



27 September 2022

Tēnā koe

On 4 September 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *The length of time MSD has been placing people at 88 Wallace Court Motel in Wellington.*
- *The total number of people MSD has placed at 88 Wallace Court Motel in Wellington (broken down by month if possible, but a total figure is acceptable).*
- *The total cost incurred by MSD in placing people at 88 Wallace Court to date.*
- *The total number of complaints, if any, made to MSD relating to conditions at 88 Wallace Court (including but not limited to health and safety concerns, noise, facilities concerns, maintenance issues) by a) any MSD clients placed at 88 Wallace Court and b) any member of the public (including neighbours).*
- *Any and all correspondence between MSD and any other government agency (including police and Wellington City council) pertaining to 88 Wallace Court Motel, including but not limited to any correspondence relating to tenant or public safety.*

For clarity, I will respond to each part of your request in turn. Some sections of your request have been grouped together.

- *The length of time MSD has been placing people at 88 Wallace Court Motel in Wellington.*
- *The total number of people MSD has placed at 88 Wallace Court Motel in Wellington (broken down by month if possible, but a total figure is acceptable).*
- *The total cost incurred by MSD in placing people at 88 Wallace Court to date.*

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.

After these seven nights Work and Income arrange another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation and if another grant is required. The Ministry works hard to support people in emergency housing to secure a long-term housing solution, either through public housing or private rental accommodation. Other options including transitional housing can also be explored as an option depending on availability and the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution or the solution that we want to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. They provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available at the following link: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/nowhere-to-stay/emergency-housing.html)

Please find attached **Appendix One** containing **Table One** showing the total number of distinct clients, Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs) and amount granted regarding 88 Wallace Court Motel for the period 20 May 2020, when 88 Wallace Court Motel first started providing Emergency Housing to Ministry clients, to end of July 2022.

- *The total number of complaints, if any, made to MSD relating to conditions at 88 Wallace Court (including but not limited to health and safety concerns, noise, facilities concerns, maintenance issues) by a)*

*any MSD clients placed at 88 Wallace Court and b) any member of the public (including neighbours).*

I am unable to provide you with this information as any complaints or concerns regarding 88 Wallace Court Motel, if they exist, would be 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.

- *Any and all correspondence between MSD and any other government agency (including police and Wellington City council) pertaining to 88 Wallace Court Motel, including but not limited to any correspondence relating to tenant or public safety.*

Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

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, 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



Karen Hocking  
**Group General Manager**  
**Housing**

## Appendix One

**Table One:** The total number of distinct clients, Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs) and amount granted regarding 88 Wallace Court Motel for the period 20 May 2020 to end of July 2022.

<b>Number distinct clients</b>	<b>Number of grants</b>	<b>Amount granted</b>
57	444	\$1,764,410.03

Notes:

- Emergency Housing assistance payments are granted as Special Needs Grants.
- Count of grants does not represent a count of individuals as the same person may have been granted more than once.
- Amount granted is not necessarily the amount spent.
- To protect confidentiality the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- This data table has had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.
- Published counts will never differ by more than two counts.