



DOIA20/21090482

s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email dated 23 September to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- 1: *How many 15-25 year olds (all youth) have been in temporary accommodation across NZ provided by MSD over the past 12 or 24 months? How many have been in Auckland?*
- 2: *How many of this age group were male?*
- 3: *How many were female?*
- 4: *How many were gender diverse?*
- 5: *How many identified as Maori?*
- 6: *How many had dependents?*
- 7: *How many lost their accommodation or were evicted through behavioural difficulties?*

On 25 September 2020, MSD transferred part of your request, as it relates to transitional housing, to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) as the agency responsible for transitional housing services. MSD will respond to your request as it related to Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants.

On 2 October 2020, the Ministry sought refinement of your request as it may have required substantial collation and could have been refused under section 18(f) of the Act. The Ministry suggested the following refined request, which you accepted:

How many 15-25 year olds (incl) were in transitional housing across NZ from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2020, broken down by month, and of this:

- *How many were in Auckland?*
- *How many of were male?*
- *How many were female?*
- *How many were gender diverse?*
- *How many identified as Māori?*
- *How many were part of households?*
- *How many lost their accommodation or were evicted through behavioural difficulties?*

Before responding to your specific requests, it may be useful to provide some additional context regarding transitional housing, as well as the current Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan as it relates to young people.

The Ministry contracts with transitional housing providers to provide warm, dry, short-term transitional housing for families and individuals who do not have anywhere to live. People and whanau in transitional housing pay 25 percent of their income in rent.

A key difference between emergency and transitional housing is that transitional housing includes wraparound support to the individual or household, even if the accommodation is in a motel. Transitional housing providers are contracted by the Ministry to provide this support.

Households may require transitional housing due to a number of difficult circumstances such as unemployment or low income, and/or may face a range of complex issues such as mental health and addictions, criminal history, and family breakdowns. As a result, there are households who require more intense specialised support to seek and maintain housing. Some landlords may consider these circumstances or issues as barriers to access their rental properties.

In February 2020, the Government released the Aotearoa/New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan (2020-2023) to prevent and reduce homelessness. The plan has 18 immediate actions to be put in place in 2020, and a further 18 longer-term actions to be developed for implementation over 2020-2023. One of the longer-term actions is to develop further actions to prevent and reduce homelessness for at-risk groups of people. As part of this work we will be looking at actions to support different at-risk groups of young people.

As part of the immediate actions within the action plan, Oranga Tamariki will provide an additional 168 placements into accommodation to support young people who are leaving care over the next four years at a cost of \$17.5 million. This is underway and approximately 30 young people have been placed already. Young people in these placements are provided with wrap-around support to help ensure safe, stable accommodation and the development of life skills to support the young people to live independently.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in April 2020 \$107.6 million was made available for over 1,200 additional places (predominantly motel units) for people who were living rough or in accommodation where social distancing was not possible. \$31 million of the funding was for wraparound support services to support people's needs. These places were brought on as an emergency and temporary measure and funded separately by the Government until April 2021.

Occupancy data is not currently being collected for individuals housed under the 1,200 additional places, so the data released to you does not include 15-25 year olds who may have been placed in accommodation for the lockdown.

Regarding your request for the number of 15-25 year olds who resided in transitional housing between July 2018 and June 2020 and identified as Māori, the Ministry does not require applicants for transitional housing to provide their ethnicity in order to receive accommodation. For this reason, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist.

The Ministry has interpreted your request for the number of 15-25 year olds who lost their accommodation or were evicted due to behavioural difficulties as any circumstance where a transitional housing provider has required a household to vacate because they have not complied with the terms of service. This information is provided in the 'removed from accommodation' columns of the tables below.

Please note that the information provided in this response is based on data collected from providers and reflects only what has been reported. This may mean that, for some months, the number of male, female and gender diverse 15-25 year olds who occupied transitional housing does not equal the total number provided.

Please find the total reported number of 15-25 year olds who resided in transitional housing broken down by month; and by the additional groups you requested, in the following tables. This is as reported by contracted providers, and as noted in the caveat that follows.

Reporting on occupancy in transitional housing is reliant on self-reporting by providers. In some cases the data is not received by the Ministry in a timely manner or does not meet data quality standards so is unable to be included. The information at issue is, but is not limited to, whether households left transitional housing or not. For these reasons, as with any manually collected administrative data, we are aware that there are data quality and coverage issues. This means that the totals provided may result in an undercount and vary over time. They should therefore not be considered as the total number of 15-25 year olds in Transitional Housing. The Ministry is working with all housing and service providers to continuously improve our data collection processes.

For your convenience, the data has been separated by financial year.

Financial year 2018-2019

Month	Total
July	328
August	244
September	366
October	418
November	397
December	405
January	374
February	314
March	228
April	453
May	419
June	402

Month	Auckland	Male	Female	Gender diverse	Part of households	Removed from accommodation
July	161	125	229	0	250	S
August	72	98	176	0	183	S
September	228	127	279	0	270	S
October	247	158	310	0	299	7
November	232	145	279	0	288	14
December	239	159	297	0	279	9
January	219	149	274	0	267	S
February	122	121	231	0	211	S
March	110	77	182	0	159	S
April	268	184	330	0	347	11
May	256	170	311	0	315	6
June	204	147	297	0	317	11

Financial year 2019-2020

Month	Total
July	690
August	570
September	624
October	580
November	594
December	584
January	712
February	700
March	711
April	563
May	644
June	599

Month	Auckland	Male	Female	Gender diverse	Part of households	Removed from accommodation
July	377	241	441	0	596	9
August	315	204	366	0	461	S
September	338	244	378	0	531	15
October	319	204	372	0	489	10
November	303	211	377	0	520	18
December	287	208	371	0	508	7
January	324	288	421	0	580	19
February	324	263	434	0	582	14
March	337	268	436	S	584	19
April	266	218	339	S	468	S
May	297	243	395	S	543	12
June	313	218	378	S	491	6

In order to protect individual privacy, some data in these tables has been suppressed and is represented by 'S'. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Yours sincerely



Anne Shaw
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Housing Supply, Response and Partnerships