



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

25 October 2023

Tēnā koe

On 2 October 2023, you submitted a query via the Ministry of Social Development's (the Ministry's) website requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

I am working on Hutt Valley. I am the data and figure presented on page 70 of the Pacific Aotearoa Status Report (<https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Reports/Pacific-Peoples-in-Aotearoa-Report.pdf>) relating to the housing register.

I am keen to know how many Pacific people living in Lower Hutt City and Upper Hutt City are registered, over the time period from June 2018 to the most recently available data, It would be helpful to have the Pacific counts by assessed number of bedrooms required, household composition and age of main applicant for those TLAs, I am happy for the TLAs to be combined if necessary to manage confidentiality/privacy considerations.

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).

Although 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 Kainga 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.

The Ministry assesses a 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.

The Ministry's role is to assess an individual's need for public housing, this includes an assessment of whether the individual or a family member may need an accessible home. The SAS includes identifying modifications that would be required to ensure the property is suitable for the applicant. The types of modifications required address varying levels of accessibility need, such as bathroom facility modifications, or property access (such as a ramp). You can find more information regarding the SAS assessment criteria at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/assessment-of-housing-need-01.html.

Once the application is completed and live in the system, it includes the letting areas, Priority Rating, and property typology needs. Public houses are allocated on the basis of need, not on 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.

Please see **Appendix 1** which contains the data you requested for the period 30 June 2018 to 30 June 2023. The Ministry's Business Intelligence team included data for all ethnicities recorded on the Housing Register to enable you to filter the information you require to facilitate comparison and to see how the total has been derived.

In order to protect client privacy, some values are suppressed and are represented by 'S'. 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.

It is important to note that the ethnicity data the Ministry uses in reporting is self-identified and multiple ethnicities may be chosen by an individual as fits their preference or self-concept. Total response ethnicity means that if a person identifies with more than one ethnic group, they are counted in each applicable group. Because a client can choose more than one ethnicity response, the total number of ethnicity responses will be greater than the number of clients.

'Unspecified' is used when ethnicity is not recorded. 'Others' is used when ethnicities fall outside the reported ethnicities. Further information regarding the Ministry's reporting of ethnicity is available here: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/tools/how-we-report-ethnicity.html.

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, 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

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

Karen Hocking
**Group General Manager
Housing**