



22 March 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 28 February 2024, requesting data and information regarding calls to Ministry contact centres. I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below. For the sake of clarity, I will respond to your request in parts.

1) *Please advise how many calls to the Work and Income Call Centre 0800 number (0800 559 009) have been presented with the above message in the twelve months from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024, broken down into monthly numbers, divided into specific phone queues, for all queues that use this system (e.g. General enquiry queue, hardship assistance queue).*

The Ministry is unable to provide the number of calls that are presented and played a message to callers stating that the Contact Centre is busy and unable to answer the call, as this data is not collected in any of our technology systems. As such, this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, under the basis that this information does not exist.

2) *Please advise how many successful calls have been made to Customer Service Representatives in all of these queues during this time period, broken down by month and phone queue, or provide some other way of advising what proportion of total calls to the call centres the answer to question 1 comprises.*

3) *Please advise the average time a caller has had to wait in your phone queues to get through, broken down by month and phone queue, for the same time period as above. Please distinguish between calls where an automated call-back is utilised, and where it is not.*

Your request for information regarding a 'phone queue' has been interpreted to mean the 0800 559 009 line.

Please find **Table One** below in response to these two aspects of your request.

Table One: Number of calls received, number of calls answered, and average time taken to answer at the Ministry's Contact Centre, broken down by month, from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024.

Month	Calls Offered	Calls Answered	Average time to Answer
February 2023	429,873	312,026	18:15
March 2023	332,551	258,690	13:40
April 2023	256,327	199,186	13:30
May 2023	321,734	255,973	11:07
June 2023	284,189	225,530	11:13
July 2023	266,793	212,330	12:13
August 2023	295,831	237,514	11:19
September 2023	290,437	220,613	13:56
October 2023	269,573	218,046	11:31
November 2023	261,153	212,070	11:55
December 2023	249,358	205,549	10:47
January 2024	289,730	239,032	10:38

4) *Please provide any policy that explains the reasoning for why a client is presented with instructions to 'Call Work and Income' when they are attempting to apply for assistance online, I.e. In what circumstances are they able to apply for assistance online, and in what circumstances are they required to call the call centre?*

This aspect of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

The Ministry does not have any policy to restrict clients applying for assistance to specific forms of communication (such as over the phone, or online). However, the Ministry acknowledges that many online offerings are currently inactive following COVID-19 and technical/resource limitations.

Please find a copy of our internal 'doogle' guidelines on what can be done via the Ministry's online service 'MyMSD' attached as **Appendix A**.

5) *Please provide a breakdown of how applications for Work and Income assistance were received (phone contact, online application or in person at an office) for the same time period, broken down by request type e.g. benefit application, food grant, special needs grant etc.*

The Ministry does not record the manner in which applications are received. As such, this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.


The Ministry aims to answer all calls to our 0800 services as quickly as possible. We are experiencing more demand across all of the Ministry's Contact Centres. We continue to work on how we can improve these services to ensure we are meeting the needs of New Zealanders as and when they need to contact us.

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 relating to data and information regarding calls to Ministry contact centres, 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

p.p. 

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

What clients can do in MyMSD

This page explains access and actions available for different clients in MyMSD

On this Page:

Actions in MyMSD

Most information in MyMSD is real-time, but in some cases it may update overnight.

MyMSD also provides access to the Woman's Refuge Shielded Site portal on both the login page and for logged in clients. All a client needs to do is click on the Shielded Site icon. Visit <https://shielded.co.nz/> to learn more.

Apply or Re-apply for:

Main benefit and New Zealand Superannuation	Including providing evidence (document upload), E-signature, agree to obligations
Hardship assistance	Food, Dental, School Uniforms, and Stationery can be submitted online if the client is eligible to. For other hardship flows, or when the client is not eligible, MyMSD will instruct clients to call the contact centre.
Extra help (Non-Beneficiary assistance)	Accommodation Supplement, Temporary Additional Support, and Disability Allowance Right now, clients apply for these using the Main Benefit Application form in MyMSD.
52-week Reapplications	Once clients have completed this application they can book an appointment in MyMSD to talk to a case manager
Temporary Additional Support Reapplications	Once clients have completed this application, a task will be created for processing.

