



20 July 2023

Tēnā koe

On 16 June 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Can I please request the following information?

- *Transitional housing numbers in Whanganui*
- *Emergency accommodation In Whanganui*
- *Break down please of Accommodation Supplement rates per Zone (1,2,3 &4) I know this is tricky due to ages and relationship status (with and without children) Do you have a table with this information on it*

Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the relevant agency for managing transitional housing. As per section 14 of the Act, we would have been required to transfer your request to HUD, but we have been advised by HUD that they have responded to this part of your request on 20 June 2023.

On 20 June 2023, the Ministry contacted you to advise that your request was broad in scope and was likely to be refused under section 18(f) of the Act as manual collation would be required to provide the information requested. As such, we suggested that you refine your request by clarifying the information you were seeking and for the time period you were wanting information on. Following some further emails on 28 and 29 June 2023, you confirmed on 29 June that you were refining the second part of your request to the following:

- *A list of suppliers that have received an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) paid on behalf of a client with a registered address in the Whanganui District TLA*
- *Number of households in emergency housing in the Whanganui District TLA*

Demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and many 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.

Some people may struggle to access suitable housing due to a lack of available supply or they simply may not be able to meet the high cost of housing which may result in them receiving EH SNG support for an extended period of time.

For people with high and complex needs, it can sometimes be challenging to identify suitable long-term housing, which can lead to longer stays in emergency housing. Work and Income work closely with these people to see what can be done to ensure that once they have a home of their own, they have the skills to sustain it, and the support they need to keep it.

The Ministry has interpreted the time period of your request to be the period 1 January 2023 to 31 May 2023. Please contact the Ministry if this was not the intent of your request for information and would like a different period of time.

You have requested a list of accommodation suppliers available in the Whanganui area. The Ministry is unable to provide a list of EH suppliers in a certain area as businesses may provide a registered address that is different to the physical address of their service (for example, a PO Box). The Ministry

can instead provide a list of EH suppliers that have received an EH SNG on behalf of a client with a registered address in the Whanganui area.

Please note, in order to protect client privacy, some values are suppressed and are represented by 'S'. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs and public interest in the information.

In response to the second part of your request, please refer to the attached **Appendix** which contains two tables as below.

Table One: List of suppliers who received Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant in Whanganui District Territorial Local Authority from 1 January 2023 to 31 May 2023.

Table Two: Number of households granted an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant in Whanganui District Territorial Local Authority as at 31 May 2023 by supplier.

You have also requested for a breakdown of Accommodation Supplement (AS) rates per zone. You might be interested in the AS table that can be found on the Ministry's website. This table categorizes the different groups and their maximum rates for the relevant areas. You can find the information here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/extra-help-information/temporary-additional-support-tables/accommodation-supplement-maximum-rates-current.html.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

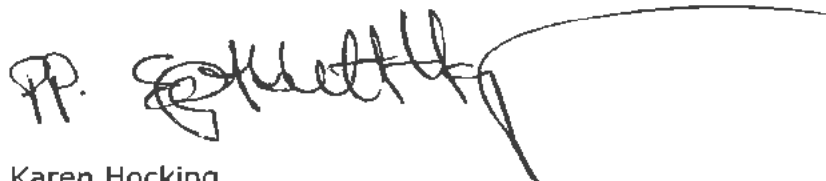
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

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.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding emergency housing and Accommodation Supplement, 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', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karen Hocking
**Group General Manager
Housing**

Appendix

Table One: List of suppliers who received Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant in Whanganui District Territorial Local Authority from 1 January 2023 to 31 May 2023

MSD Supplier Registered Name
ALPHA MOTEL
ANNDION LODGE
ASTRAL MOTEL
BIRCHWOOD SPA MOTEL
BRAEMAR HOUSE
BURWOOD MOTEL
COACHMAN'S LODGE MOTEL
FIESTA COURT MOTEL
MATTHIAS A & VERENA A NOWAK - 42B COLLEGE HOUSE
OSSIE'S MOTELS AND CHALETS
PIHMS HOLDINGS LIMITED
TAIHAPE MOTEL
WHANGANUI PEOPLES CENTRE
WHANGANUI RIVER TOP 10 HOLIDAY PARK

Table Two: Number of households granted an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant in Whanganui District Territorial Local Authority as at 31 May 2023 by supplier.

MSD Supplier Registered Name	Number of Households
ANNDION LODGE	S
ASTRAL MOTEL	S
BURWOOD MOTEL	S
COACHMAN'S LODGE MOTEL	S
WHANGANUI RIVER TOP 10 HOLIDAY PARK	S
Total Households	12

Notes:

- Emergency Housing assistance payments are granted as Special Needs Grants.
- Territorial Local Authority (TLA) is based on the clients address at the time of the grant. It may not be the same as the address of the emergency housing provider.

- One registered supplier may provide accommodation across multiple premises with different trading names receiving payment through the single supplier record.
- To protect confidentiality the Ministry of Social Development uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- These data tables have 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.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.
- In certain circumstances low numbers may potentially lead to individuals being identified.
- Due to these privacy concerns, numbers for some categories of clients have been suppressed or aggregated.
- Suppressed numbers have been replaced by an 'S'.