



Dear

On 14 March 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *In each of the last five years, how many special needs grants have been paid in Tauranga and the Western Bay of Plenty? To what total cost in each year?*
- *For recoverable assistance programme payments, how many payments were paid for each specific purpose in each of the last five years in Tauranga and the Western Bay of Plenty? What was the amount paid in each category in each year?*
- *In each of the last five years, how many benefit advances have been paid in Tauranga and the Western Bay of Plenty? To what total cost in each year?*

The Ministry of Social Development, through Work and Income, provides hardship assistance to help people meet an immediate need for essential items such as food, health costs, power and other costs.

Hardship assistance includes Advances, Recoverable Assistance Payments and Special Needs Grants:

- Advances are recoverable payments available to people receiving a main benefit that require assistance to meet a particular immediate need for an essential item. More information is available on Work and Income's website at [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/advance-payment-of-benefit/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/advance-payment-of-benefit/index.html).
- Recoverable Assistance Payments are recoverable financial assistance to non-beneficiaries to meet essential immediate needs for specific items or services. More information is available on Work and Income's website at [www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/recoverable-assistance-payment/index.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/recoverable-assistance-payment/index.html).
- Special Needs Grants provide non-taxable, one-off recoverable or non-recoverable financial assistance to people to meet immediate needs. More information is available on Work and Income's website at

At the time of application the client is advised of their repayment obligations and repayment amounts are organised.

Work and Income assists people to manage their costs in the longer term, not just with immediate and urgent assistance. It is important to understand why the client cannot meet these costs, to provide the most appropriate form of assistance. The applicant also has an obligation to manage their own finances with the help of Work and Income. This may include seeking financial advice from budgeting services.

You will find enclosed three tables showing the number of Special Needs Grants, Recoverable Assistance Payments and Advances and amounts granted, in the Bay of Plenty Work and Income region for the financial years 2010/11 to 2014/15. This includes the Western Bay of Plenty and Tauranga areas. An additional table is provided showing the number of Recoverable Assistance Payments broken down by reason.

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 after ten working days. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments on the Ministry of Social Development'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.

I hope you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10-152  
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely

*pp. Lelehia Paparechi*

Ruth Bound  
**Deputy Chief Executive, Service Delivery**

**Table 1: Number of Special Needs Grants and amount granted in the Bay of Plenty Work and Income region, during each calendar year from 2011 to 2015, by service centre.**

Service Centre	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted
Greerton	4,602	\$598,152.46	3,862	\$525,474.81	3,819	\$523,010.11	3,884	\$509,772.75	3,985	\$528,741.70
Kawerau	2,669	\$316,453.12	2,041	\$275,085.08	2,039	\$263,201.78	2,041	\$259,098.89	1,912	\$246,877.78
Mount Maunganui	3,820	\$529,219.15	3,300	\$472,969.55	3,159	\$442,409.75	3,114	\$424,706.13	2,959	\$398,125.97
Opotiki	2,320	\$309,689.85	2,401	\$329,491.38	1,435	\$192,522.27	1,464	\$192,530.51	1,665	\$228,668.64
Rotorua	10,166	\$1,312,563.55	8,044	\$1,058,526.65	8,534	\$1,249,753.93	10,154	\$1,336,640.72	11,537	\$1,457,761.56
Taupo	3,173	\$488,649.57	2,615	\$425,111.89	2,623	\$411,720.40	2,809	\$385,416.21	3,114	\$433,577.64
Tauranga	3,637	\$570,591.13	3,195	\$500,107.80	3,324	\$509,218.19	3,204	\$470,685.11	2,944	\$440,319.22
Te Puke	1,634	\$236,695.49	1,407	\$206,544.54	1,543	\$215,296.13	1,629	\$223,711.35	1,737	\$242,853.58
Tokoroa	2,992	\$369,117.49	3,121	\$403,631.31	3,183	\$384,774.09	3,254	\$396,974.36	2,975	\$359,820.33
Whakatane	3,372	\$454,159.10	2,495	\$353,361.15	2,791	\$383,134.37	3,195	\$429,047.69	3,847	\$526,253.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,385</b>	<b>\$5,185,290.91</b>	<b>32,481</b>	<b>\$4,550,304.16</b>	<b>32,450</b>	<b>\$4,575,041.02</b>	<b>34,748</b>	<b>\$4,628,583.72</b>	<b>36,675</b>	<b>\$4,862,999.74</b>

**Table 2: Number of Recoverable Assistance Payments and amount granted in the Bay of Plenty Work and Income region, during each calendar year from 2011 to 2015, by service centre.**

