



17 October 2022

Tēnā koe

On 19 September 2022, your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), was partially transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) for the following information:

- 1. I am interested in knowing how many COVID food parcels have been distributed in Hikurangi. The timeframe that I am looking at (for both queries) would be from 1 April 2022 until the current date (or as near to it as reasonably possible).*
- 2. I would also like to know who to make a complaint to regarding the local distribution of COVID-19 food parcels. Background to that is the Hikurangi Business Association are the local agent and receive 15k grants from Ngati Hine I believe, I would like to make a complaint about the fraudulent book-keeping that the business association have.*

As at 1 August 2022, Community Connectors across Aotearoa have supported 184,380 households with wider social service needs whilst in self-isolation.

The Ministry's regional teams are working locally through existing partnerships with iwi, Māori, Pacific and ethnic communities, the disability sector, community providers and leaders, councils and government agencies to provide support to those who are required to self-isolate.

Each region has a dedicated team of experienced people who will triage referrals for assistance, by connecting isolating individuals and whānau to appropriate local providers where needed, as well as directly assisting people where they can.

Existing Ministry clients are encouraged to check their eligibility for Work and Income support first before accessing other community support. The Ministry's dedicated webpage outlines the different supports available for individuals and whānau at the following link:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/covid-19/index.html.

There is also a dedicated COVID-19 0800 phone number that can be used if further information is required, and an online form that people can fill in to access the help they need, at the following link:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/covid-19/self-isolation-forms/index.html.

You have asked how to make a complaint about the distribution of COVID-19 food parcels. The following link provides information about how to make a complaint:

www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/complaints/index.html.

There are currently 293 community food organisations nationally providing food support to people and whānau who are self-isolating with COVID-19. Reporting indicates that they have delivered 573,313 food parcels as at 1 August 2022.

These providers are diverse and provide culturally appropriate kai support. The Community Groups work closely with our regional response teams to ensure that the Care in Community approach has good coverage and is accessible.

The Ministry advises that providers report that the number of food parcels to those in self-isolation in the Northland region for the period 1 April 2022 to 12 October 2022 is approximately 9980. This is an approximate number based on different reporting over the different phases of the response.

As it is the providers who distribute the food parcels, your request for information about the number distributed in Hikurangi is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as the Ministry does not hold this information and has no grounds for believing it is held by another department or organisation subject to the Act.

The Ministry does not collect data at a level below that of the region.

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 about the local distribution of COVID-19 food parcels in the Hikurangi area with us, please feel free to contact 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 or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



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