



19 September 2022

Tēnā koe

On 22 August 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. The number of people staying in emergency housing each year from 2016 to present (if information is not available for this period then for the period for which it is available)*
- 2. The number of people in emergency housing by region of New Zealand each year from 2016 to present (or available period)*
- 3. The number of people who have been moved to a region where they don't usually reside in order to access emergency housing each year from 2016 to present*
- 4. A breakdown of where people have been moved from in order to access emergency housing, and a breakdown of where people have been moved to in order to access emergency housing. Both for the aforementioned period.*

Demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and more people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is generated by a shortage of affordable housing driving up house prices and rents. People on low incomes are most affected by rising housing costs and many seek financial help through the Ministry.

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. The Ministry pays EH SNGs directly to the accommodation supplier and assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights but can be extended dependant on individual circumstances.

You can find more information regarding EH SNGs at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/emergency-housing.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/emergency-housing.html).

For the sake of clarity, I will address your questions in turn.

- 1. The number of people staying in emergency housing each year from 2016 to present (if information is not available for this period then for the period for which it is available)*
- 2. The number of people in emergency housing by region of New Zealand each year from 2016 to present (or available period)*

Please see attached the Excel Spreadsheet which contains the following two tables:

- **Table One:** The number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants and Clients during the period 1 October 2016 to 31 July 2022, broken down by Territorial Local Authority (TLA) and calendar year, and
  - **Table Two:** The number of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants and Clients during the period 1 October 2016 to 31 July 2022, broken down by region and calendar year.
- 3. The number of people who have been moved to a region where they don't usually reside in order to access emergency housing each year from 2016 to present*
  - 4. A breakdown of where people have been moved from in order to access emergency housing, and a breakdown of where people have been moved to in order to access emergency housing. Both for the aforementioned period.*

In order to provide you with this information for parts three and four of your request, 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.

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 the number of people in Emergency Housing from 2016 to present, 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



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