



1 November 2023

Tēnā koe

On 4 October 2023, your request for the following information was transferred from The Treasury to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *And lastly I would like to know before Jacinda came into power there was x amount of people in emergency housing and how much was that costing nz per year. And then taking that same scenario. what is today's cost and figure as a result of her leadership.*

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 arranges 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

Please find the attached **Appendix One** which contains **Table One** showing the number of distinct clients who have received an EH SNG and the total amount granted each month from 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2023.

Appendix One also contains **Table Two** showing the number of adults and number of children in Emergency Housing from 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2023, broken down by month. Household composition was not captured in our reporting prior to April 2020.

You can find Monthly Housing Updates at the following link, which contain notes regarding increases and decreases in numbers for Emergency Housing: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/housing-monthly-archive/index.html>

Demand for Emergency Housing reflects the high cost of housing in New Zealand generally, and the continuing shortage of affordable rental properties which impacts particularly on low-income and beneficiary whanau.

The cost for Emergency Housing is driven by a number of factors, including the size of households being accommodated, the location of the accommodation and other demands upon short-term accommodation such as tourism.

The Ministry does not contract Emergency Housing, but rather where people approach the Ministry with an urgent housing need and no other options, such as private rentals or transitional housing, are available, the Ministry may pay an EH SNG to help meet the costs of short-term accommodation. Here, the Ministry pays the rate quoted by the supplier.

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, 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.

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Hocking', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Karen Hocking
**Group General Manager
Housing**