



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

15 SEP 2021

Dear

On 5 August 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Please provide data nationally and for the Auckland region.

- 1. How many people on the social housing register are waiting for a modified property?*
- 2. Of these, how many require a fully accessible property?*
- 3. How many of those waiting for a modified property are waiting for a transfer from a Kāinga Ora property?*
- 4. How many people who have received the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant in 2020 and 2021 to date have also been in receipt of a disability allowance, child disability allowance and/or supported living payment? Please break down by benefit type.*

When New Zealanders are in need of public housing, their needs are recorded on either the Housing Register or the Transfer Register. The combined register is referred to as the Public Housing Register, also known as the Social Housing Register. The Housing Register shows people who are not currently in public housing but who have been assessed as eligible for public housing. The Transfer Register shows people already in public housing but who have applied to be rehoused. While the Ministry completes the housing assessments which inform the Public Housing Register, responsibility for funding and supply sits with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Kāinga Ora, respectively. More information about the Housing Register is available here: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/index.html.

Each housing application is given a priority rating based on the Ministry's assessment of their housing need, and all applications are measured against the same criteria to determine that priority rating. Applicants who are assessed as at risk (Priority A) or as having a serious housing need (Priority B) are placed on the Register until a house becomes available. The Ministry's role is to assess people's needs for public housing, and if they or a family member need an accessible home, we capture that as part of the assessment process. Clients who are on the Register are referred to Public Housing providers when suitable properties become available.

Clients who approach the Ministry seeking public housing are offered other assistance appropriate to their situation. These options include, for example, an Accommodation Supplement for private renters, or a Recoverable Assistance Payment Grant. Further

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information regarding available support can be accessed on the Ministry's website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/living-expenses/housing.html.

For the sake of clarity, I will respond to each of your questions in turn. Where appropriate, the answers to several questions may be combined. As requested, information has been provided for the Auckland Super City Territorial Local Authority (TLA), and the rest of New Zealand.

- 1. How many people on the social housing register are waiting for a modified property?*
- 3. How many of those waiting for a modified property are waiting for a transfer from a Kāinga Ora property?*

Please see attached as **Appendix A, Table One**, which shows the number of people on the Social Housing Register as at end of June 2021 waiting for a modified property, broken down by type of register and region.

- 2. Of these, how many require a fully accessible property?*

Any information regarding the type of accessibility a person needs is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information Ministry staff would have to manually review hundreds of files. As such, I refuse this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

- 4. How many people who have received the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant in 2020 and 2021 to date have also been in receipt of a disability allowance, child disability allowance and/or supported living payment? Please break down by benefit type.*

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 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.

It is important to note that over 50 per cent of people accessing EH SNGs only need between one and three grants before securing more suitable accommodation.

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 see attached as **Appendix A, Table Two**, which shows the number of distinct clients in receipt of Child Disability Allowance (CDA), Disability Allowance (DA) and/or Supported Living Payment (SLP) as at end of June 2021, who also received at least one EH SNG in the period 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2021, broken down by Auckland Super City TLA and the rest New Zealand.

For context, during the period 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2021, a total of 28,116 distinct clients received at least one EH SNG.

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
- 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 regarding data relating to housing, 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.

Yours sincerely



P.P.

Karen Hocking
General Manager
Housing

Appendix A:

Table One: The number of people of the Social Housing Register waiting for a modified property as at end of June 2021, broken down by region and type of register.

		Housing Register	Transfer Register	Total
Auckland Super City TLA	Does not need a modified house	8,073	1,989	10,059
	Needs a modified house	315	183	498
Rest of New Zealand	Does not need a modified house	15,480	2,280	17,760
	Needs a modified house	612	234	843
Total		24,474	4,683	29,160

Notes for Table One:

- 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.
- A value of one or two may be rounded to zero or three.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.

Table Two: The number of distinct clients in receipt of Child Disability Allowance (CDA), Disability Allowance (DA) and/or Supported Living Payment (SLP) as at end of June 2021, who also received at least one EH SNG in the period 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2021, broken down by Auckland Super City TLA and the rest New Zealand.

Assistance Type		Number of distinct clients as at end of June 2021
Auckland Super City TLA	Child Disability Allowance	201
	Disability Allowance	738
	Disability Allowance and Child Disability Allowance	33
	Supported Living Payment	348
	Supported Living Payment and Child Disability Allowance	33
	Supported Living Payment and Disability Allowance	441
	Supported Living Payment, Disability Allowance and Child Disability Allowance	18
Rest of New Zealand	Child Disability Allowance	483
	Disability Allowance	1,536

	Disability Allowance and Child Disability Allowance	126
	Supported Living Payment	843
	Supported Living Payment and Child Disability Allowance	42
	Supported Living Payment and Disability Allowance	1,302
	Supported Living Payment, Disability Allowance and Child Disability Allowance	63
Total		6,204

Notes for Table Two:

- EHSNG is an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant
- SLP is a Supported Living Payment
- CDA is a Child Disability Allowance
- DA is a Disability Allowance
- Clients in this table are not necessarily on the social housing waitlist awaiting a modified house.
- The Supported Living Payment, Child Disability Allowance or Disability Allowance may not be for a condition that necessitates a modified house to live in.
- This is a count of clients, not grants. A client may have received more than one grant during the period.
- The client may have received an emergency housing grant at any time within the 18 months between 1 January 2020 and the end of June 2021.
- The client may not have received the EH SNG whilst getting the assistance type, they were receiving at the end of June 2021.
- To protect confidentiality the Ministry of Social Development 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.
- A value of one or two may be rounded to zero or three.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.
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