



09 AUG 2019



Dear 

On 12 July 2019, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Would the MSD, by any chance, be able to provide me with time series values for the weekly Unemployment Benefit and NZ Superannuation payment rates from 1980-2018? The values for a single person living alone would be great.*

The Ministry publishes current and past benefit rates on the Work and Income website. You can find benefit and superannuation rates here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/index.html.

You may also be interested to know that the Ministry publishes the benefit fact sheets quarterly, which provide a high-level view of trends in benefit receipt.

For rates prior to 1998, please find attached a spreadsheet showing the following historic benefit rates after tax:

- Unemployment Benefit
- Training Benefit
- Independent Youth Benefit
- Job Search Allowance
- Sickness Benefit Rates
- Domestic Purposes Benefit – Sole Parent
- Widow's Benefit
- Domestic Purposes Benefit – Caring for Sick & Infirm
- Invalid's Benefit
- Transitional Retirement Benefit
- Orphan's Benefit Unsupported Child's Benefit
- New Zealand Superannuation.

Please note that on 15 July 2013, Welfare Reform changes came into place, resulting in three new benefits replacing most of the previous benefits: Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payment.

A timeline of New Zealand social assistance may be found online at: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/about-msd/history/social-assistance-chronology-programme-history.html. You may find this chronology useful to determine the causes of changes evident in the attached tables.

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 and any attached documents 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



Elisabeth Brunt
General Manager Ministerial and Executive Services