



12 FEB 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

On 8 January 2018, your request, made under the Official Information Act 1982, for the following information was transferred to the Ministry of Social Development from Housing New Zealand:

- *Statistics on the ethnicity of the tenants [in public housing]*

It may help if I clarify the procedure for applications for public housing. The Ministry's role is to assess eligibility for public housing (also known as social housing), manage the Social Housing Register, calculate and review income-related rent, and pay Income-Related Rent Subsidies to public housing providers. It is Housing New Zealand and approved Community Housing provider organisations that match prospective tenants on the Social Housing Register to a suitable and available property.

The Social Housing Register (the Register) is made up of two registers; the Housing Register and the Transfer Register. People who have been assessed and are eligible for public housing go on the Housing Register. Existing public housing tenants who have applied to transfer to another home, as the one they're in no longer suits their needs, are placed on the Transfer Register.

The Register is not a time-ranked waitlist - the register is dynamic and always changing as people come on and off it. Each person on the Register is given a priority rating based on their individual circumstances and the urgency of their housing need at the time of their application. An applicant's priority rating, which does not take into account ethnicity, may increase or decrease if their circumstances change. Applicants with the most urgent needs will be matched to a property first, as opposed to the length of time they may have been on the register.

The stock of properties available through Housing New Zealand and community housing providers is limited, and availability depends on how quickly suitable housing becomes available and the number of other people with urgent needs also waiting.

Further information regarding the assessment of eligibility for public housing and the calculation of a priority rating, can be found on the Ministry's website here: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/index.html>

Please find overleaf a table showing public housing tenancies as at the end of 2017, broken down by the ethnicity of the main applicant.

It is important to note that ethnicity is self-reported, and that reporting of ethnicity by applicants is voluntary.

Public Housing tenancies as at 31 December 2017, broken down by the ethnicity of the main applicant.

Māori	New Zealand Pākehā	Pacific Peoples	Unspecified	Other	Total
23,448	15,653	15,382	1,211	9,494	65,188

Notes:

- Ethnicity is self reported and prioritised to determine a single ethnicity where multiple are recorded.
- This data includes both Housing New Zealand (HNZ) and Community Housing Provider (CHP) tenancies.
- There may be some variations in Ministry and HNZ reporting. This is due to differences in timing and processes. The Ministry data provides a snapshot at a specific point in time, the HNZ data is drawn from an operational database that reflects changes in tenant status.
- It cannot be assumed that the ethnicity classification used to construct this table necessarily aligns neatly with the current Statistics New Zealand classification of ethnicity. Ethnicity details recorded in the Ministry's systems have been gathered under a variety of classification schemes as clients came into contact with the Ministry.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:


- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

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 this response, 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.

Yours sincerely



Scott Gallacher
Deputy Chief Executive, Housing