



27 March 2023

Tēnā koe

On 8 February 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

1. *How many children are currently in emergency housing placements in the Bay of Plenty? And how many placements are there?*
  - *Can this please be broken down into each of the TLAs.*
2. *How many children were in emergency housing placements in the Bay of Plenty in each year for the last five years?*
  - *Can this please be broken down into numbers for each year in each of the TLAs.*
3. *Please provide the total number of children that have been through emergency housing in the Bay of Plenty in each of the last five years.*
  - *Can this please be broken down into numbers for each of the TLAs.*
4. *How young is someone allowed to be in emergency housing by themselves (meaning at what age can a person become a primary client)?*
5. *In the Bay of Plenty region, how many people are in the youngest age bracket of all primary clients? What is this age bracket?*
6. *What support is provided to young people (teens – early 20s) in emergency housing who are primary clients?*
7. *What support is provided to young families with children in emergency housing in the Bay of Plenty?*

On 8 March 2023, the Ministry contacted you to advise that the Ministry requires more time to respond to this request. In accordance with section 15(1) and 15A of the Act, the Ministry's decision will be with you no later than 29 March 2023.

In the interests of clarity, I will respond to your questions in turn.

1. *How many children are currently in emergency housing placements in the Bay of Plenty? And how many placements are there?*
  - o *Can this please be broken down into each of the TLAs.*

This information is available on the Ministry's website at: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/monthly-housing-reporting.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/monthly-housing-reporting.html)

The EH datafile with all the information is regularly updated by the Ministry.

For data broken down by each of the TLAs, please see the link to the Ministry's information provided to your questions 2 and 5.

Following the devastation caused by Cyclone Gabrielle, Local Civil Defence teams are responsible for immediate accommodation needs after an emergency – not emergency housing. People can also register with the Temporary Accommodation Service (TAS) in the areas where it has been activated. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) is responsible for TAS.

2. *How many children were in emergency housing placements in the Bay of Plenty in each year for the last five years?*
  - o *Can this please be broken down into numbers for each year in each of the TLAs.*

Please find attached a table, broken down by Territorial Local Authority (TLA), which provides the information to address this request:

- **Table: Households, Households with Children in Emergency Housing in the Bay of Plenty region as at 31 December 2020 and 31 December 2021**

Note that the information provided covers only the last two calendar years, as the Ministry has only been collecting this data since 2020.

3. *Please provide the total number of children that have been through emergency housing in the Bay of Plenty in each of the last five years.*
  - o *Can this please be broken down into numbers for each of the TLAs.*

The Ministry's website provides various Housing Reports that are publicly available. This link takes you to one titled 'Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants', which has the data broken down to TLA level, which answers your request:

<https://msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/datafiles/2022/eh-tha-data-dec22.xlsx>

Note that the information provided covers only the last two calendar years, as the Ministry has only been collecting this data since 2020.

4. *How young is someone allowed to be in emergency housing by themselves (meaning at what age can a person become a primary client)?*

A person can become a primary client of the Ministry at age 18. However, in situations where a young person (aged 16 or 17) has been discharged from the care of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki (or other authorised agency), they can receive Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment from the Ministry, subject to the conditions outlined in the Appendix about Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment.

5. *In the Bay of Plenty region, how many people are in the youngest age bracket of all primary clients? What is this age bracket?*

This information is available on the Ministry's website, please see the link provided in answer to your Question 3, above. The 'Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants' report shows all age groups, and there is a column for 16-17 years of age, also broken down to TLA level.

6. *What support is provided to young people (teens - early 20s) in emergency housing who are primary clients?*

Please see **Appendix One** at the end of this response, which provides information covering the range of services the Ministry provides. Note, there is cross-over between services to young people that the Ministry provides, and services provided to young people who are clients of Oranga Tamariki.

7. *What support is provided to young families with children in emergency housing in the Bay of Plenty?*

The Ministry provides the following support for people in emergency housing:

- **Intensive/Integrated case management**

If whānau in emergency housing needs extra support, they may be assigned to an Intensive/Integrated Case Manager (ICM). ICMs help clients stabilise and access the necessary products, services and supports they need while staying in emergency housing. ICMs are a single point of contact for their clients. ICMs also support with referrals to other agencies to support whānau.

