



13 May 2021

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Hemant
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Tēnā koe Hemant

Official Information Act request 2122-0702 – Passport staffing over Easter weekend

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request which was transferred from the Minister of Internal Affairs to the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 12 April 2022.

You requested –

On the passports website

(<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.passports.govt.nz%2F&data=04%7C01%7CSDOOfficialCorrespon%40dia.govt.nz%7C0234b20a021b47497ee108da1c0b010a%7Cf659ca5cfc474e96b24d14c95df13acb%7C0%7C0%7C637853130840681107%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sd=EkobgGOSgkykpkF5Je%2Fj6IORddwbXJPir42Plh%2BNBlo%3D&reserved=0>) it says "...We are experiencing delays processing passports due to reduced staff on site — we will process your application as soon as possible. The approximate timeframe to process a standard passport application is currently 22 working days.....".

As the delays are due to social distancing (i'm assuming that's why there are reduced staff on site) how many staff will be working on easter friday and easter monday to be able to still comply with social distancing, but also reduce processing timeframes?

In response to your request I can provide you with the following information.

You have noted the information on our passports website that advises we have reduced staff on site, and this is affecting processing, and inferred that this was due to social distancing requirements.

In fact, this refers to the fact that a high proportion of our staff – at times over a third – were required to quarantine or isolate due to their, or a family member or household member, contracting COVID-19.

I can advise that there were 16 Life and Identity Services Officers on Saturday 16 April 2022, and 33 Life and Identity Services Officers on Monday 18 April 2022, working on Passport tasks to help reduce processing timeframes.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal tail extending to the right.

Julia Taylor
Manager Operational Policy and Official Correspondence
Service Delivery and Operations