



16 NOV 2015

Ms Belinda Blair
fyi-request-2997-df4a4598@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Blair,

On 30 July 2015 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information about the Chief Executive complaints panel process and the cost per year for a child in the custody of the Chief Executive.

Chief Executive Complaints Panel

The Child, Youth and Family complaint resolution process consists of two stages: firstly, an internal review of the complaint by Child, Youth and Family; and secondly, a review by the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development if a complaint has not been resolved at stage one. The panel is an advisory committee put in place to assist the Chief Executive in his review. The panel is independent from Child, Youth and Family and can recommend a range of remedies to assist in resolution.

The remedies recommended in individual cases can include an ex gratia payment, if the panel considers this is justified in the circumstances. Ex gratia payments are not recommended as a matter of course for all complaints considered by the panel. Further information about the complaint resolution process can be found at the following link: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/contact-us/complaints/ce-review-cyf-complaints.html>

I can advise that the highest monetary figure paid to a complainant through the Chief Executive complaints panel process since it was established is \$15,000. This was an ex gratia payment which was approved by the Chief Executive to cover the social work failures and practice deficiencies identified by the panel.

As at 31 August 2015, the panel had heard 86 complaints, of these cases the panel had recommended an ex gratia payment for 20 cases, with an average payment of \$6,460.

Care and Protection

When serious care and protection concerns are apparent for a child (aged 10-14 years) due to the nature or frequency of their offending, the child may be placed into the custody of the Chief Executive under section 14(1)(e) of the Children Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 in order to ensure that they do not harm themselves or others. An example of this includes children who have harmful or concerning sexual behaviours who may require placement with specialist caregivers, in a specialist group home, or in a specialist residential treatment facility. Below I have provided a link to information on our website about how we work with children or young people exhibiting harmful or concerning sexual behaviours. <http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/service-guidelines/hsb-service-specification.pdf>

You have asked for information about the costs associated with the placement of a child or young person, exhibiting harmful or concerning sexual behaviours, in a

residential treatment facility, with a specialist caregiver or in a specialist group home. Te Poutama Arahi Rangatahi is a specialist residential treatment facility run by Barnardos in Christchurch. Child, Youth and Family and the Ministry of Education contract Barnardos to run the home. Funding per placement in Te Poutama Arahi Rangatahi is \$217,687 on average per annum. This rate includes the care and the clinical programme while there.

Youth Services Strategy (YSS) is a department of Child, Youth and Family which provides individually targeted services for high risk youth. These services aim to eliminate persistent offending, behavioural problems including drug and alcohol abuse and addressing mental health issues. Funding per placement in YSS one to one specialist caregivers is \$90,939 on average per annum. This is for the care and day activities components only.

Funding per placement in YSS specialist group homes is \$137,848 on average per annum. This is for the care and day activities components only. For each YSS placement (specialist caregivers and specialist group homes) there is a requirement for a harmful sexual behaviour assessment and treatment programme to be delivered by the local Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) provider. On average the placement cost is \$27,933 per annum.

Information on Child, Youth and Family and Community Investment funding provided to Safe Network Incorporated for the previous three financial years is enclosed.

The Ministry is unable to provide information on Child, Youth and Family referred children who have completed the SAFE programme and then reoffended as the information is stored in individual files. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982. Thousands of files would need to be reviewed in order to sufficiently answer your question. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

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



Viv Rickard
Deputy Chief Executive, Child, Youth and Family