Service Centre	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted
Greerton	357	\$120,385.44	247	\$107,482.87	242	\$101,243.00	331	\$147,508.25	411	\$186,187.63
Kawerau	115	\$45,332.69	84	\$33,796.02	105	\$40,727.80	88	\$32,094.05	125	\$43,336.03
Mount Maunganui	251	\$109,438.35	272	\$121,424.26	233	\$115,132.30	266	\$110,072.02	287	\$136,690.74
Opotiki	86	\$30,477.65	88	\$35,617.01	75	\$32,422.08	78	\$34,750.22	64	\$26,873.24
Rotorua	596	\$253,622.42	530	\$262,456.14	492	\$221,417.46	760	\$330,689.07	812	\$322,629.66
Taupo	256	\$104,966.00	258	\$102,653.72	275	\$107,397.55	321	\$124,260.12	335	\$123,002.36
Tauranga	292	\$122,986.66	331	\$156,441.00	334	\$149,618.02	342	\$159,703.12	245	\$113,696.97
Te Puke	61	\$22,729.34	70	\$27,512.42	106	\$53,360.53	96	\$36,323.02	108	\$47,804.65
Tokoroa	160	\$68,365.39	198	\$78,569.17	170	\$72,361.30	173	\$66,308.25	160	\$58,051.95
Whakatane	237	\$79,468.07	180	\$78,862.22	221	\$105,880.37	246	\$110,301.71	272	\$115,668.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,411</b>	<b>\$957,772.01</b>	<b>2,258</b>	<b>\$1,004,814.83</b>	<b>2,253</b>	<b>\$999,560.41</b>	<b>2,701</b>	<b>\$1,152,009.83</b>	<b>2,819</b>	<b>\$1,173,941.42</b>

**Table 3: Number of Recoverable Assistance Payments and amount granted in the Bay of Plenty Work and Income region, during each calendar year from 2011 to 2015, by reason group.**

Reason Group	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted
Ambulance subscriptions fees	-	-	S	\$55.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Driver licence	16	\$2,554.80	S	\$332.50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medical and associated costs (SNG)	146	\$81,311.21	114	\$62,253.51	118	\$75,405.31	129	\$65,204.11	121	\$58,215.49
Other Emergency Situations (SNG)	2,130	\$855,032.53	2,033	\$921,238.64	2,019	\$902,154.53	2,433	\$1,059,297.97	2,562	\$1,087,051.29
School education costs (SNG)	119	\$18,873.47	106	\$20,935.18	116	\$22,000.57	139	\$27,507.75	136	\$28,674.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,411</b>	<b>\$957,772.01</b>	<b>2,258</b>	<b>\$1,004,814.83</b>	<b>2,253</b>	<b>\$999,560.41</b>	<b>2,701</b>	<b>\$1,152,009.83</b>	<b>2,819</b>	<b>\$1,173,941.42</b>

Note: 'S' represents a suppressed cell to protect clients' privacy

**Table 4: Number of benefit Advances and amount granted in the Bay of Plenty Work and Income region, during each calendar year from 2011 to 2015, by service centre**

Service Centre	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted	Grants	Sum Granted
Greerton	2,276	\$808,104.92	2,082	\$857,804.32	2,165	\$864,259.40	2,107	\$852,270.86	2,324	\$977,666.89
Kawerau	1,717	\$600,316.03	1,382	\$549,873.41	1,665	\$639,242.31	1,519	\$548,043.48	1,520	\$556,533.16
Mount Maunganui	2,323	\$907,975.60	1,887	\$851,764.72	1,930	\$907,283.72	1,901	\$811,107.94	1,811	\$799,515.51
Opotiki	1,030	\$372,224.15	1,244	\$520,784.20	643	\$261,128.80	607	\$252,289.06	616	\$284,281.09
Rotorua	8,342	\$3,180,999.64	6,240	\$2,936,355.53	6,281	\$2,953,649.33	7,895	\$3,394,443.59	8,037	\$3,227,108.59
Taupo	2,205	\$860,717.21	1,718	\$753,918.72	1,943	\$785,220.68	1,986	\$738,378.96	2,410	\$921,287.71
Tauranga	2,859	\$1,124,982.29	2,494	\$1,106,090.73	2,690	\$1,195,943.09	2,347	\$968,946.82	2,243	\$978,389.20
Te Puke	1,102	\$383,294.10	925	\$376,553.33	961	\$387,666.95	837	\$297,013.06	880	\$349,747.87
Tokoroa	2,641	\$1,012,109.38	2,385	\$991,651.59	2,290	\$928,660.78	2,411	\$956,730.51	2,307	\$866,967.02
Whakatane	2,463	\$899,290.47	1,759	\$755,142.30	2,136	\$864,443.69	2,304	\$934,227.47	2,526	\$1,020,837.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,958</b>	<b>\$10,150,013.79</b>	<b>22,116</b>	<b>\$9,699,938.85</b>	<b>22,704</b>	<b>\$9,787,498.75</b>	<b>23,914</b>	<b>\$9,753,451.75</b>	<b>24,674</b>	<b>\$9,982,334.67</b>