



6 April 2022

Tēnā koe

On 23 February 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants paid in Rotorua District Territorial Local Authority on a quarterly basis from 1 Jan 2016 to the most recently available full quarter, by ethnic group, iwi and gender?*

On 1 July 2021, contracting with emergency housing suppliers in Rotorua commenced. However, for the rest of New Zealand, the Ministry does not contract motels to provide emergency housing. The Ministry meets the cost of emergency housing in all locations outside of Rotorua through the Special Needs Grant programme. 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.

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.

Concerning your request for information regarding EH SNGs paid in the Rotorua District Territorial Local Authority, broken down by ethnic group, iwi and gender for the period 1 October 2016 to 31 December 2021, please see the attached Excel spreadsheet, which contains the following tables:

- **Table One:** Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants paid in Rotorua District Territorial Local Authority during the period 01 October 2016 to 31 December 2021, by ethnic group
- **Table Two:** Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants paid in Rotorua District Territorial Local Authority during the period 01 October 2016 to 31 December 2021, by iwi
- **Table Three:** Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants paid in Rotorua District Territorial Local Authority during the period 1 October 2016 to 31 December 2021, by gender

The Ministry is in the process of changing its reporting to total response. In this regard you will note that the categories for ethnic group in **Table One** differ from data previously released to you under the Act. Total response ethnicity means that if a person identifies with more than one ethnic group, they are counted in each ethnic group. As clients can identify as more than one ethnicity, the amount paid for each of a clients' ethnicities may be duplicated across multiple ethnicity categories.

This change to total response reporting reflects our clients more accurately, aligns the Ministry's approach with Statistics New Zealand reporting, and reflects best practice. Ethnicity is about identity and a sense of belonging, measuring cultural affiliation rather than race, ancestry, nationality, or citizenship. Ethnicity is self-perceived, and people can identify with more than one ethnic group. For more information about how ethnicity reporting differs from data previously released to you under the Act, please see:

www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/tools/how-we-report-ethnicity.

You will also note that the categories for gender presented in **Table Three** differ from data previously released to you under the Act. During the period 1 October 2016 to 31 December 2021, some people receiving EH SNGs identified themselves as gender diverse, which has been included in the data released to you.

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 and attached Excel spreadsheet 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 Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants 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.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'PP. Hocking', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Karen Hocking
Group General Manager
Housing