been released to you on 1 December 2021.
11.	REP/21/9/930	03/09/2021	Report	MSD's response to demand for support to access food and other related services	Has been released to you on 1 December 2021.
12.	REP/21/9/939	03/09/2021	Report	Re-prioritising existing funding to meet community needs	Has been released to you on 1 December 2021.
13.	REP/21/9/949	06/09/2021	Joint Report	Income support options for low-income households, following Alert Level increases	Has been released to you on 17 November 2021.
14.	REP/21/9/953	07/09/2021	Minute of decision	COVID-19 - Government's Response to Increased Ongoing Demand for Access to Food and Other Essential Wellbeing Items	18(d). Will be made publicly available soon by the Ministry.
15.	REP/21/9/953	07/09/2021	Cabinet paper	COVID-19: Government's response to increased ongoing demand for access to food and other essential items	18(d). Will be made publicly available soon by the Ministry.
16.	REP/21/9/953	07/09/2021	Report	COVID-19: Government's response to increased ongoing demand for access to food and other essential items	18(d). Will be made publicly available soon by the Ministry.
17.	REP/21/9/961	08/09/2021	Aide-memoire	Government's response to increased ongoing demand for access to food and other essential wellbeing items	18(d). Will be made publicly available soon by the Ministry.

No.	File number	Date	Document type	Title	Decision and OIA Section(s)
18.	REP/21/9/970	13/09/2021	Aide-memoire	Housing provider meeting, Tuesday 14 September	Has been released to you on 2 December 2021.
19.	N/a	18/08/2021	Spreadsheet	High level options and advice for pausing work during COVID-19 alert levels	Release in part. 9(2)(h)

Below, the Ministry is providing you with an excerpt of the spreadsheet *High level options and advice for pausing work during COVID-19 alert levels*, dated 18 August 2021, that was provided to the Ministry's Leadership Team. No further information in this spreadsheet relates to food security.

***Longer term changes – not recommended unless longer term lock down***

Topic	Change description	Rationale for change	Legal and Policy advice	High level recommendation	Technical Change Required	Operational or Ministerial Decision required
<i>Food grant changes</i>	<i>We increased everyone's food entitlement balance by \$400 so that more people were able to access assistance via MyMSD.</i>	<i>This was to make it easier for more people to get help with food online as people were having trouble getting through on our phones.</i>	<b>Legal:</b> [9(2)(h)]	<i>Not recommended.</i>  <b>Agreed Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Ministerial</b>

You will note that some information in the spreadsheet withheld under section 9(2)(h) of the Act in order to maintain legal professional privilege. The greater public interest is in ensuring that government agencies can continue to obtain confidential legal advice.

The principles and purposes of the Act 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
- 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, 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Magnus O'Neill', written in a cursive style.

Magnus O'Neill  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**