



20 January 2022

Tēnā koe

On 4 November 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. What is the average time to acknowledge the online complaints lodged here under the heading "submit your enquiry online"?*
- 2. How many complaints have been responded to since (and including) January 2021?*
- 3. How many complaints were received on the same online form since January 2021?*

The Ministry of Social Development is committed to delivering first class services and providing dependable advice. Therefore, the Ministry takes all complaints seriously not only to resolve the complaint but to improve the Ministry's services for everyone.

Please note, the Online Complaints form went live on 25 June 2021. Therefore, the Ministry is only able to provide information regarding online complaints from this date.

Furthermore, to protect confidentiality, the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data. The below figures provided in questions two and three have had random rounding where, values have been randomly rounded to the nearest multiple of 3. The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.

For the sake of clarity, the Ministry will address your questions in turn.

- 1. What is the average time to acknowledge the online complaints lodged here under the heading "submit your enquiry online"?*

A complaint must be acknowledged within 24 hours (unless it is resolved within that time). All complaints need to be fully investigated and resolved within 5 working days, unless there is a good and sufficient reason for the delay. Where there is a delay, the client must be kept informed of the progress.

The Ministry is unable to provide you with the average time to acknowledge forms received, as the Ministry does not record the date a form was acknowledged. Therefore, this part of your request has been refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist.

2. How many complaints have been responded to since (and including) January 2021?

Since 25 June 2021 to 10 November 2021, the Ministry has responded to 4,446 forms received via the Online Complaints form.

3. How many complaints were received on the same online form since January 2021?

Since 25 June 2021 to 10 November 2021, the Ministry has received a total of 4,653 forms via the Online Complaints form.

Please note, numbers include forms that have been submitted multiple times. The Ministry is currently working on a fix to reduce duplicate submissions. As there is no duplicate search result in reporting, the Ministry is unable to identify how many of the total forms are duplicates.

207 forms are yet to be completed due to either currently still being acknowledged, addressed or are currently on hold.

A form is typically put on hold when there is not enough information entered into the form, therefore, the Ministry are awaiting further information from the complainant. This is information such as missing a client number, so the Ministry is unable to identify who completed the form and is therefore unable to identify the complainant through any other source, to assist them.

In these situations, the Ministry will contact the complainant, if possible, for further information. If the Ministry has not received further information within 48 hours, the complainant is notified that their form has been completed but to submit further information when possible.

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 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 the Online Complaints form, 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.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paula McManus', is positioned above the printed name.

Paula McManus
Manager
Client Service Delivery Support