



23 November 2023

Tēnā koe

On 14 November 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*I would like to request the following information under the Official Information Act.*

*Both the Labour Party and National Party indicated throughout the recent election campaign the need for government departments to implement fiscal savings going forward.*

*Please provide the following:*

- 1. What measures have your department already implemented or intend to implement in order to meet the above expectations?*
- 2. Please break this down by political party, financial costs, and employment measures.*
- 3. Please provide any correspondence shared with staff and external stakeholders in relation to the above measures.*

*Please note: In relation to each of these requests, this information should include all documents of any nature, including but not limited to any correspondence, text messages, memos, notes and advisory notes, and emails relating to these matters.*

Government agencies are accountable for government policy, not election commitments regarding policy, and therefore any measures that are being considered would be to meet potential new government policies rather than to meet election commitments. Therefore your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist.

In the interests of being helpful, the Ministry is taking a careful approach to expenditure, reflecting ongoing measures to absorb cost pressures in the current financial year (2023/24), as well as implementing \$87m in savings that were announced as part of Budget 2023.<sup>1</sup>

For the next financial year (2024/25), the Government announced on 28 August 2023 that it would be asking agencies to make reductions in existing baselines from July 2024.<sup>2</sup> The Ministry was asked to reduce its baseline by \$60.3m. We have identified potential areas of cost savings to provide advice to a new government on these savings.

We will work with the new government to carry out its priorities, including any additional cost savings. Decisions will be made in line with the priorities of incoming Ministers.

Some Budget 2023 initiatives that had not been progressed before the election are awaiting confirmation of priorities with the incoming government.

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).

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, 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



Magnus O'Neill  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**

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<sup>1</sup> Please see page 138 of Treasury's *Wellbeing Budget 2023*:  
[www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-05/b23-wellbeing-budget.pdf](http://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-05/b23-wellbeing-budget.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The 28 August 2023 Government announcement can be found here:  
[www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-tightens-belt-and-clamps-down-spending-consultants-and-contractors](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-tightens-belt-and-clamps-down-spending-consultants-and-contractors)