



1 June 2023

Tēnā koe

On 11 May 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *How many people were placed in emergency housing in Wellington region in 2022 and what was the cost? Also how many emergency housing (motels, hotels etc) facilities are there are in the Wellington region.*
- *If you are unable to supply the figure for 2022, do you have it for 2021.*

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](http://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.

Please see the table below, which shows for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, in the Wellington region:

- the number of distinct clients that received an Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG)
- the number of EH SNGs approved
- the value of payments approved, and
- the number of suppliers used for these EH SNGs.

Year ending	Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants	Distinct Clients	Amount Granted	Number of Suppliers
December 2022	12,693	1,875	\$48,674,682.13	104

**Notes:**

- Grants are not the same as clients. A client may receive more than one grant within a period
- The amount granted may not necessarily be the same as the amount spent
- One registered supplier may provide accommodation across multiple premises. These premises may be in different locations or operating trading names but are receiving payment through the single supplier record
- Territorial Local Authority (TLA) is based on the client's address at the time of the grant. It may not be the same as the address of the emergency housing provider

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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response about emergency housing in the Wellington region, 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



Karen Hocking  
**Group General Manager  
Housing**