



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

12 December 2023

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act Request**

Thank you for your email of 16 November 2023, requesting information about Contact Centre wait times. I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

The remainder of the matters raised in your email did not fall under the Act. A response addressing these matters will be sent to you separately in due course.

*"Please supply information on whether wait times are now longer in 2023 than in 2020."*

Please find the below, the **Appendix** containing **Table One**: The number of Calls Offered, Calls Answered and the Average Speed to Answer, broken down by contact line, from 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2020 and **Table Two**: The number of Calls Offered, Calls Answered and the Average Speed to Answer, broken down by contact line, from 1 January 2023 – 30 November 2023.

The Contact Centre Average Speed to Answer in 2020 was 14:41 minutes, and in 2023, this decreased by 54 seconds to 13:46 minutes.

Due to different services offered between 2020 and 2023, such as the COVID Welfare Response line, call volumes are not comparable.

Our Contact Centres are focused on first-call resolution and are providing more support up front, over the phone, meaning our Contact Centre staff have increased the services they deliver over the phone. Due to this, we have seen an increase to our overall call handling time, with an increase of 5:53 minutes from 2020 to 2023. Today, Contact Centres process around 44 percent of all non-automated hardships, compared to 19 percent in 2019.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal detailed removed, on the Ministry's website in due course.

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 my decision on your request regarding call wait times at the Ministry Contact Centres, 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



pp.  
Magnus O'Neill

**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**

## Appendix

**Table One:** The number of Calls Offered, Calls Answered and the Average Speed to Answer, broken down by Contact Line, from 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2020

Contact Line	Calls Offered	Calls Answered	Average speed to answer
Government Helpline	77,607	49,480	11:45
Housing	288,895	240,072	9:48
Seniors	722,806	557,365	11:25
Studylink	572,494	447,959	15:35
Work and Income	5,471,689	4,214,819	15:20
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,133,491</b>	<b>5,509,695</b>	<b>14:41</b>

**Table Two:** The number of Calls Offered, Calls Answered and the Average Speed to Answer, broken down by Contact Line, from 1 January 2023 – 30 November 2023

Contact Line	Calls Offered	Calls Answered	Average speed to answer
Housing	253,625	203,630	11:15
Seniors	529,098	381,049	13:24
Studylink	250,919	196,043	14:32
Work and Income Covid Support	18,133	16,295	1:46
Work and Income	3,359,676	2,586,674	14:03
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,411,451</b>	<b>3,383,691</b>	<b>13:46</b>

Notes:

- In 2020, the COVID Support line was not open. These calls were being managed through the Government Helpline.