



19 June 2025

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 20 May 2025, requesting information about the number of claims of abuse in care made to the Ministry of Social Development.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

*The number of Sensitive claims of abuse in care made to the Ministry to date since 2018*

5,944 people have contacted Historic Claims to register a claim of abuse in state care between 1 January 2018 and 31 March 2025.

*A breakdown of that number according to:*

- *How many were accepted in full, resulting in a settlement*

The Ministry's Historic Claims process currently has two methods of assessing a claim that a person can choose from: a rapid payment or an individualised assessment.

A rapid payment assessment does not consider individual allegations, but calculates payment based on the length of time the claimant was involved with or in the care of Child Youth and Family and its predecessor agencies. Whereas an individualised assessment considers each of a person's specific allegations and whether each allegation can be taken into account for the purposes of making a settlement offer.

As the Historic Claims process does not "accept" allegations (rather it is able to take allegations into account for the purposes of making a settlement offer), we cannot advise how many claims were "accepted in full". As noted above, rapid payments also do not consider individual allegations so do not "accept" or "deny" these.

However, it may be helpful for you to understand that of the 5,944 claims received since 2018, the Ministry has made settlement payments for 2,115 of them.

- *How many were partially accepted*

Under existing assessment processes, all eligible claims are entitled to receive a settlement payment. As discussed above, those who choose a rapid payment do not have their allegations considered and therefore there is no partial or full acceptance of the allegations within the claim.

For those that request an individualised assessment, there may be allegations that are not taken into account for the purposes of making a settlement offer. But generally, if a person is eligible to register a claim there will nearly always be some allegations taken into account meaning that the person will receive a settlement offer in respect of those allegations.

- *How many were denied in full*

For a claimant to be eligible to register a historic claim, they must have been in the care, custody, guardianship, or came to the notice of Child, Youth and Family (or its predecessor agencies) before 1 April 2017 and believe they were harmed as a result of abuse or neglect while in care.

Of the 5,944 claims received since 2018, 389 did not meet the Historic Claims eligibility criteria and therefore did not receive a payment offer. Further information on our eligibility criteria can be found in the Historic Claims Handbook: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/historic-claims/the-msd-historic-claims-handbook.pdf>.

- Out of those, how many were due, either wholly or in part, to a lack of records backing up the claims submitted.*

When checking a claimant's eligibility the claimant's state care records are consulted. The records sometimes confirm that a claimant is not eligible to make a claim of abuse in state care. For example, the records may indicate the claimant was never in state care, but rather they were in the care of a faith-based organisation.

This information is not centrally recorded. If held, this information would only be contained within individual client files, which would each require manual review to respond to your request. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. 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.

*The total amount of money given in settlements by the Ministry to date since 2018, broken down by year*

Please refer to the below table which provides a breakdown of settlement payments made by year from 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2025.

Year	Payments made
2018	\$2,242,000
2019	\$1,937,000
2020	\$3,562,000
2021	\$2,592,500
2022	\$7,519,500
2023	\$17,258,500

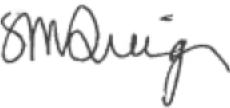
2024	\$21,613,500
2025	\$6,326,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$63,051,000</b>

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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**