

18 March 2019

David Howse
fyi-request-9619-d544ab21@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Howse

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 18 February 2019. You requested the following (numbered for ease of response):

- 1. ... for which benefit types child support is retained, whether there is a limit to the amount retained with respect to each and whether the pre or post tax benefit amount is retained.*
- 2. Please advise the benefit amount payable with respect to each in the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 with details of all components that may contribute i.e number of children, accommodation supplement, etc.*

For each of the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 please provide the following:

- 3. The total number of receiving parents and the total child support received*
- 4. The number of receiving parents who had child support payments retained to offset benefits and the total amount retained.*
- 5. Data for each month of 2016, 2017 and 2018 detailing the monthly retention's within \$10 bands. i.e. In January 2016 the number of receiving parents from whom 0 to \$10; \$10.01 to \$20; \$20.01 to \$30..... was retained in relation to a benefit they received.*

Request one

Child support is retained for the following benefits:

- Emergency benefit;
- Jobseeker benefit;
- Sole Parent Support;
- Young Parent Payment; and
- Unsupported Childs Benefit.

The Crown entitlement is calculated by comparing the Receiving Carer's daily rate of base benefit, to their daily Child Support entitlement. The lesser of the two is the Crown entitlement.

The entitlement retained is based upon the post-tax rate of benefit.

Request two

Your request for the benefit amount payable for the 2016, 2017 and 2018 tax years with details of all components that may contribute to the amount payable is refused under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information requested is publicly available.

Benefit rates paid are determined by individual client circumstances and are changeable throughout the year as clients may have changeable income and circumstances. The following information is available on the Ministry of Social Development's website:

- current and historical main benefit rates with factors that may affect the rate (<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/main-benefits-rates/index.html>);
- current and historic Supplementary Assistance rates with factors that may affect the rates (<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/extra-help-information/index.html>); and
- child Support Payments in relation to benefits (<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/core-policy/income/types-of-income/child-support-payments.html>).

Request three

The table below shows the total number of receiving parents and the total amount of child support received for the years ending 31 March 2016, 2017 and 2018.

	2016	2017	2018
Receiving Carers	149,797	151,967	153,969
Total child support received (\$)	461,352,197	459,432,865	\$463,987,986

Clarifications for request three:

- The number of receiving carers is those who have had a child support entitlement at some point during the relevant child support year.
- The total child support received is the sum of payments made to receiving carers and payments offset against benefits.

Request four

The table below shows the number of receiving carers and the amount retained to offset a benefit.

	2016	2017	2018
Receiving carers	139,274	135,762	128,839
Net transfers to crown (\$)	185,668,323	181,356,607	178,560,433

Clarifications for question 4:

- The number of receiving carers includes all those who had a child support payment retained in the relevant child support year. That payment may relate to entitlement for previous child support years.

Request five

Appendix 1 provides the number of receiving carers by month, with child support retained by \$10 band.

Right of review

If you disagree with my decision to refuse an aspect of your OIA request, you can ask an Inland Revenue review officer to review my decision.

To ask for an internal review, please email the Commissioner of Inland Revenue at: CommissionersCorrespondence@ird.govt.nz.

Alternatively, under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision. You can contact the office of the Ombudsman by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Thank you for your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sue Gillies".

Sue Gillies
Segment Management Lead Families