



22 June 2022

Tēnā koe

On 24 May 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. How many people in New Zealand were on the unemployment benefit during the period 15 January 2022 to 15 May 2022 for more than 4 weeks*
 - 2. How many people in Hawkes Bay were on the unemployment benefit during the period 15 January 2022 to 15 May 2022 for more than 4 weeks.*
 - 3. How many people in Western Bay of Plenty were on the unemployment benefit during the period 15 January 2022 to 15 May 2022 for more than 4 weeks.*
 - 4. As at 15 May 2022 how many people in New Zealand had been on the unemployment benefit for more than one year, two years, five years, and ten years respectively.*
 - 5. As at 15 May 2022 how many people in Hawkes Bay had been on the unemployment benefit for more than one year, two years, five years, and ten years respectively.*
 - 6. As at 15 May 2022 how many people in Western Bay of Plenty had been on the unemployment benefit for more than one year, two years, five years, and ten years respectively.*
- For 4, 5, and 6 please provide the taxpayer cost for those respective breakdown periods.*

Jobseeker Support Work Ready is a temporary benefit paid for up to 52 weeks while clients look for work or are in training for work.

In response to your request, please find attached an Excel spreadsheet with the following Tables:

- **Table One:** The number of working age clients on Jobseeker Support Work Ready in specified Territorial Local Authorities as at month end in months January 2022 to May 2022, broken down by continuous duration.
- **Table Two:** The number of working age clients on Jobseeker Support Work Ready in specified Territorial Local Authorities as at month end in months January 2022 to May 2022, broken down by more than four weeks continuous duration.

Please note that the Ministry has not provided Table Two as at 15 May 2022 as you have requested, but as at the end of the month as this is in line with the Ministry's standard reporting and Table One.

The Ministry is unable to provide you with the total amounts paid to the Jobseeker Work Ready clients reported on in the attached Excel spreadsheet due to the way information is centrally recorded. This information is held in notes on individual case files, and in order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review a substantial number of client files. As such, I refuse 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.

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'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 Jobseeker Support, 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

Bridget Saunders
**Manager Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**