



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

17 January 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 10 January 2024, requesting information on the number of clients with unpaid uniform and stationery debts, and the total amount of this debt.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) and can advise that I am unable to provide you with this information as the costs associated with uniform and stationary fees cannot be disaggregated from all other recoverable assistance debt. The Ministry can only provide the total outstanding debt balance for recoverable assistance payments.

As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Act as this information is held in notes on individual case files and would require Ministry staff to manually review a substantial number of files. 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.

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

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 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 or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp.

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services