



DOIA21/22080605

s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your letter dated 26 July 2021 to the Ministry of Health requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Can you please forward information that tells me what the "maintaining tenancies" support/funding programme is, what it is and how it works, how it is normally accessed (through NASC?).

As you know, on 12 August 2021, this was transferred to Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) to respond as it falls within our responsibilities.

The Sustaining Tenancies programme started as a trial in 2017 to support over 4,650 households to keep their tenancies – covering both public housing and private rentals. There are now 33 providers in ten regions funded to support individuals and whānau who need help with issues that put their tenancy at risk. It is for individuals, families and whānau requiring different levels of service support including:

- tenants who need a low level of support to stay in their home
- tenants with complex life events and risk factors (for example, those who have problems with alcohol and drugs or require mental health support)
- vulnerable tenants experiencing multiple risk factors and adverse life events (for example, those who have been recently released from prison or have a history of family violence).

Support services will work with tenants to assess what support services they need and to develop a whānau-led goal plan. Support services will then be provided based on this plan and the level of support identified. This includes things like life skills coaching, budgeting advice and engagement with landlords. Where additional support is needed, providers will refer them to specialist social and health services.

When tenants have successfully sustained their tenancy and are on track with their whānau-led goal plan, the support service will work with them to develop a plan to become independent of the service.

Anyone may self-refer to a sustaining tenancies provider in their area or they can be referred by another agency, such as Work and Income, or community organisations.

The programme was redesigned and expanded as part of the Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan. The Ministry received funding to provide 1,550 places per year for three years to June 2023. In response to the immediate impact of COVID-19, 600 places were brought forward to Year One (from Year Three). Support service providers started delivering the redesigned service around the country from July 2020.

The Homelessness Action Plan was launched last year to deliver on the Government's vision that homelessness is prevented where possible, or is rare, brief and non-recurring. The action plan sets out a balanced and comprehensive package of actions to address homelessness with an increased focus on prevention, alongside supply, support and system enablers. Actions will build on and support work already underway around New Zealand and put in place essential changes to address gaps in responses to homelessness. I have included a copy of the action plan for you.

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



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Housing Supply, Response and Partnerships