



21 July 2023

Tēnā koe

On 13 June 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), information about beneficiaries who are ACC Sensitive Claims claimants and are receiving Child Support.

For the sake of clarity, your questions will be addressed in turn below.

For successful ACC sensitive claim claimants, for whom MSD took the claimants child support payments from IRD whilst they were on the jobseeker benefit. Please provide by year since the beginning of the current Labour governments term (2017).

- 1. The total amount of claimants per year*
- 2. The total amount of money MSD received from IRD for these claimants and then passed through as part of the jobseeker benefit*
- 3. The gender of the claimants as a number and percentage)*
- 4. The number of dependent children the claimants had whilst on the jobseeker benefit*
- 5. The total 'debt' MSD required the claimants to pay back after ACC weekly compensation was approved. Please split this into the MSD's contribution from their budget to the jobseeker benefit, and the total amount of child support MSD received from IRD that MSD used to supplement the jobseeker benefit.*

Child Support payments are not passed on to the Ministry by Inland Revenue. As such, your request for information regarding beneficiaries for whom the Ministry took Child Support payments from Inland Revenue is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

The Ministry has considered responding to your request if it was for information regarding beneficiaries who are claimants for ACC Sensitive Claims and who are also receiving Child Support payments. I am unable to provide you with this information as it is 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.

6. *Please provide evidence from the MSD website, documents or other information format that is accessible to a person applying for the for the Jobseeker benefit that:*
 - a. *Any child support (or a portion of) will be taken directly from IRD to MSD to supplement their Jobseeker benefit payment.*

As advised above, Child Support payments have never been passed on to the Ministry by Inland Revenue. Your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

For further information regarding Child Support and Jobseeker Support, the following links are useful:

- <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/child-support/introduction.html>
- <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/child-support/formula-assessment-of-child-support.html>
- <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/income/types-of-income/child-support-income/introduction.html>
- <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/on-a-benefit/tell-us/income/child-support.html>
- <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/jobseeker-support.html>

- b. *If the jobseeker applicant is subsequently found to have been eligible for weekly compensation whilst on the jobseeker benefit, that they will be required to pay MSD back not only MSDs component of the jobseeker benefit they received but also have to pay back the child support that was actually from the clients own IRD account to MSD*

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

Please see the following link containing information for clients who are waiting for a decision to be made on their ACC application:

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/income/types-of-income/clients-waiting-for-compensation-01.html

The following publicly available page contains information about what is required of a client should their ACC weekly compensation be approved while they are in receipt of a benefit:

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/income/types-of-income/weekly-compensation-granted-after-benefit-granted-01.html

If you have questions about your situation, you can ring Work and Income on 0800 559 009.

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

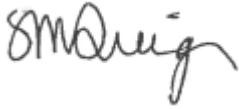
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

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 Child Support, 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 'S Quigan', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Quigan
Manager
Official Information Team