



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

23 OCT 2014

Patrick Kavanagh

fyi-request-2040-1aae54dc@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Kavanagh

I am writing in response to your email of 22 September 2014 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, a breakdown of figures regarding long-term beneficiaries from 2011 to the present, and beneficiaries who refuse offers of employment.

The Ministry of Social Development is committing to achieving Better Public Services through reducing long-term welfare dependency. The Ministry reports on long-term beneficiaries as those who have a continuous duration of benefit receipt of one year or more. The Ministry started reporting on this beneficiary group in June 2012.

In 2012/13, 11,095 people who received an Unemployment or Sickness related benefit for one year or more exited benefit into work. In 2013/14, when benefit categories changed, 15,593 Jobseeker Support beneficiaries exited benefit into work.

The Ministry's target is to reduce the number of people continuously receiving Jobseeker Support for more than 12 months by 30 percent, from 78,000 in April 2012 to 55,000 by June 2017. The Ministry reports regularly to the State Services Commission on this target. This information is publicly available at: www.ssc.govt.nz/bps-reducing-dependence

Benefit information, including information on long-term beneficiaries, is also publicly available on the Ministry's website: www.msd.govt.nz

You also asked about the number of full-time work obligated beneficiaries who refused to work and had their benefit sanctioned. Between July 2013 and 30 June 2014, 93 beneficiaries refused a suitable offer of employment and consequently had their benefit cancelled for 13 weeks.

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

Debbie Power
Deputy Chief Executive Work and Income