

22 December 2022

C161714

Mohammed Khan

fyi-request-20496-78a93944@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Mohammed

Thank you for your email of 25 November 2022 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting further information about people being released into the Rotorua district. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested:

*I'm interested in the statement that
"As at 21 July 2022, there were 45 people in emergency accommodation in Rotorua who were in the management of Corrections. These people had been placed in emergency accommodation through our nationwide agreement with MSD. "*

*I had been led to think by other statements from Corrections- such as this one:
<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffyi.org.nz%2Frequest%2F20495%2Fresponse%2F79138%2Fattach%2Fhtml%2F13%2Fletter.pdf.html&data=05%7C01%7Cinfo%40corrections.govt.nz%7C2e133b51c2a843134c5208dace54e28e%7Cfc4d60d1bb674d7b898109a1c54e91ea%7C0%7C0%7C638049161820163865%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlloiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IkhWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=IZcDTx7%2FBqAuE54kjxmdrGuBZ79STbb828RmREfkC4%3D&reserved=0>
that Corrections only retained data on whether prisoners were initially funneled to emergency accommodation. Interestingly, that letter indicates that throughout the entire Bay of Plenty, not just Rotorua, only 15 people were initially released into emergency accommodation.*

Your own letter indicates that

"The vast majority of people return home to family or make their own arrangements about where to live."

Does this suggest that Corrections maintains full data on this, and that you can in fact provide full information on situations like those where parolees are released elsewhere, but then funneled to motels in Rotorua?

Individuals released from prison are only required to advise Corrections of their release address if they are subject to a post release order with residential restrictions. A post release order means the person is subject to either release conditions, parole or an extended supervision order.

Corrections does not place people into emergency accommodation, where this is an urgent need, we would place them with a support/transitional accommodation provider who we contract. The data we provided on 7 November 2022, regarding definitive placements into emergency accommodation is limited to those where there is a contract between Corrections and the emergency accommodation provider. These contracts are primarily used for people who are not eligible for Ministry of Social Development's (MSD) Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (also referred to as emergency accommodation). The emergency accommodation contracts Corrections manages are different from the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant provided by MSD.

People's living circumstances change and where required Corrections will work with them to identify and source alternative accommodation. If all accommodation options are exhausted, people who are eligible may access MSD's Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant. Corrections will work closely with MSD, who are responsible for sourcing and funding the emergency accommodation.

Addresses are entered manually by staff directly into individual files. To be certain that we were answering this request accurately we would need to manually review each person's file. Therefore, your query for surrounding situations whereby people on parole are released elsewhere - but then housed in motels in Rotorua - would require substantial collation to answer.

A further manual review into each individual profile would then be required to determine whether they were on the relevant order at that address during the relevant time and to identify the circumstances that led to their loss of accommodation.

Further, addresses which are used to house people using Emergency Special Needs Grants are records held by MSD, not Corrections.

Accordingly, your request is refused in accordance with section 18(g) of the OIA as the information requested is not held by Corrections and also 18(f) of the OIA, as it would require substantial collation or research to provide the information we do hold.

In accordance with section 18A and 18B of the OIA we have considered whether fixing a charge, extending the time limit or asking you to refine or amend your request would enable us to provide a response. However, given the scale of the request, we do not consider that this would be an appropriate use of our publicly funded resources.

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections' website. Typically, responses are published quarterly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MH' followed by a horizontal line.

Matt Huddleston
Manager Ministerial Services (acting)
People and Capability