



Amanda Murtagh
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10 December 2021

Tēnā koe Amanda Murtagh

On 11 October 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information in relation to a previous response sent to you on 7 September 2021:

- 1. How did the Official and Parliamentary Information team assessing the OIA which arrived at the decision that the best approach would be a personal phone call and not a formal response?*
- 2. Who at the Ministry authorised this decision?*
- 3. Why was the decision made not to answer the questions under the OIA act?*
- 4. Was Ministerial Services involved in the decision?*
- 5. Please provide a copy of all Internal MSD correspondence regarding this matter.*

For the sake of clarity, the Ministry will address you questions in turn.

- 1. How did the Official and Parliamentary Information team assessing the OIA which arrived at the decision that the best approach would be a personal phone call and not a formal response?*
- 3. Why was the decision made not to answer the questions under the OIA act?*

With every official information request, the Official and Parliamentary Information (OPI) team corresponds with the relevant business units who are the subject matter experts of the request. In this case, the OPI team consulted with the Service Delivery business unit.

Numerous factors were taken into consideration when discussing your previous official information request, such as, the context of your questions, the information you were seeking as well as your privacy. When responding to requests we also always consider the best channel to convey information back to the client, and in some cases we may consider a direct phone call to be more appropriate because it will allow for follow up questions to be addressed as part of this conversation.

However, since you disagreed with the approach, we did provide you with a written response on 7 September 2021.

As per our letter of 19 November, we treated your request as a request under the Privacy Act 2020 rather than one made under the Official Information Act 1982 because you requested information about yourself and your file information which is covered by the Privacy Act. Responses under the Privacy Act do not get published on our website.

3. Who at the Ministry authorised this decision?

I authorised this decision. But I also wish to add that the legislation required this decision.

4. Was Ministerial Services involved in the decision?

Yes, the OPI team is part of the Ministerial and Executive Services.

5. Please provide a copy of all Internal MSD correspondence regarding this matter.

The Ministry interpreted your request as being all internal correspondence regarding the Ministry's decision making of the previous response, sent to you on dated 7 September 2021. Therefore, please see enclosed a copy of all internal correspondence in relation to the decision making of the response sent to you on 7 September 2021. Some information has been withheld to protect the privacy of Ministry staff under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. There are no countervailing reasons which would favour release of this information.

Due to the sensitive and personal information enclosed in these documents, I am sending them to your personal email address to protect your confidentiality. As such, they will not be posted on the FYI website.

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. 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 this response 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Magnus', written in a cursive style.

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services