



27 March 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 5 February 2024, requesting information about regarding complaints to the Ministry within the past 24 months. I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

I have also included some general information about complaints at the end of this letter, for your further information.

Please find my decision set out below.

1. The number of complaints received by MSD in the past 24 months, related to conflicts between MSD staff and clients.

Complaints submitted by clients regarding the Ministry are filed by types of complaints and the closest type that relates to conflict between Ministry staff and clients would fall under Interpersonal Skills/Staff Attitude. Please refer to **Table One** below for a yearly breakdown of these complaint types. I have also attached the different types of complaints in the **Appendix** included below which outlines the different categories for reference.

We take seriously our responsibility to support our clients and provide good service. The complaints represent a tiny proportion of the hundreds of thousands of overall interactions with our clients over the same period. For example, in the 2022/2023 year, we answered 3.9 million calls.

Table One:

Year/Total	2022	2023	2024 (as of 31 January 2024)	Grand Total
Interpersonal Skills / Staff Attitude	2457	2109	220	4786

2. How many of those complaints have been resolved and how many are still under investigation.

Out of these complaints, 30 are still unresolved pending a conclusion. The remainder of complaints have been resolved.

3. What were the top 3 causes of the complaints.

Complaints are sorted into categories as stated above, however ascertaining the individual complaint cause would require manually reviewing each complaint in order to compile this information. As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Act. 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 requests 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.

4. How much have MSD spent on investigating complaints in the past 24 months.

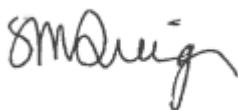
Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this document does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

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

pp. 

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Appendix: Complaint Types.

- Complaints can be made verbally or in writing and can lodged with CSRs, services centres, regional or national office.

Complaint Type	Definition	Example
Action Taken	Complainant is not happy about the action a staff member has taken as it's caused hardship or distress to the client.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff member changes a client's appointment time without talking with the client first. • client was referred to an inappropriate seminar.
CE Correspondence (National Office only)	<p>A complaint is made to the Chief Executive (CE) about a service received from MSD.</p> <p>This correspondence is formally lodged with Ministerial and Executive Services in National Office. There are strict timeframes for providing a written response in order for the letter to be sent from the CE.</p> <p>If a client requests the CE email suggest they are supplied with the feedback form first. This is the best way to make sure complaints are sent to the right place.</p>	
Confidentiality	Complainant states their information hasn't been kept confidential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal information was discussed and overheard by nearby staff and clients. • personal information has been released without the client's

		<p>consent eg, family members, third parties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> client could see personal information of other clients on the desk when they came in.
<p>Designated Health Practitioner OR Medical Appeals Board Member</p>	<p>A complaint about a designated health practitioner or medical practitioner on a medical appeals board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Manner</i> - e.g., practitioner was abrupt, rude or didn't give their case due consideration. <i>Conduct</i> - e.g., practitioner behaved or said something inappropriate. <i>Decision</i> - e.g. client is unhappy about a health practitioner's decision.
<p>Environment</p>	<p>A complaint about a service centre / community link's appearance or functionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not accessible to public transport / free parking. no suitable access for disabled clients. site is dirty / smells / dead plants. site is operating on skeleton staff due to planning or training.
<p>Information Provided</p>	<p>Complainant is unhappy with information provided by staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff member has insufficient product / process knowledge. client wasn't offered appropriate advice or service.

<p>Interpersonal Skill / Staff Attitude</p>	<p>Complaint about a staff member's attitude, manner or demeanour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • client felt belittled during an appointment. • staff member was abrupt on the phone or on reception. • staff member wasn't listening to the client.
<p>Policy / Legislation / Procedural (This is not a Review of Decision)</p>	<p>Complaint about the policy or processes used by Work and Income.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unhappy about opening hours. • feels a policy is incorrect / unfair / wants to change.
<p>Technology</p>	<p>Complaints about delay in payments that have been caused by a system delay/fault in service provided due to system outages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delayed payments from SWIFTT. • delays in answering calls at the contact centre.
<p>Timeliness</p>	<p>Complaint about a delay in getting a service or decision from Work and Income.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefit application hasn't been granted and it is passed the expected timeframe. • staff member hasn't responded to a client's voice mails / emails.