



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

1 November 2023

Tēnā koe

On 4 October 2023, the Office of Hon Megan Woods, Minister for Housing, transferred part of your request to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) to respond to under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). The Ministry will be responding to the following part of your request only:

5.) Does the Government take a share of the rental accommodation supplements the landlords receive or do the landlords receive the full amount of the supplement and pay an amount to rental agencies?

The Accommodation Supplement (AS) which replaced the Accommodation Benefit from 1 July 1993, is a non-taxable payment to assist people with limited income and limited cash assets to meet their accommodation costs. Assistance is available to help pay rent, board or costs of home ownership. A person does not have to be receiving a benefit to be assessed to qualify for AS. It is calculated using a formula that considers geographical location, family size, accommodation costs, income and tenure type (renting, boarding, or home ownership).

You can find more information about AS at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/accommodation-supplement.html.

In response to your request, I can confirm AS is paid to a client to help with the payment of their accommodation costs. Any contractual relationship and payment of accommodation costs (such as rent or board) is between a client and their accommodation supplier.

Clients can request for a redirection of their benefit payment that includes their AS to be set up to pay their accommodation costs.

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 Accommodation Supplement, 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

Bridget Saunders

Bridget Saunders
**Manager Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**