



06 MAY 2021

Tēnā koe

On 17 March 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

1. *Provide an update on the total that has been charged to those accommodated in emergency housing since the charge was introduced.*
2. *Month by month breakdown.*

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 whether 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 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 here:

[www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/special-needs-grant.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/special-needs-grant.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.

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.

From 19 October 2020, the Ministry introduced the Emergency Housing Contribution (EHC). Clients receiving EH SNG for more than seven nights need to pay 25 per cent of their weekly income towards accommodation costs. The EHC is similar to what clients pay in transitional housing or public housing, this is to better transition clients when they leave Emergency Housing into longer-term housing. More information about EHC is available here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/news/2020/emergency-housing-changes.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/news/2020/emergency-housing-changes.html).

Please refer to **Table One** below, which shows the number of Emergency Housing Contributions amount charged and the number of distinct clients, during the period 19 October 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Please also refer to **Table Two** below, which shows the number of Emergency Housing Contributions established, the amount charged and the number of distinct clients, over the entire period 19 October 2020 to 31 March 2021.

**Table One: The number of Emergency Housing Contributions (EHCs) established, the amount charged and the number of distinct clients, during the period 19 October 2020 to 31 March 2021.**

Month Ending	Number of EHCs requests	Amount charged	Distinct clients
October 2020	5,880	\$837,109.25	3,897
November 2020	11,325	\$1,641,663.47	4,701
December 2020	10,248	\$1,957,122.08	4,710
January 2021	8,928	\$1,452,031.31	4,374
February 2021	9,369	\$1,528,477.57	4,461
March 2021	11,166	\$1,869,664.76	4,761

**Notes for Table One:**

- Count of distinct clients should not be manually added together to create a total as a distinct client may appear in multiple months.
- A client may have multiple grants over the whole period but will only be counted once in each month where an EHC was created.
- To protect confidentiality the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- These data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.

**Table Two: The total number of Emergency Housing Contributions (EHCs) requests, over the entire period 19 October 2020 to 31 March 2021.**

	Number of EHCs requests	Amount charged	Distinct clients
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,913</b>	<b>\$9,286,068.44</b>	<b>10,083</b>

**Notes for Table Two:**

- These data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows of Table One may not add exactly to the given column or row totals in Table Two.
- Distinct clients have only been counted once in this total, even if they have had multiple grants over the each monthly period shown in Table One.

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 regarding 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 the Emergency Housing contribution data, 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.

Nāku iti noa, nā,



 Karen Hocking  
**General Manager  
Housing**