



3 April 2023

Tēnā koe

On 6 March 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Last July, you and Chris brought a paper to the DPO Coalition about a review of Support Funds (and other things). Can you provide an update of where this is at? Did you report to the Minister for Social Development on the scope by the end of September as you had planned? If so, can we please get a copy of it?

Secondly, Support Funds are due to be handed back to MSD on 20 March. Are any settings changing at this point, or are things remaining the same? Has any comms gone out about this?

The second part of your question was forwarded to the Support Funds team to respond to.

On 14 March 2023, you clarified the first part of your request to:

Just to clarify, I'm looking for this paper (snippet taken from paper 9a from the July 2022 DPOC meeting):

- *opportunities for improvement identified through the transfer of Support Funds administration to MSD.*

This is a response to your request.

The document you have requested is withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials. The release of this information is likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest of effective government would not be served.

However, I consider I can provide you with a summary of aspects of this paper (section 16(1)(e) of the Act refers). I am providing you with as much information as possible. This has been done to ensure information under

active consideration remains protected, whilst also ensuring sufficient information is provided to address any transparency and accountability reasons favouring release of the information.

Please find below a summary of the document.

- In November 2022, the Minister for Social Development and Employment agreed for the Ministry to begin a review of employment, participation and inclusion supports.
- As part of this review, the Ministry will be looking at Support Funds, as well as Business Enterprises, Very High Needs, Community Participation, and Transition Services, and considering how these supports could be improved and made consistent with the direction of Disability System Transformation and cross-government changes in the disability sector.
- The Ministry anticipates that the review will take around two years to complete including potential engagement.

I note that you are seeking information in particular about Support Funds. Support Funds is one of the subjects of the paper being withheld. To provide you with the most helpful information, we can provide the following summary of Support Funds from the paper.

- To address current issues with Support Funds and to improve the way they operate, the Ministry will be reviewing them as part of the larger review of employment, participation, and inclusion services for disabled people.
- This review would look at how we can make Support Funds more consistent with New Zealand's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and broader disability system transformation, including Enabling Good Lives.
- One of the considerations the Ministry will have when undertaking this review is how Support Funds could be improved to provide disabled people more choice and control.
- We plan to engage on policy proposals that come out of this work.

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.

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



Julia Bergman
General Manager
International, Disability and Generational Policy