



25 March 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 25 February 2025, requesting information on the Winter Energy Payments (WEP).

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

- 1. Copies of official documents that show the rate of payment for a married couple for the past 10 years.*
- 2. Copies of official documents that show how the abovementioned rate of payment has been calculated over the past 10 years.*
- 3. Copies of official documents that show annual increases by their percentage points.*
- 4. Copies of official documents that show how the abovementioned increased rate of payment has been calculated for the past 10 years.*

All historical rates of WEP is publicly available on the Ministry's Work and Income website at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/extra-help-information/winter-energy-payment-tables/index.html.

Please note that the Ministry did not calculate the applicable rate of WEP, beyond determining the weekly amount to reflect the annual sum proposed in the then-Government's Families Package.

The report containing advice on how to pay the sum weekly has been proactively released and can be found at the following link: www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-04/fp-3903009.pdf.

The rate of WEP has remained the same since it was introduced in 2018, except between 1 May 2020 and 1 May 2021, where it was temporarily doubled as part of the COVID-19 response. As such, your request for annual increases and calculation of the increases is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist.

The relevant Cabinet Paper and Cabinet Minute relating to the temporary doubling of WEP has been proactively released and can be found at the following links:

- www.covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/proactive-release/COVID-19-Overview-of-the-Governments-Response-Economic-Package-Minute.pdf

- www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/covid-19/unite-against-covid/covid-19-recovery-package-increases-to-main-benefits-and-the-winter-energy-payment-paper.pdf

Please note some information contained in the Cabinet Minute has been withheld. I have not assessed this information because it does not fall in scope of your request, as it does not relate to WEP. However, please contact the Ministry if you would like this information.

Official reports relating to the introduction of WEP can be found at the following links:

- www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-04/fp-3803996.pdf
- www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-04/fp-3800246.pdf
- www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-04/fp-3903011.pdf
- www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-04/fp-3810514.pdf
- www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-04/fp-3903012.pdf
- <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-01/ria-tsy-fp-dec17.pdf>

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
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Ministerial and Executive Services