



22 November 2022

Tēnā koe

On 30 September 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

1. *The wait times for processing for the past year, including average wait times and five longest/shortest*
2. *How many applications for the subsidies were made and how many declined?*
3. *The amount given in childcare subsidies each year for the past five years*
4. *The average amount given*

On 31 October 2022 the Ministry emailed you to advise that more time was required to respond to your request as consultations necessary to make a decision on your request were such that a proper response could not reasonably be made within the original time limit, and the decision on your request would be with you no later than 22 November 2022.

Childcare Subsidy (CCS) is a non-taxable payment that aims to assist clients with dependent children to undertake and remain in employment, education, or training. It also assists with client access to pre-school care if they or their child are seriously disabled or ill. You can find more information regarding CCS at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/childcare-assistance-programme/childcare-subsidy.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/childcare-assistance-programme/childcare-subsidy.html).

1. *The wait times for processing for the past year, including average wait times and five longest/shortest*

You will find **Table One** and **Table Two** below in response to this question.

Please note, the data in these two tables details the processing time for Childcare Assistance applications, which includes CCS and Out of School Care and Recreation Subsidy (OSCAR) applications. OSCAR is a non-taxable payment that aims to assist low-income caregivers to enter and remain in

employment. Due to the way this information is held in our system we are unable to separate processing times for CCS and OSCAR.

This information details the number of working days between when the Childcare Assistance application first enters the work queue to when it is completed. This may include a number of days where the application is placed on hold whilst the Ministry awaits further information from the client to complete the application.

The Ministry will make proactive contact with clients who have applications on hold to seek the further information required, which can attribute to a quicker processing time.

Please note this information is based off Client Event Notes, which are updated by the Work and Income Case Manager processing the applications. It is possible that due to administrative error Client Event Notes may not be updated at the time of the application being completed. As a result, payments may have occurred earlier than the processing time recorded.

This was the case for two of the five applications included in **Table Two**, which outlines the top 5 highest processing times to complete Childcare Assistance applications. These applications were completed within 11 and 14 days respectively, however, due to administration error the Client Event Notes were not updated to reflect this at the time.

The 5 lowest processing times for Childcare Assistance applications were all 'zero days', meaning they were received and processed on the same day.

**Table One: Average processing time for Centralised Services Childcare Units to complete Childcare Assistance applications, from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.**

| Average number of working days to complete |
|--|
| 13   |

**Table Two: Top 5 highest processing times for Centralised Services Childcare Units to complete Childcare Assistance applications, from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.**

| Rank | Working Days |
|------|--------------|
| 1    | 64           |
| 2    | 63           |

| Rank | Working Days |
|------|--------------|
| 3    | 63           |
| 4    | 62           |
| 5    | 62           |

2. *How many applications for the subsidies were made and how many declined?*

You will find **Table Three** below in response to this question. The data detailed in this table is for CCS applications only.

**Table Three: Number of Childcare Subsidy applications (grants and declines), from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2022, broken down by quarter.**

| Quarter ending        | Type           |               | Applications<br>(Grants +<br>Declines) |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|--|
|                       | Grants         | Declines      |  |
| <b>September 2017</b> | 9,312          | 1,107         | <b>10,419</b>                          |
| <b>December 2017</b>  | 7,608          | 1,053         | <b>8,658</b>                           |
| <b>March 2018</b>     | 10,254         | 1,287         | <b>11,541</b>                          |
| <b>June 2018</b>      | 8,133          | 1,152         | <b>9,285</b>                           |
| <b>September 2018</b> | 9,108          | 1,317         | <b>10,425</b>                          |
| <b>December 2018</b>  | 7,212          | 1,152         | <b>8,367</b>                           |
| <b>March 2019</b>     | 8,283          | 1,230         | <b>9,510</b>                           |
| <b>June 2019</b>      | 7,695          | 1,548         | <b>9,240</b>                           |
| <b>September 2019</b> | 9,543          | 2,031         | <b>11,574</b>                          |
| <b>December 2019</b>  | 5,916          | 1,302         | <b>7,218</b>                           |
| <b>March 2020</b>     | 8,373          | 1,797         | <b>10,167</b>                          |
| <b>June 2020</b>      | 2,811          | 810           | <b>3,624</b>                           |
| <b>September 2020</b> | 8,241          | 1,680         | <b>9,918</b>                           |
| <b>December 2020</b>  | 5,703          | 1,194         | <b>6,897</b>                           |
| <b>March 2021</b>     | 7,854          | 1,455         | <b>9,312</b>                           |
| <b>June 2021</b>      | 7,092          | 1,521         | <b>8,613</b>                           |
| <b>September 2021</b> | 5,337          | 1,071         | <b>6,408</b>                           |
| <b>December 2021</b>  | 3,933          | 642           | <b>4,572</b>                           |
| <b>March 2022</b>     | 6,270          | 1,056         | <b>7,326</b>                           |
| <b>June 2022</b>      | 6,156          | 1,278         | <b>7,434</b>                           |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>144,822</b> | <b>25,680</b> | <b>170,499</b>                         |

