

3 March 2023

Rose Tafford
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Dear Ms Tafford

Thank you for your email of 9 January 2022 requesting information on Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities' policies on overcrowding in its homes, fire-damage to Kāinga Ora properties, and the number of applicants for housing who decline the offer of a property due to its size.

As Kāinga Ora advised on 17 February 2023, we have transferred the following parts of your request to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), as MSD is responsible for managing the waitlist for public housing and needs assessment interviews:

- *how many tenants on the Kainga Ora housing waiting list in 2020 and 2021 turned down a property or demanded a larger home.*
- *For Intergenerational families wanting to live together are all adults interviewed or carefully considered as to whether they are eligible to be housed by Kainga Ora.*

You can expect to hear further from MSD on these parts of your request.

Kāinga Ora has considered the remaining parts of your request under the Official Information Act 1982, and I list your questions, and my responses, below.

1. *What is Kainga Ora's policies or strategies regarding Overcrowding in their properties?*

At the time a property is let, Kāinga Ora determines the total number of occupants who can reside in the property. This is based on the size of both the household and the property. All tenants are required to sign a Residential Tenancy Agreement. Our current Residential Tenancy Agreement requires a tenant to advise us if an additional resident intends to join the household for more than three months. Please note that 'additional person' does not include any child who is born during the tenancy.

If Kāinga Ora becomes aware of a potential over-crowding situation, we will discuss alternatives with the customer, such as applying for a transfer to a property that better suits their needs. Kāinga Ora addresses any issues of tenants exceeding the maximum number of occupants allowed in a tenancy on a case-by-case basis. We ensure that the tenancy remains sustainable for the occupants, and that there are no adverse impacts on surrounding neighbours, or the neighbourhood.

2. *How many properties between 2020 and 2022 had been damaged or destroyed due to fire incidents.*

Please see the table below for the number of fire notifications actioned by our Fire and Chemical response team in 2020 -2022. These incidents are broken down by the extent of the damage, ie whether the property required minor or major repairs or demolition. Kāinga Ora requires all fires, even a small fire on a stovetop, to be notified, regardless of whether repairs are necessary.

With regard to the properties demolished, it is worth noting that demolition is not always due to the extent of fire damage. Kāinga Ora may decide to demolish a fire-damaged property if there are plans to redevelop the site and it is financially unviable to carry out repairs for the short amount of time the property will be retained.

Calendar Year	No. of Fire Notifications	No Action or Minor Action	Major Repair	Demolition
2022	373	272	61	40
2021	392	300	45	47
2020	371	277	48	46

3. *Are Private Landlords and Kainga Ora bound by the same legislative acts such as Healthy Homes Standards and Residential Tenancies Act, or do Kainga Ora have different legislative acts that differ from private landlords.*

Kāinga Ora is bound by the same legislative acts as private landlords, however, Kāinga Ora is subject to a different legislative deadline than private landlords for achieving Healthy Homes compliance. Under the revised timeframes announced by the Government in 2022, Kāinga Ora has until 1 July 2024 to make our homes complaint with the Healthy Homes Standards. This is a year before the deadline for private rentals, which are required to be fully complaint by 1 July 2025. In addition, the Government expects Kāinga Ora to aim for 1 July 2023 for compliance on as many homes as possible.

4. *do Kainga Ora have a maximum amount of tenants they will allow in a home depending on how many rooms that home has, (example: 4 bedroom home = maximum of 8 tenants), if so please provide a breakdown depending on bedrooms.*

The maximum number of tenants allowed in a property is based on the assessment made by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) of household occupants and the number of bedrooms required. Kāinga Ora also makes a case by case assessment based on our customers' housing needs. However, MSD is primarily responsible for managing the housing need assessment criteria.

In general, the guidelines for allocating the number of bedrooms a household requires are as follows:

- there should be no more than two persons per bedroom
- children aged 10 years or over of the opposite sex should not share a room
- children aged under 18 years of the same sex may reasonably share a bedroom
- single adults and couples should have a separate bedroom
- children should not share a bedroom with their parent(s)

For the purposes of allocating bedrooms, adults are considered to be someone aged 18 years or over, or if aged 17 or 17 years, are (or have been) married or in a civil union.

5. how many fires have been confirmed as being due to overcrowding?

Kāinga Ora is not aware of any direct correlation between housing overcrowding and fires. The leading cause of fires notified in Kāinga Ora homes is unattended cooking.

I trust this information is helpful. Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to OIA requests where possible. We do not publish requesters' personal information.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Kelly
Manager Government Relations