



10 May 2022

Tēnā koe

On 11 March 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information regarding disabled people employed within the Ministry:

- 1. What is your policy on employing disabled people in roles where they can influence the experience of fellow disabled people?*
- 2. How many staff work in the area of disability service provision in any and all parts of your organisation?*
- 3. How many staff working in disability service provision in any and all areas of your organisation themselves experience disabling barriers related to significant impairment(s)?*

On 29 October 2021, the Ministry for Disabled People was announced. The Ministry for Disabled People will be a 'departmental agency' hosted by the Ministry. That will mean that the new Ministry will make decisions independently from the Ministry in most respects and is separately accountable to a Minister through its own Chief Executive (rather than being accountable through a Departmental Chief Executive).

With regard to question one, the Ministry supports the employment of disabled people into all roles at the Ministry. Please see attached as **Appendix One** a copy of the Ministry's intranet pages Employment of disabled people guidance. The Ministry has a range of policies that support the employment of disabled people which include the Reasonable Accommodation in Employment Policy and the Flexible Working Policy.

The Ministry is committed to increasing the employment of disabled people in the Public Service as part of its commitment to the Disability Action Plan. More information on the Disability Action Plan 2019 – 2023 is available at the following link: [www.odi.govt.nz/disability-action-plan-2/](http://www.odi.govt.nz/disability-action-plan-2/).

Please note that the Ministry does not have a specific policy of employing disabled people specifically in roles where they can influence the experience of fellow disabled people. The nature of the Ministry's work is such that we touch

the lives of many disabled people and all Ministry employees may have some influence on the experience of disabled people.

The Ministry has a range of policies that support the employment of disabled people which include the Reasonable Accommodation in Employment Policy and the Flexible Working Policy.

The Disabled Employee Network which is an employee-led network had 67 members from across the Ministry as of April 2022. The Ministry's Disabled Employee Network, disability includes people with health conditions, including mental health. People do not have to share why they are joining as there are no requirements on being part of this network.

The Ministry is a CareWise employer, supporting employees who provide care and support for someone close to them who needs additional assistance with their everyday living because of a disability, including a health condition, illness or injury. Please find enclosed as **Appendix Two** a copy of the Ministry's Carer Hub intranet page.

You will note that some information has been deemed to be 'out of scope' of your request, as this information related to Ministry staff names and contact details who are below tier 4 and/or who are not decision-makers.

The Ministry's Accessibility Charter, which acts as a catalyst for change in creating inclusive workplaces was launched on 15 February 2018 and several government agencies, local councils, District Health Boards, and Non-Governmental Organisations have ratified it.

Information on the Ministry's accessibility programmes are available at the following link: <https://msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/accessibility/index.html>.

The Ministry also provides the use of the Lead Toolkit to all employers that is a "valuable resource for employers, leaders, managers, and human resource professionals to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for disabled people". You can find more information about the Lead Toolkit on the Ministry's website: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/lead-programme-work/lead-toolkit/index.html>.

## **Response to question two**

With regard to question two, the Ministry has identified 82 positions which focus on or support disability related work, with a Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) of 80.2 (as at 28 February 2022).

Please note we had to undertake a manual search using key terms and other parameters to identify these positions. Of the total positions identified, 47 had 'disability' in their position title (table one), and an additional 35 roles were

identified by being within the Disability, Seniors and International part of the Policy business group (table two).

**Table One: Roles identified by search of 'disability' in position title**

<b>Business group</b>	<b>Position title</b>	<b>Number of roles (headcount)</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Māori Communities and Partnerships	Relationship Manager Disability	6	6.0
Policy	Advisor Office for Disability Issues	7	7.0
	Director Office for Disability Issues	1	1.0
	Manager Office for Disability Issues	1	1.0
	Project Leader Disability	1	0.6
	Senior Advisor Office for Disability Issues	4	3.4
Service Delivery	All of Government Disabled Internship Relationship Manager	1	1.0
	Health and Disability Coordinator	13	13.0
	Principal Disability Advisor	1	1.0
	Regional Disability Advisor	12	12.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>46.0</b>

**Table Two: Roles identified by cost centre or directorate within Disability, Seniors and International in the Policy business group**

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Number of roles (headcount)</b>	<b>FTE</b>

Group Administrator	1	1.0
Senior Analyst Reporting	1	1.0
Senior Communications Advisor	1	1.0
Demonstration Director Enabling Good Lives	1	1.0
Director Office for Seniors	1	1.0
Executive Assistant	1	1.0
Manager NZSL	1	1.0
Policy Manager	3	2.9
Principal Analyst	4	4.0
Policy Analyst	2	2.0
Senior Policy Analyst	4	4.0
Administrator Enabling Good Lives	1	1.0
Business Manager Enabling Good Lives	1	1.0
Financial Administrator	1	0.7
Lead Connector	3	3.0
Tūhono Connector	9	8.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34.2</b>

**Notes:**

- Table two excludes roles with the term 'disability' in their position title. These roles are included in table one.
- These lists are based on the search criteria of 'disability' within a position title or cost centre description and is intended to give an indication of the number of disability-focussed roles within the Ministry.
- There may be other roles that assist or are related to disability services not captured by this search criteria.

