



6 June 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 9 May 2025, requesting data on hardship payments for food and electricity, including granted and declined applications.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

1. *Excluding the Winter Energy Payment, for each month of 2024 and 2025 for which data is available, (if monthly data is not available, please supply quarterly),*
2. *What total sums did MSD give out in assistance for electricity costs, by region, and by MSD office?*
 - a. *Please break this down into recoverable and non-recoverable (if any).*
 - b. *How many grants did MSD give out in assistance with electricity costs, by region, and by MSD office? Please break this down into recoverable and non-recoverable (if any).*
 - c. *How many requests for assistance with electricity costs did MSD decline, by region, and by MSD office?*
3. *For each month of 2024 and 2025 for which data is available (if monthly data is not available, please supply quarterly),*
 - a. *What total sums did MSD give out in food grants, by region, and by MSD office? Please break this down into recoverable and non-recoverable.*
 - b. *How many grants did MSD give out for food, by region, and by MSD office? Please break this down into recoverable and non-recoverable.*
 - c. *How many requests for assistance with food did MSD decline, by region, and by MSD office?*

Please find the information requested attached in **Appendix A**.

4. *What was the total debt owed to MSD for electricity assistance each quarter from Jan 2023 until the most recent data available?*
5. *What was the total debt owed to MSD for food assistance each quarter from Jan 2023 until the most recent data available?*

This aspect of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. If held, this information would only be contained within individual client files, which would each require manual review to respond to your request. 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.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

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 my decision on your request, 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

pp.



Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services