



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

4 April 2022

Tēnā koe

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

- *What is the average wait time for those calling Studylink?*
- *How many people are employed nationwide at the Studylink call centre?*

I can inform you that the average wait time for those calling Studylink for the week ending 28 March 2022 was 16 minutes and 41 seconds.

Studylink staff were deployed to the COVID-19 Welfare Support line when it was initially implemented in December 2021, in order to assist with high call volumes. As Studylink went into their peak season, staff returned to handling only student-related calls for a three-week period in March 2022. Studylink's wait times have since decreased, and staff have since been reassigned to help with the COVID-19 Welfare support line again.

In regard to the second part of your request I can inform you that, as at 4 April 2022, there are 140 people employed across the two Studylink call centres in Palmerston North and Lower Hutt.

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.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding Studylink wait times, 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

Bridget Saunders

Bridget Saunders
**Manager, Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**