



9 October 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 11 September 2024, requesting information about public servants who have applied for financial assistance through the Ministry of Social Development.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision set out below.

- 1. How many public servants have applied for and/or received Work and Income benefits following job loss from January 2020 to the present date?*
- 2. Can you provide a breakdown of the types of benefits public servants have accessed due to job loss (e.g., Jobseeker Support, Emergency Benefits)?*

The Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) does not centrally record where clients receiving financial assistance previously worked. This information would be held on notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review a substantial number of files. 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 be prejudiced.

- 3. Are there any specific support mechanisms or redundancy policies (eg return to work) in place within your agency for public servants who lose their jobs and need to apply for Work and Income support?*

There are currently no specific support mechanisms or redundancy policies established for all public servants. Public servants who have lost their jobs and seek financial assistance will be subject to Work and Income's standard assistance procedures and policies. However, we do have a number of wellbeing and career supports in place for our people impacted by change.

- 4. What steps, if any, have been taken to re-employ or provide assistance to public servants who have lost their jobs and subsequently needed to rely on Work and Income benefits?*

There are no specific steps taken to re-employ or provide assistance to Ministry employees who have lost their jobs.

As mentioned above, all public servants receive the same support from Work and Income to return to work as other individuals seeking support.

5. Can you provide data or reports on the number of public servants who have transitioned from being employed in the public service to receiving benefits, including any insights into trends, reasons for job loss, or redundancy?

Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist. The Ministry does not have data or reports on the number of 'public servants' who are receiving financial assistance from the Ministry, including trends, reasons for job loss, or redundancy.

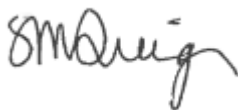
As per section 18B of the Act, I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request following consultation with you. I have concluded that due to the specificity of your request, my decision to refuse your request would still stand.

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