Provide Evidence (document upload):

During an application for Benefit, Hardship or Temporary Additional Support	Available automatically until they choose "I have uploaded all I can" in the Current Application under 'Next Steps'
On one-off occasions when the client calls to have upload function is enabled	Requires a staff member to enable from CMS

Tell us about changes in circumstances:

Contact Details	Change of address, phone numbers, email
Income	Declare wages
Overseas Travel	Clients can tell us when they're going overseas through MyMSD, however cannot declare online that they have returned.
Request their payments be stopped	Clients must fill in a form telling us why they are stopping their payments, a case manager may call them back to discuss further.
Declare they are Ready for Work	If the client is getting Jobseeker Support and they don't need to renew their

	medical certificate
Update accommodation costs	

Check on or review:

Community Service Card details	Including their children's cards
SuperGold app details	
View some letters	In some cases, clients will be sent a hard-copy letter. Eg. manually created letters, forms, or letters from our Integrity teams
View Payment card balances and expiries	
Costs included in their Accommodation Supplement, Disability Allowance, and Temporary Additional Support	
Who is included in their benefit	Partner and children
Deductions or Redirections of their payment	
Medical Certificate details	Including the expiry date
Eligibility	Check What You Might Get
Jobseeker Profile details	Clients can update and/or change their profile to display jobs in MyMSD based on their profile preferences.
Latest jobs	Clients can access and view available jobs listed by Work and Income. They can apply for these by calling the Job Search Line and quoting the Job ID. Jobs displayed to the client in MyMSD are based on their jobseeker profile preferences (location and job type).
Review Rights and Obligations	
My Financial Information	Clients can check debt balances. Financial information is available as a PDF download

[My Financial Information - Screenshots and further details \(Word 1.03MB\)](http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/products-services/service-delivery/mymsd/my-financial-information-screenshots.docx) [http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/products-services/service-delivery/mymsd/my-financial-information-screenshots.docx]

Be notified of

Upcoming Medical Certificate Expiry	Including a 'to-do' about renewing, requesting an extension (if they need more time to get it renewed due to exceptional circumstances) or declaring themselves work ready
Changed payment dates	Due to public holidays, through additional messaging in MyMSD
Annual General Adjustment or other payment rates changes	Through additional messaging in MyMSD
A current application where they have 'Next Steps' to complete	Upload evidence and identification, agree to obligations

Get ready for Employment

Create or Update their Jobseeker Profile	
Find courses by providers to support job search	Known as Click to Enrol
Access job search websites	
Access and view jobs listed by Work and Income	Known as Latest Jobs on MyMSD homepage
Access one-on-one support to find work	Known as Rapid Return to Work (RRtW)

Access to MyMSD

To be able to use MyMSD, the client must have a current CMS record.

Working age, seniors, clients living overseas, and clients not on main benefit but still receiving financial assistance all have full access to MyMSD as long as they are not also in a group that is restricted.

Some parts of MyMSD are limited to specific groups of clients, or are unavailable due to other restrictions.

In some cases, a client may be able to navigate to a part of MyMSD but is then directed to call us. Other client groups may not have the option to access that area at all.

Client Status	Access type
Youth Service	Can login, declare wages, view and change details but can't apply for anything
Remote Services Unit	Can't see letters or appointments
Low Trust Case Managed	Can't apply, re-apply, upload evidence, update contact details, address, or relationships. Also can't declare overseas travel, declare income, stop their payments, or update their jobseeker profile Will be directed to call us if applying for Hardship
Staff with a client number	Unable to apply for Hardship
Clients not getting any financial assistance	Can't declare wages

Key:

LTCM = Low Trust Case Managed clients

MAWP = Mosque Attack Welfare Payment

RSU = Remote Services Unit

RSS/RCS = Residential Care or Residential Support Subsidy

YS = Youth Service clients

Assistance type or Action	Not available to
TAS and 52-week reapplications	Trespassed, LTCM, MAWP, or RSU clients
Letters and View Appointments	RSU clients

Apply online	YS, LTCM, or MAWP clients
Hardship	MSD staff Food grants are not available to RSS/RCS clients (directed to contact us) LTCM will be directed to call us RSU will be required to call the unit
Document upload (evidence)	LTCM
Declare wages	Trespassed, LTCM, MAWP, or RSU Note: clients declaring wages can only declare the current week, and need to do this by 6pm Friday, for processing.
Job Seeker Profile	LTCM, RSU, MAWP, clients 65+ years old, or clients with no CMS/SWIFTT record
Stop my payment	Trespassed, LTCM, MAWP, or RSU clients
Change address	LTCM and MAWP clients
Update contact details	LTCM clients
Registration: Get PIN via text	overseas mobile numbers (NZ mobile numbers only)
Declare overseas travel	LTCM, RSU, MAWP
Update relationship status	LTCM and MAWP

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