



27 JUL 2020

Dear

On 30 June 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*A breakdown of the number and value of Special Needs Grants (SNG) issued for the Wairarapa sub-region (Masterton, Carterton, and South Wairarapa District Councils), for the quarter ending 30 June 2020, broken down per SNG category.*

Please find enclosed **Table One** which shows the number and amount of SNGs granted in the Wairarapa Community Link during the period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, broken down by SNG need.

Please note, the total numbers and amounts of SNGs have significantly decreased, compared to the numbers provided to you in the Ministry's response on 12 June 2020 for January 2019 to May 2020. This is because during the quarter ending 30 June 2020, due to the COVID-19 lockdown, many service centres weren't open to the public for face-to-face appointments. Many service centres, especially small service centres, have also experienced a decline in numbers and amounts of SNGs granted. At the same time, SNGs linked to the Ministry's Central Processing Unit and some larger centres have increased, as these grants were made electronically or over the phone.

For the reason specified above, there were no grants in a number of SNG categories for the Wairarapa Community Link in the time period specified. Categories with zero grants have been removed from the table.

Please note, the Ministry reports on hardship assistance by the Service Centre that granted the assistance, not the address of the client. As there is only one Service Centre in the Wairarapa Region, the Ministry is unable to break down the number and amount of food grants provided by territorial authority level, as this information is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files to determine the territorial authority in which the client lives.

As such, I refuse this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information 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 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
- 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. 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the number and value of Special Needs Grants issued for Wairarapa, 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.

Yours sincerely



Bridget Saunders  
**Manager, Issue Resolution  
Service Delivery**

**Table One: Number and amount of SNGs granted in the Wairarapa Community Link during the period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, broken down by SNG need**

<b>Need</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Food	517	\$72,873.96
Health Travel Costs Client Only (Non-Recoverable)	S	\$330.00
Emergency Medical Treatment (prescription charges)	S	\$290.98
Other Emergency Grants	14	\$5,448.00
Health Travel Costs Client Only (Recoverable)	S	S
Health Travel Costs with attendant (Non-Recoverable)	S	S
HSP Bond Grant	S	S
Emergency Housing	17	\$36,940.20
Steps to freedom	S	S
Water Tank Refill	S	\$430.00
Emergency Medical Treatment (fees)	S	\$1,280.50
Transfer to NZ Super	6	\$1,785.39
Ambulance Fees (Non Subscription)	S	S
Bedding SNG	S	\$467.00
Dental Treatment SNG	35	\$9,814.00
Drivers Licence Renewal	S	S
Drivers Licence New	6	\$623.20
Emergency Medical Equipment	S	S
<b>Total</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>\$132,731.70</b>

**Notes:**

- This table provides a count of grants, not a count of clients. Clients may have multiple grants in a period.
- The amount granted may not be the same as the amount spent.
- A grant was included in the table if the case manager that approved the grant was based at Wairarapa Community Link at the time of approval.
- In order to protect client privacy, some values are suppressed and are represented by 'S'. Secondary suppression rules have also been applied when required. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs and public interest in the information.