3. *The amount given in childcare subsidies each year for the past five years*

4. *The average amount given*

You will find **Table Four** below in response to these questions. The data detailed in this table is for CCS applications only.

**Table Four: Number of current Childcare Subsidies, total weekly payment rate and average weekly payment rate, from quarter ending September 2017 to June 2022.**

| <b>As at quarter ending</b> | <b>Number of children</b> | <b>Total weekly rate</b> | <b>Average client weekly rate</b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>September 2017</b>       | 28,953                    | \$2,570,234.96           | \$88.77                           |
| <b>December 2017</b>        | 15,636                    | \$1,401,714.40           | \$89.65                           |
| <b>March 2018</b>           | 25,593                    | \$2,276,897.21           | \$88.96                           |
| <b>June 2018</b>            | 25,215                    | \$2,254,209.94           | \$89.40                           |
| <b>September 2018</b>       | 25,260                    | \$2,264,195.37           | \$89.64                           |
| <b>December 2018</b>        | 16,263                    | \$1,389,022.80           | \$85.42                           |
| <b>March 2019</b>           | 22,248                    | \$1,963,000.30           | \$88.23                           |
| <b>June 2019</b>            | 22,353                    | \$2,037,073.07           | \$91.13                           |
| <b>September 2019</b>       | 23,811                    | \$2,151,557.77           | \$90.35                           |
| <b>December 2019</b>        | 12,987                    | \$1,108,939.32           | \$85.39                           |
| <b>March 2020</b>           | 21,684                    | \$1,939,254.27           | \$89.44                           |
| <b>June 2020</b>            | 15,633                    | \$1,457,556.26           | \$93.25                           |
| <b>September 2020</b>       | 19,659                    | \$1,789,075.92           | \$91.00                           |
| <b>December 2020</b>        | 11,694                    | \$1,017,146.36           | \$86.98                           |
| <b>March 2021</b>           | 19,548                    | \$1,740,562.26           | \$89.04                           |
| <b>June 2021</b>            | 20,088                    | \$1,826,159.45           | \$90.90                           |
| <b>September 2021</b>       | 18,933                    | \$1,755,494.08           | \$92.73                           |
| <b>December 2021</b>        | 10,128                    | \$919,378.32             | \$90.79                           |
| <b>March 2022</b>           | 15,882                    | \$1,557,565.18           | \$98.08                           |
| <b>June 2022</b>            | 16,701                    | \$1,643,789.42           | \$98.43                           |

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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding Childcare Subsidy, 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

*Bridget Saunders*

Bridget Saunders  
**Manager Issues Resolution  
Service Delivery**

**Table One and Two Notes:**

- Childcare Assistance applications are for 'Childcare Assistance Application' Client Event Notes.
- Only Client Event Notes completed by Centralised Services Childcare Units have been included. This includes Auckland Childcare Processing Centre, Central Processing Unit and Specialised Processing Services Whangarei.
- Only Client Event Notes that have been placed in the queue have been included.

**Table Three and Four Notes:**

- The Ministry's financial year begins on 1 July and ends on 30 June.
- Payments for Childcare Assistance is paid directly to childcare providers.
- CCS's payable hours is the hours payable after deduction of 20 hours of free Early Childcare Education (ECE) hours.
- ECE is provided by the Ministry of Education.
- A child may be attending more than one institution at the same time.
- Numbers have been revised from previous reports to only display applications that have been processed.
- Applications processed are applications granted or declined in the given period.
- The total weekly rate is as at given points in time. Adding up each quarter will not reflect the total amount paid in a year.