



15 February 2023

Kia ora kōrua

On 17 January 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

The Board have had a theme raised with them from the community affected by the 15 March terrorist attack in relation to the public housing waitlist not taking into consideration the faith or cultural requirements of the community. The Board are aware that larger families within the community may be struggling to find suitable accommodation due to the size of their family and their religious and cultural requirements for adult children to remain in the family home until they are married.

Prior to making any recommendations, the Board would like to understand the current criteria and approach used for public housing. This includes the following information:

- how bedrooms are allocated within a family unit*
- is there any consideration given to the use of communal living space, intergenerational living etc.*
- how many can share a bedroom?*
- are any allowances made for family beliefs (i.e., girls and boys not sharing the same room in line with religious beliefs or allowing larger intergenerational families to share a home with 3 children in a room)*
- are there any guidelines relating to extended families who wish to be accommodated in separate houses but close together?*

To aid clarity, each part of your request will be responded to in-turn.

- how bedrooms are allocated within a family unit*

Please refer to the following publicly available link on the Work and Income website which provides details on how bedrooms are allocated for eligible members of a household: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/bedroom-allocation-01.html

- is there any consideration given to the use of communal living space, intergenerational living etc.

The Ministry is committed to being responsive to the diverse communities that we serve and will take into consideration any cultural or religious preferences identified by people applying for public housing with a view to accommodate these preferences where practicable.

- how many can share a bedroom?

Please refer to the following publicly available link on the Work and Income website which provides details on overcrowding guidelines for the allocation of bedrooms: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/bedroom-allocation-01.html

- are any allowances made for family beliefs (i.e., girls and boys not sharing the same room in line with religious beliefs or allowing larger intergenerational families to share a home with 3 children in a room)

The overcrowding guidelines set-out that children aged under 18 years and of the same sex may reasonably share a bedroom. More information on the qualifications of those applying for social housing can be found by following this publicly available link on the Work and Income website: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/qualifications.html

- are there any guidelines relating to extended families who wish to be accommodated in separate houses but close together?

The Ministry will facilitate the location preferences of people applying for public housing subject to housing availability. It is important to note that there is flexibility within the guidelines to allow for case-by-case considerations such as housing proximity to extended whānau.

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 regarding social housing, 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Hocking'.

Karen Hocking
**Group General Manager
Housing**

Collective Impact Board

Memo

To: Ministry of Social Development [MSD]
CC: Denise Jackson – Chair, Kaiwhakaoranga Operational Group
From: Collective Impact Board – CIBoard@msd.govt.nz
Date: 12 January 2023

OIA Request for Information on Public Housing Criteria

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to request information from MSD to understand the criteria and any policy/legislation/framework that is applied to the public housing waitlist assessments.

Background

The Collective Impact Board was established on 25 May 2021 in line with Recommendation 26 of the [Royal Commission of Inquiry](#) into 15 March 2019 terrorist attack on Christchurch mosques.

Recommendation 26: Investigate establishing a Collective Impact Network and Board or other relevant mechanism that enables Public sector agencies, non-government organisations and affected whānau, survivors and witnesses to agree a specific work programme to provide ongoing wrap-around services to affected whānau, survivors and witnesses.

The Collective Impact Board has two key aims:

1. To provide advice and recommendations to the Kaiwhakaoranga Service ('the Service'), partners and other agencies on wrap-around services to support the needs of the community.
2. Create a best practice guide that can help inform wrap-around services and support should a tragedy of this nature happen again.

The Board have had a theme raised with them from the community affected by the 15 March terrorist attack in relation to the public housing waitlist not taking into consideration the faith or cultural requirements of the community. The Board are aware that larger families within the community may be struggling to find suitable accommodation due to the size of their family and their religious and cultural requirements for adult children to remain in the family home until they are married.

Prior to making any recommendations, the Board would like to understand the current criteria and approach used for public housing. This includes the following information:

- how bedrooms are allocated within a family unit
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- how many can share a bedroom?
- are any allowances made for family beliefs (i.e., girls and boys not sharing the same room in line with religious beliefs or allowing larger intergenerational families to share a home with 3 children in a room)
- are there any guidelines relating to extended families who wish to be accommodated in separate houses but close together?

Ngā mihi nui, assalamu alaikum,

(Chair) and

(Co-Chair)

On behalf of the Collective Impact Board