



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

06 December 2021

Tēnā koe

On 10 November 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

***April-June:***

- 1. Which Buller commercial accommodation providers were used for emergency housing?*
- 2. How long had each been used for emergency housing?*
- 3. How many people were housed at each (month by month breakdown)?*
- 4. How much was each provider paid (month by month breakdown)?*
- 5. In total, how many people in Buller used emergency housing in this quarter?*
- 6. On average, what was the length of stay in emergency housing in Buller?*
- 7. On average, how many people were in each household that used emergency housing?*
- 8. In total, how many children were living in emergency accommodation in Buller?*

***July-September:***

- 1. Which Buller commercial accommodation providers were used for emergency housing?*
- 2. How long had each been used for emergency housing?*
- 3. How many people were housed at each (month by month breakdown)?*
- 4. How much was each provider paid (month by month breakdown)?*
- 5. In total, how many people in Buller used emergency housing in this quarter?*
- 6. On average, what was the length of stay in emergency housing in Buller?*
- 7. On average, how many people were in each household that used emergency housing?*

8. *In total, how many children were living in emergency accommodation in Buller?*

Additionally, you also requested the information below. These two questions were transferred to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) on 2 December 2021 as these questions are more closely aligned with their functions and you can expect a response from MBIE in due course.

9. *We understand that many Westport residents took up emergency accommodation following the July 17 floods. Can you advise whether any of your figures include people who were housed by MBIE's Temporary Accommodation Service?*

10. *If so, how many people?*

Demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and more people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is generated by a shortage of affordable housing driving up house prices and rents. People on low incomes are most affected by rising housing costs and many seek financial help through the Ministry.

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of 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 or 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 we want to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. They provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available at the following link:

[www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html).

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. Please note that the Ministry does not hold any contracts or official agreements or arrangements with any emergency housing provider outside of Rotorua.

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 enclosed an **Excel Spreadsheet** which contains the following tables:

- **Table One:** List of suppliers for clients granted Emergency Housing between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021 in the Buller District and the month of the supplier's first grant.

Table One responds to questions one and two.

- **Table Two:** The number of grants, clients and amount granted for Emergency Housing in the Buller District.

Table Two responds to questions three, four and five.

- **Table Three:** The average consecutive weeks stay in Emergency Housing in the Buller District between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021.

Table Three responds to question six.

- **Table Four:** The number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants in the Buller District between 1 April and 30 September 2021.

Table Four responds to question seven. Please note that the Ministry does not officially report on average household size. The Ministry has provided you with the number of households with children, broken down to couples and single people.

- **Table Five:** The number of clients and children who were in receipt of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants as at 30 June 2021 and 30 September 2021.

Table Five responds to question eight.

Regarding the tables provided, please note that the Territorial Land Authority (TLA) is estimated based on the clients' address at the time of the grant. This TLA may not be the same as the address of the emergency housing supplier. Where the client address is not recorded, the location of the Ministry's service centre case managing the client has been used to approximate which TLA a client resides in. However, as the Ministry has switched to working from national queues, EH SNGs and other hardship grants could be granted by a case manager working anywhere in New Zealand. Therefore, in such cases, the TLA may not reflect the actual client address or location. Due to the transient nature of people receiving EH SNGs, the recorded address for a client may also be that of a trusted family member or friend who receives mail on their behalf.

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 and attachments on the Ministry'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 Buller, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



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