The following paragraphs below are intended to provide you with an overview of the type of roles and functions related to disability issues within the Ministry:

### **Regional Health and Disability teams**

The Regional Health and Disability (RH&D) teams support Work and Income regions to improve understanding, remove inequalities, promote inclusion and improve employment outcomes for clients with a health condition or a disability. The teams work collaboratively with health, disability and other providers to ensure clients are linked to the right services and support.

The RH&D teams are made up of three key roles: Regional Health Advisor (RHA), Regional Disability Advisor (RDA) and Health and Disability Coordinators (HDC).

Each RHA and RDA have key strengths and experience, however their roles are interconnected, and staff are encouraged to contact either party for advice. Contact can be made via phone, email or in person.

The role of the HDC is to work with health and disability organisations and providers in the community, including general practitioners and designated health practitioners. The purpose of this is to improve their understanding and knowledge of Work and Income operational processes, philosophy and to strengthen their knowledge of the services and support available.

- **Principal Advisors - Principal Health Advisor (PHA) and Principal Disability Advisor (PDA)**

These principal advisor roles provide strategic leadership to our staff. They also help the Ministry to engage effectively with other health and disability sector agencies, such as the Ministry of Health, the Accident Compensation Corporation, District Health Boards, Primary Health Organisations and Non-Government Organisations.

The job description of the PDA identified that lived experience was an advantage. There are two positions in this team - Senior Disability Adviser and Relationship Manager All of Government Internships.

### **Enabling Good Lives (EGL)**

EGL is an approach to supporting disabled people, which aims to ensure that disabled people and their families have greater choice and control over their supports and lives and make more use of natural and universally available supports. The EGL vision and principles were developed by the disability community in 2011, and government agencies have worked with the community over the following years to demonstrate and evaluate the approach in several areas.

The Ministry is currently the lead for the Waikato EGL site, and employs the Tūhono/Connectors, who walk alongside disabled people and whānau to help them identify what they want in their life, how to build their life, and the range of supports available to live their life. More information about EGL is available at <https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/about-egl/egl-approach/>.

### **Accessibility and Usability Team**

The Accessibility and Usability Team's goal is to improve the experience that disabled people have when interacting with the Ministry's online and digital services, for both our clients and staff, by making them easily accessible, regardless of disability.

### **Disability Policy team**

This team provides strategic policy development to enable disabled people to live good lives. It is responsible for a broad range of policy issues impacting disabled people and whānau and provides advice to both the Minister for Disability Issues and the Minister for Social Development and Employment.

The team is currently leading cross-government work to introduce new Accessibility legislation and is also responsible for policy work relating to the establishment of the new, provisionally named, Ministry for Disabled People.

### **The Office for Disability Issues (ODI)**

ODI provides support and advice to the Minister for Disability Issues, as well as advice and advocacy across government on disability issues and coordinates government reporting on commitments and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. ODI also provides secretariat and programme support to the New Zealand Sign Language Board.

More information on the functions and responsibilities of ODI can be found at the following link: [www.odi.govt.nz/about-us/](http://www.odi.govt.nz/about-us/).

### **Response to question three**

With regard to question three of your request, the Ministry is unable to provide a breakdown of the number of staff that experience disabling barriers related to significant impairment(s) as the Ministry does not record this type of information from our employees. Therefore, this information is refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry.

The Ministry offers individual assistance to any of its employees that may have a disability or require specific additional resources for their role. These are often discussions that are held directly with the employee and respective manager.

## **Employment of disabled people in the new Ministry for Disabled People**

The Ministry is hosting the Establishment Unit for the new Ministry for Disabled People. The Establishment Unit is setting up the new Ministry for Disabled People, which will be established on 1 July 2022.

Where functions of the new Ministry are currently performed by the Ministry of Health and Ministry, people performing these functions will be transferred to the new Ministry under section 86 of the Public Sector Act. For new positions, the Establishment Unit has updated the position descriptions to include a statement that disabled people with lived experience is desirable.

The Establishment Unit has strong input and oversight from the disabled community. Governance arrangements include a Community Steering Group comprised of disabled people, to help ensure the voice of disabled people, whānau, tāngata whaikaha Māori and whānau whaikaha Māori is embedded in the development of key policies, operational models and tikanga of the new Ministry. This group oversaw the process to appoint the Establishment Unit Director and is engaging on the full range of work of the Establishment Unit.

You can follow updates and announcements on the work to establish the new Ministry online at [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/disability-system-transformation/ministry-for-disabled-people-establishment-unit/index.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/disability-system-transformation/ministry-for-disabled-people-establishment-unit/index.html).

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 these principles and purposes and 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response, 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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

PP. 

Stephen Crombie  
**Deputy Chief Executive People and Capability**