



26 October 2022

Tēnā koe

On 28 September 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *I'm looking for annual data, from 28/9/2012 to today's date 28/9/2022.*
- *How many females received the youth payment each of these years?*
- *How many males received the youth payment each of these years?*
- *How many females received the young parent payment each of these years?*
- *How many males received the young parent payment each of these years?*
- *Are you able to calculate the average amount of time each individual receives this payment for?*
- *What was the weekly youth payment in 2012 and what is it today?*
- *What was the weekly young parent payment in 2012 and what is it today?*
- *If this has changed, are there any factors that mitigate the change (eg payment structure changes, other benefits that can be accessed etc).*

The Ministry offers a number of services for young people to help improve skills through education, training, work, or other related activities.

The Youth Payment (YP) is available for young people who are aged 16 or 17 who can't live with their parents or guardians and aren't supported by them or anyone else. More information about YP is available on the Work and Income website, here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/youth-payment.html.

The Young Parent Payment (YPP) is available for young parents aged 16 to 19 years old. More information about YPP is available on the Work and

Income website, here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/young-parent-payment.html.

I have grouped your questions for the sake of clarity.

- *I'm looking for annual data, from 28/9/2012 to today's date 28/9/2022.*
- *How many females received the youth payment each of these years?*
- *How many males received the youth payment each of these years?*
- *How many females received the young parent payment each of these years?*
- *How many males received the young parent payment each of these years?*
- *Are you able to calculate the average amount of time each individual receives this payment for?*

Please see the **attached Excel spreadsheet** which contains the following tables in response to your request:

- **Table One:** Current number of clients receiving Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment as at the end of December 2012 to December 2021, broken down by gender
- **Table Two:** Current number of clients receiving Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment at the end of December 2012 to December 2021, broken down by current duration.

The Ministry has interpreted your request for 'annual data' as at the end of each year from 2012. As such, data for 2022 has not been provided as the year is not yet ended.

For **Table Two**, the Ministry has provided the current duration of clients receiving YP or YPP, as we are unable to provide the average length of time that a client receives these benefits.

A client may have their YP or YPP suspended, cancelled, or resumed for a number of reasons. 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 requests 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.

- *What was the weekly youth payment in 2012 and what is it today?*
- *What was the weekly young parent payment in 2012 and what is it today?*
- *If this has changed, are there any factors that mitigate the change (eg payment structure changes, other benefits that can be accessed etc).*

You can find the current payment rates for YP and YPP on the Ministry's website. Please refer to the links below to see the current and historic rates of each benefit:

- Youth Payment: workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/youth-service-tables/youth-payment-current.html
- Young Parent Payment: workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/youth-service-tables/young-parent-payment-current.html.

The Ministry offers a number of services for young people alongside YP and YPP. You can read more about what the Ministry offers on the Work and Income website, here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/16-19-year-olds/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 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.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment, 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

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**Manager Issue Resolution
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