



10 August 2023

Tēnā koe

On 13 July 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. What was the income and cash assets thresholds for entering the public housing register at the time of Census 2018?*
- 2. How are the income and cash assets thresholds for entering the public housing register calculated? I refer to the general income and cash assets thresholds referred to here: (as stated here: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/find-a-house/who-can-get-public-housing.html>)*
- 3. Was the calculation to figure out income and cash assets thresholds for entering the public housing register the same at the time of Census 2018 as it is now?*

For clarity, I will respond to each of your questions in turn.

- 1. What was the income and cash assets thresholds for entering the public housing register at the time of Census 2018?*

Information on the income and asset thresholds required to qualify for public housing can be found on the Ministry's website.

You can find information on the income limit for public housing in 2018, at the following link:

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/social-housing-tables/at-1-april-2018-01.html.

You can find information on the cash asset limit for public housing in 2018, at the following link:

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/social-housing-tables/cash-asset-limit-01.html.

2. *How are the income and cash assets thresholds for entering the public housing register calculated? I refer to the general income and cash assets thresholds referred to here: (as stated here: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/find-a-house/who-can-get-public-housing.html>)*

The weekly income limit for eligibility to public housing is set at 1.5 times the relevant after-tax weekly rate of New Zealand Superannuation.

The income limits are adjusted annually in line with increases to the rates of New Zealand Superannuation. This occurs on 1 April each year.

The cash asset limit for eligibility for public housing is currently \$42,700 for all household types. The current cash asset limit was set in 2013 and at that time, it reflected 10 percent the national median house sale price. It has not been adjusted since this time.

While an applicant may have an income and/or cash asset that exceeds the limits, the Ministry has discretion to determine that the person is eligible for public housing, if it is determined that the person has a persistent housing need, that is:

- serious; or
- severe and must be addressed immediately

You might also be interested to know that the income and cash asset limits for public housing are contained in the Ministerial direction on Eligibility for Social Housing given under the Public and Community Housing Management Act 1992. The income and asset limits are set out in Schedule 3 of the Direction.

You can refer to the link below for the Ministerial Direction on eligibility for Social Housing.

- www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/legislation/ministerial-directions/eligibility-for-social-housing-direction/ministerial-direction-on-eligibility-for-social-ho.html.

3. *Was the calculation to figure out income and cash assets thresholds for entering the public housing register the same at the time of Census 2018 as it is now?*

We can confirm that there has been no change to the way that the income limit for eligibility to public housing is calculated since 2018.

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. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry'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 regarding the income and cash asset limits for public housing, 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



Karen Hocking
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Housing**