



23 March 2023

Tēnā koe

On 15 February 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Could you please let me know how many people have:

- *made an application for a Civil Defence Payment since the payments opened up due to the floods in Auckland?*
- *how many were accepted?*
- *how many were declined?*
- *what was the reason for decline or how did the applicant not match the criteria?*

Can you let me know outside of this payment:

- *how many requests were made for help with food?*
- *How many were accepted?*
- *how many were declined?*
- *What was the reason for decline?*

Do you have data over the last 6-12 months on the number of people who requested help for food for Auckland and nationally (can you break this down in regions as well as the number accepted and declined per month?)

From Friday 27 January 2023, an extreme weather event of heavy rainfall caused widespread catastrophic flooding across the upper North Island, Auckland experiencing substantial and significant damage from flooding.

There is general information available on the Work and Income website, that you may find interesting, about the assistance that the Ministry provided to those affected by this flooding. It is available at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/emergencies/auckland-floods-january-2023.html

You may also find helpful, in the Guide to Social Development Policy, information about Civil Defence Payments at the following link; www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/civil-defence-payment-01.html.

At the following link you can find more information about the Special Needs Grant for food assistance: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/food-01.html.

I will now address your specific information requests. For the sake of clarity, the Ministry will respond to each part of your request in turn.

Could you please let me know how many people have:

- *made an application for a Civil Defence Payment since the payments opened up due to the floods in Auckland?*
- *how many were accepted?*

Please find enclosed **Table one**, which shows the number of clients who have received Auckland flooding Civil Defence Payment (CDP) grants from 28 January 2023 to 31 January 2023.

- *how many were declined?*
- *what was the reason for decline or how did the applicant not match the criteria?*

In relation to these two parts of your request, I am unable to provide you with this information, as the reporting on declined CDP is not captured centrally. This information 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.

Can you let me know outside of this payment:

- *how many requests were made for help with food?*
- *How many were accepted?*
- *how many were declined?*
- *What was the reason for decline?*

Do you have data over the last 6-12 months on the number of people who requested help for food for Auckland and nationally (can you break this down in regions as well as the number accepted and declined per month?)

Please find enclosed **Table Two**, which shows the number of clients and number of food grants and declines from 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2023, broken down by month.

Please find enclosed in **Table Three**, the number of clients, and number of food grants and declines from 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2023, broken down by region.

Please find enclosed in **Table Four**, the number of clients and the number of food grants from 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2023, broken down by month and by region.

Please find enclosed in **Table Five**, the number of clients and the number of declined food grants from 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2023, broken down by month and region.

Please find enclosed in **Table Six**¹, the number of clients who have had their food grants declined from 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2023, broken down by reason for decline.

Please find enclosed in **Table Seven**, the number of clients who have had their food grants declined from 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2023, broken down by reason for decline and month.

The principles and purposes of the Act 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.

¹ In relation to **Table Six** and **Table Seven**, the Ministry notes that some of the 'decline reason codes' will not be relevant to the application for assistance, this is due to administrative error. Ministry staff manually input the reasons for declining a food grant assistance, and may have incorrectly recorded these reasons.

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, 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

Bridget Saunders

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Manger
Issue Resolution