



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

11 October 2023

Tēnā koe

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

- *Are you able to provide quarterly data from Q1 2020 to Q2 2023 regarding housing register applicants in Wairarapa. Specifically the number of applicants housed each quarter and the mean and median time to house (in days).*

I will first provide an explanation of the Housing Register, before responding to your request for information.

Demand for housing across New Zealand is growing and more people are experiencing a severe and immediate need. This demand is generated by a shortage of affordable housing, which is driving up house prices and rents. People on low incomes are most affected by rising housing costs, and many seek financial help through the Ministry.

When New Zealanders are eligible for public housing, their needs are recorded on either the Housing Register or the Transfer Register. The Housing Register is made up of people who are not currently in public housing but who have been assessed as being eligible. The Transfer Register consists of people who want to move from one public house to another, generally due to a change in circumstances prompting a move to somewhere more appropriate to their needs. The combined register is referred to as the Public Housing Register (the Register).

While the Ministry completes the housing assessments which inform the Register, responsibility for funding and supply sits with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Kāinga Ora, respectively. More information about the Register is available here: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/housing-register.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/housing-register.html).

The Ministry assesses the client's need for Public Housing through the Social Allocation System (SAS). The assessment looks at both an applicant's need to move, and their ability to afford, access, and sustain a private rental. Each housing application is given a Priority Rating based on their housing need, and all applications are measured against the same criteria. Priority A applicants are considered to be 'at risk' with a severe and persistent housing need. Priority B applicants are those with a 'serious housing need' that is significant and persistent. If there are many barriers to them accessing a private rental, this will also be reflected in a higher need rating.

Once the application is completed and live in the system, it includes the letting areas, Priority Rating, and property typology needs (such as whether a modified property is required). Public houses are allocated on needs basis, not a 'first in, first served' basis. The length of time someone will be waiting for a house depends on their Priority Rating under the assessment, as well as the availability of a house that suits their needs in a location, they are willing to live.

Applicants are matched to properties based on their level of need and the availability of a property that fits their selected letting areas and the typology of house required. Applicants that require a modified home may spend a longer period of time on the Register before placement due to a lower availability of modified accommodation. Public housing landlords (such as Kāinga Ora or Community Housing Providers) are responsible for matching the specific client to the property and sign a lease agreement with the applicant directly.

Please see **Table One** in the below **Appendix** which shows the number of primary applicants housed and the mean and median time to house from the Housing Register for the period 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2023, broken down by quarter ending.

You will note that some information regarding some individuals is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

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.

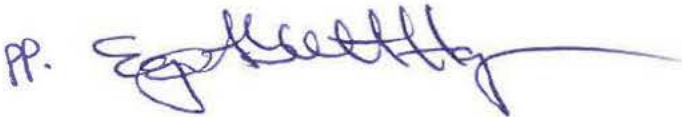
This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by

publishing this letter and attachments 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding Housing Register applicants in 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.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'PP. Karen Hocking', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karen Hocking  
**Group General Manager**  
**Housing**



## Appendix

**Table One: The number of primary applicants housed and the mean and median time to house from the Housing Register for the period 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2023, broken down by quarter ending.**

Quarter Ending	Carterton District			South Wairarapa District		
	Total Housed	Mean Days to House	Median Days to House	Total Housed	Mean Days to House	Median Days to House
June 2023	0	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
March 2023	0	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
December 2022	S	25	25	0	n/a	n/a
September 2022	S	392	392	0	n/a	n/a
June 2022	0	n/a	n/a	S	39	39
March 2022	S	517	517	0	n/a	n/a
December 2021	S	20	20	S	93	93
September 2021	S	55	52	S	13	13
June 2021	S	254	254	S	92	29
March 2021	S	62	62	S	26	15
December 2020	S	132	132	S	113	113
September 2020	S	1	1	S	102	62
June 2020	S	172	172	0	n/a	n/a
March 2020	S	24	22	S	16	16

### Notes:

- This includes applications on both the Housing Register and Transfer Register.
- The median average time to house is the midpoint of the time to house.

- The A and B priority applications used in these tables are as at the time of accepting an offer of social housing. The application priority may have changed prior to this date.
- Territorial Local Authority (TLA) is based on the tenancy address. TLA is defined under the Local Government Act 2002 as a city council or district council.
- To protect confidentiality the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- In certain circumstances, low numbers may potentially lead to individuals being identified.
- Due to these privacy concerns, number for some categories of clients have been suppressed or aggregated.
- Secondary suppression rules have also been applied when required.
- Suppressed numbers have been replaced by an 'S'.