- **Navigators**  
Whānau in emergency housing who need further, or different, kinds of support can be referred to a community-based Navigator. Navigators can help coordinate community, health and government services, and be hands-on in making sure those services are accessible to the client. Navigator's support whānau with children as a priority but other individuals requiring additional support and assistance in accessing other agencies may also be referred to Navigators.
- **Housing Brokers**  
Housing Brokers work with whānau and help to connect them with local landlords and property managers to access housing opportunities in the private rental market. Housing Brokers advocate for clients in Emergency Housing.
- **Ready to Rent**  
The Ready to Rent programme is designed to better prepare individuals and whānau for the private rental market. The Ministry contracts community providers to deliver targeted programmes to people living in emergency housing or on the housing register, equipping them with the skills and confidence to gain and sustain private rental housing. Ready to Rent programmes have now been delivered in every region.
- **Flexible Funding Assistance**  
This is non-taxable and non-recoverable financial assistance for clients with dependent children staying in accommodation funded by the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG). Its purpose is to assist in meeting education, early childhood, and wellbeing needs of families with children when additional costs are incurred because they are staying in emergency housing.

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

If you are not satisfied with this response about children in the Bay of Plenty using emergency 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](http://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 One: The range of services the Ministry provides to young people in emergency housing who are primary clients**

The following is an overview of the range of services provided by the Ministry and those provided to young people in Oranga Tamariki care. You will see there is cross over between services provided by each agency, and the types of services will vary depending on the needs of the young person.

Further information about services provided by Oranga Tamariki can be found on their website: [www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/](http://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/)

### **Oranga Tamariki Transition Support**

- From the age of 15, social workers' conversations with young people can include discussions about their transition from care or from a youth justice residential placement.

### **Match young people with a transition worker**

- When the young person turns 16, with their consent, they are referred to a transition worker who meets the needs of the young person. The transition worker is responsible for working with the young person until they leave our care or turn 18.
- Once the young person turns 18 or leaves Oranga Tamariki care, the transition worker will have the primary responsibility for maintaining contact with the young person and providing them with proactive support and assistance up until they turn 21.
- If a young person is in Oranga Tamariki's care, how long this last depends on the circumstances under which they were placed into their care. In general, Oranga Tamariki will place a young person with someone else in their family, or with a foster family, until they believe it is safe for them to return to their parents or previous caregivers.
- At the age of 18, and if the young person is still in care, they can leave the caregiver. However, if your caregiver agrees to it, they can stay with the caregiver until they turn 21.

### **Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment**

When a young person (aged 16 or 17) has been discharged from the care of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki (or other authorised agency), they can

receive Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment from the Ministry when they are no longer subject to:

- an agreement under section 140 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- an order under section 78, section 101 or section 283(n) of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 or
- a sole guardianship order under section 110 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

In these cases, the young person will not need to prove the relationship breakdown with either their parents or caregivers because it has already been established through Oranga Tamariki. If the young person was discharged for other reasons, they will need to complete the Family Breakdown assessment.

**NOTE:** Most young people will remain in care until they turn 18

If a young person is eligible for Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment, they are eligible to receive support from both services (Transition Support and Youth Service).

### **Not in Employment, Education or Training**

The Ministry provides the Youth Services for young people through the *Not Employment, Education or Training* (NEET) service. Further details about NEET are available here: [How our Youth Service NEET works - Ministry of Social Development \(msd.govt.nz\)](https://www.msd.govt.nz/our-work/transition-support/youth-services/youth-services-neet-works)

Young people with a transition worker are not eligible to enrol in Youth Services. However, if the young person is with a Youth Justice coordinator, they are eligible to apply to enrol in the NEET programme.

### **Youth Service role in support young people transferred from Oranga Tamariki**

Youth Coaches' main role is to support the young person to be in education, training, work-based learning, or a sustainable job and support their wellbeing. Youth Coaches also need to:

- help implement the Youth Service plan
- work with the social worker or transition worker to make sure the YS and OT plans align
- make sure the young person is getting their full entitlements from Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki
- help the young person access extra financial support when they need it.

### **Ministry assistance available to young people aged 18 years or older**

When an 18-year-old has been discharged from the care of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki (or another authorised agency), they can apply for:

- Working age benefit (i.e. Jobseeker Support),
- Young Parent Payment (if they have a child (aged 18/19)
- Student Services (Student Loan/Allowance). Young Parent Payment clients will receive support from a Youth Coach.

Working aged clients will receive case management support from the Ministry's Work and Income service.

The young person can continue to receive support from Oranga Tamariki's transition support service until they turn 25.

Young people transitioning from care are not prioritised for EH placement.