



16 February 2026

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 9 December 2025 requesting information relating to New Zealand Superannuation (NZS) payments made to people outside of New Zealand.

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 people who received New Zealand Superannuation and were outside New Zealand for more than six months.*

Clients receiving NZS can be absent from New Zealand and continue to get their payments for up to 26 weeks. Further information on NZS and absence from New Zealand is available on the Work and Income Manuals and Procedures (MAP) website, here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/main-benefits/new-zealand-superannuation/changes-and-reviews-new-zealand-superannuation/absence-from-new-zealand-01.html.

If a client is overseas for 30 weeks or more, they do not qualify for NZS from the date they left New Zealand. However, they may qualify for their payments if the client's return to New Zealand is delayed due to circumstances beyond the client's control, that could not have been expected before their departure.

As these payments continue under domestic NZS on our system, the Ministry would need to assess each individual client files to determine the number of people who were paid NZS for longer than six months due to being absent from New Zealand.

In order to provide you with this information, the Ministry would need to divert personnel from their core duties and allocate extra time to complete this task. The diversion of these resources would impair the Ministry's ability to continue standard operations and would be an inefficient use of the Ministry's resources. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, requires substantial collation. 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 requests 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 Ministry is able to provide some information on pension portability. This is where clients may be able to continue their payment while overseas under portability provisions if they are:

- Residing in a country that New Zealand does not have a social security agreement with, or
- Travelling overseas for more than 26 weeks but not residing in any one country, or
- Leaving New Zealand for more than 52 weeks to live in certain Pacific countries (Special portability).

Clients must apply for portability at least six weeks prior to departure from New Zealand. More information on General portability is available here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/to-or-from-overseas/portability/general-portability/going-overseas-for-more-than-26-weeks.html. More information on Special portability is available here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/to-or-from-overseas/portability/special-portability/qualifications.html.

Please see attached **Appendix One** containing **Table One** showing the number of New Zealand Superannuation clients on Portability as at end of November 2025 broken down by country.

Please note, that this does not fully answer your question as the Ministry is unable to determine how many people receiving portability have been absent from New Zealand for longer than six months as at the date of this data pull without assessing each individual client file.

- *Of this group:*
 - *How many had their New Zealand Superannuation payments suspended?*
 - *The reasons for these suspensions.*
 - *How many were determined not to be "ordinarily resident" in New Zealand.*

Please see attached **Appendix One** containing **Table Two** showing the number of New Zealand Superannuation benefit suspensions related to leaving New Zealand from 1 January 2025 to 30 November 2025, broken down by month.

Please note that this table is in relation to domestic NZS and not in relation to portability. This is a count of suspensions and not individual clients – a client may receive more than one suspension during the period provided.

Regarding the section of your request about whether people were determined to not be ordinarily resident, this information would be held on individual client files. In order to provide you with this information, the Ministry would need to divert personnel from their core duties and allocate extra time to review each file. The diversion of these resources would impair the Ministry's ability to continue standard operations and would be an inefficient use of the Ministry's resources. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, requires substantial collation. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

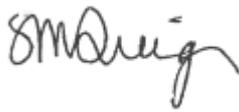
I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your requests given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

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