



R S Grant
fyi-request-20777-ab2454cf@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear R S Grant

Thank you for your email on 6 October 2022 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

On or around 26 April 2020 you stated that:

“Some of the agencies we’ve been working with, who of course know most of the rough-sleepers in the area, have been trying for years to get some of these people into accommodation. It’s during COVID we’ve managed to achieve that, so we certainly don’t want to lose those gains that we’ve made in really tackling homelessness in New Zealand.”

Please can you provide any information you have assessing the extent to which those gains have, in fact, subsequently been lost in respect of Auckland?

You refused my request under section 18(g) of the OIA, but indicated that you expected to receive advice during the first quarter of 2022 that would "of course include detail specifically about the outcome of the response in Auckland as per your request".

I trust you have received that advice, and I would therefore like to request that you now provide a response to my earlier request. For the avoidance of doubt, given that you achieved having zero rough sleepers in Auckland during COVID, I would like to know whether those gains were, or were not, lost after the COVID emergency ended.

On 7 October 2022 your request was transferred to Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) to respond.

When the first COVID-19 lockdown was announced in March 2020, the Government funded over 1,200 temporary places for some of our most vulnerable people including those experiencing chronic homelessness. A large number of these people have high and complex needs and wrap around support was also put in place to support them to find long term housing.

The Government committed to ensuring the people accommodated in these places do not need to return to homelessness. The collective work done across agencies meant we were in a stronger position to keep everyone safe when the August 2021 lockdown was announced in response to the Delta outbreak. As at 30 June 2022, there were 427 COVID-19 response motel places being funded by the Ministry in Auckland.

As well as the COVID-19 response motel places, the Ministry funds a number of programmes to achieve the government's vision that homelessness is prevented where possible, and when it does happen, is rare, brief and non-recurring.

Transitional housing

Transitional housing gives families, whānau and individuals a warm, dry, safe place to stay if they're in immediate and severe need of housing. They're also provided with wrap-around support services to help them find longer-term accommodation and deal with some of the barriers they face in finding a permanent home.

As at 30 June 2022, there were 2,496 transitional housing places in Auckland. Each place is irrespective of the number of bedrooms so can house one household or individual.

Sustaining Tenancies

Sustaining Tenancies is for tenants in private rentals or public housing who are at risk of losing their place to live. Those issues could range from struggling to pay their rent, to dealing with mental or physical health concerns, or risk factors such as addiction or family violence.

In Auckland, there are 435 households actively participating in the programme as at the end of June 2022. A further 450 households had successfully exited the service on or before 30 June 2022 in Auckland.

Rapid Rehousing

Rapid Rehousing helps individuals and whānau quickly exit homelessness and get back into permanent housing. Once they're back in stable housing, it also provides support to help them maintain their tenancies and avoid a return to homelessness.

In Auckland, 425 people have been accepted into the Rapid Rehousing program as of May 2022.

Housing First

Housing First is a collective response to homelessness funded by the Ministry. It offers people immediate access to housing and then wraps around tailored support for as long as needed to help people remain housed and address the issues that led to homelessness.

In Auckland, 1,259 people have been housed by Housing First by the end of June 2022.

HomeGround

The Ministry has provided HomeGround, Auckland City Mission's new home, with funding of \$18 million to help with the development. HomeGround provides housing for people on the public housing register and for people experiencing homelessness, as well as an on-site medical centre to provide crisis care, social support, food and counselling.

The Ministry has agreed to provide funding for the 80 one-bedroom accommodation units for a period of 25 years. The Whole of Life costs for the Ministry is estimated at \$74.4 million and includes the capital contribution.

Homelessness Action Plan

On 22 October 2022, Hon Marama Davidson, Associate Minister of Housing (Homelessness), released the latest progress report for the Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan (HAP). The HAP recognises that action is needed now to prevent homelessness, increase housing supply and provide support services. You can read more about the programmes listed above, the HAP and the latest progress on our website here: www.hud.govt.nz/our-work/aotearoa-new-zealand-homelessness-action-plan-2020-2023/.

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 at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely

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

Gabriel Pollard
Acting Manager Ministerial Services