



5 October 2022

Tēnā koe

On 7 September 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. What verification does MSD require of recipients of foreign pensions to provide about the amounts and payment times of bank transfer fees made before the money reaches NZ? Please advise what legislation applies, and how the recipient is to go about this.*
- 2. Other than advice from the foreign pension authority of the annual amount and payment times of a foreign pension, what else, if anything, does MSD require of recipients of foreign pensions? And where in the legislation is this prescribed?*
- 3. What is the outcome of the process or formula used by the Chief Executive (pursuant to Part 6 of the earlier regulations) and MSD (pursuant to Cl 127 of the current Social Security Regulations) to determine bank transfer fees on a foreign pension of \$22-\$24 monthly, to compensate that recipient for specified types of bank transfer fees?*
- 4. Does either the Chief Executive or MSD complete reviews to ascertain whether there are any shortfalls or over-payments of NZS?*
- 5. In what circumstances would no bank transfer fees be reimbursed, when a foreign pension is sent from overseas?*
- 6. How many NZ Superannuitants who receive a foreign pension are asked to verify what bank transfer fees are deducted from the foreign pension before it enters NZ, and how many NZ superannuitants are unable to do this and no allowance is made by MSD for bank transfer fees previously considered?*

For the sake of clarity, the Ministry will respond to your request in turn. Some questions have been aggregated together for they have the same response.

1. *What verification does MSD require of recipients of foreign pensions to provide about the amounts and payment times of bank transfer fees made before the money reaches NZ? Please advise what legislation applies, and how the recipient is to go about this.*
2. *Other than advice from the foreign pension authority of the annual amount and payment times of a foreign pension, what else, if anything, does MSD require of recipients of foreign pensions? And where in the legislation is this prescribed?*

The Ministry requires a bank statement as a form of verification which show the transfer from overseas agency to a New Zealand bank account directly. The relevant legislation can be found here: [www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6784005.html?search=sw\\_096be8ed81c90476\\_bank+fee\\_25\\_se&p=1&sr=.](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0032/latest/DLM6784005.html?search=sw_096be8ed81c90476_bank+fee_25_se&p=1&sr=)

3. *What is the outcome of the process or formula used by the Chief Executive (pursuant to Part 6 of the earlier regulations) and MSD (pursuant to Cl 127 of the current Social Security Regulations) to determine bank transfer fees on a foreign pension of \$22-\$24 monthly, to compensate that recipient for specified types of bank transfer fees?*

I refer to the following link to the Social Security Regulations 2018 which explains the formula used to determine the bank fee: [www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2018/0202/latest/LMS96576.html](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2018/0202/latest/LMS96576.html).

4. *Does either the Chief Executive or MSD complete reviews to ascertain whether there are any shortfalls or over-payments of NZS?*

The Ministry only review a client's entitlement if we have sufficient reasons to. Clients who are receiving overseas pensions from countries outside the social security agreement with New Zealand will need to advise the Ministry of any changes to their entitlements to the overseas pension.

5. *In what circumstances would no bank transfer fees be reimbursed, when a foreign pension is sent from overseas?*

The Ministry requires verification as stated in the answer to question 1 and 2 of your request. If there is no verification provided by the client of the bank transfer fee, there will not be a reimbursement for the bank transfer fee.

6. *How many NZ Superannuitants who receive a foreign pension are asked to verify what bank transfer fees are deducted from the foreign pension before it enters NZ, and how many NZ superannuitants are*

*unable to do this and no allowance is made by MSD for bank transfer fees previously considered?*

I am unable to provide you with this information as it is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review a substantial number of 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.

Regarding the second part of your question, I refer you to question 5, verification is required for reimbursement of the bank transfer fee.

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

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding overseas pension deduction administration and bank transfer fees, 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**  
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