



26 July 2022

Tēnā koe

On 12 July 2022, Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) transferred part of your request to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry), under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), that asked for the following information:

- *The total costs of money paid out as government support for businesses and COVID-19 wage payments*

In March 2020, the Government implemented an economic package in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The package consisted of taxpayer funded subsidies for those who were in business and were either self-employed or employed others and met the eligibility criteria. Subsequently, there were extensions to the package to continue supporting employers in retaining their staff through the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.

I have provided some examples below of the support provided and the publicly available website links for further information:

- **COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme:** The COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme is available to employers, including self-employed people, to help pay their employees who must self-isolate because of COVID-19 and can't work at home during that period. [COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme - Work and Income](#)
- **COVID-19 Short-Term Absence Payment:** The COVID-19 Short-Term Absence Payment is available for businesses, including self-employed people, to help pay their employees who cannot work from home while they (or their dependant) wait for a COVID-19 PCR test result. [COVID-19 Short-Term Absence Payment - Work and Income](#)
- **COVID-19 Wage Subsidy:** The Wage Subsidy payments supported employers to continue to pay employees and protect jobs for businesses affected by a change in COVID-19 alert levels and the COVID-19 Protection Framework.

As at 1 July 2022, a total of \$19,430,025,414 billion has been spent on supporting businesses to retain and pay their employees. See **table one** below which shows a breakdown of this total amount by the wage subsidy schemes available.

Table One: Total amount of Wage Subsidy paid as at 1 July 2022 by scheme type

Scheme type	Amount
Essential worker	\$25,412,785.20
Isolating Caring or Sick	\$85,205,389.20
Leave Support	\$18,821,259.20
Leave Support December 2021	\$422,550,843.50
Self Isolating	\$20,005,276.20
Short-term absence payment	\$44,368,725.51
Original wage Subsidy	\$10,948,900,818.9
Wage Subsidy Extension	\$2,573,279,555.9
Wage Subsidy Resurgence	\$317,916,844.78
Wage Subsidy March 2021	\$183,358,409.61
Wage Subsidy August 2021	\$4,790,205,505.8
Total	\$19,430,025,414

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 and attachments on the Ministry'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 COVID-19 wage subsidies, 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

Bridget Saunders

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Manager Issue Resolution
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