



26 November 2024

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 29 October 2024, requesting information about emergency housing.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

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

You requested the following information:

- *all correspondence including but not limited to emails, letters, memorandums, directives, text messages and WhatsApp messages, Ministry staff have received from or sent to service centre staff regarding the classification of motel rooms as emergency or permanent accommodation since 27 November 2023.*
- *all correspondence including but not limited to emails, letters, memorandums, directives, text messages and WhatsApp messages, Ministry staff have received from or sent to emergency accommodation motels regarding the classification of motel rooms as emergency or permanent accommodation since 27 November 2023*

Your request for all information is very broad, and substantial manual collation would be required to locate and prepare all documents within scope of your request. 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 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.

The Ministry registers hardship suppliers for the purpose of facilitating payments on behalf of eligible clients. It is important to note registered supplier status does not indicate a contractual relationship between the Ministry and a supplier, or an endorsement of the services provided. The contractual relationship is between the client receiving the Emergency Housing Grant (EHG) and the emergency housing supplier. The Ministry's role is to grant EHG's for the cost of emergency housing.

The Ministry pays its clients their legal entitlements which are not contingent upon the compliance status of the property. The Ministry plays no regulatory role in monitoring the quality of accommodation used by its clients. The Ministry provides clients with options and advice on alternative accommodation and does not refer people to motels as a long-term solution. Ultimately, the choice of where to live rests with the individual.

### **Supplier Standards**

The Emergency Housing Supplier Standards set out the Ministry's expectations that people staying in Emergency Housing receive the same level of service and are treated with the same care and respect as any other paying customer. While suppliers have the option to choose to opt in, the Ministry expects that all suppliers providing Emergency Housing should meet minimum standards of suitability, and safety standards set by regulatory agencies.

From 6 November 2023, the Ministry have only granted EHG's for clients to stay with opted-in suppliers, except in some limited circumstances (such as a lack of vacancies with opted-in suppliers in a particular location).

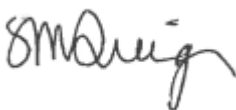
The Ministry is therefore encouraging suppliers to opt-in, provided they meet the standards required.

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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



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