24 September 2026

Ministry for Ethnic Communities
Te Tari Mātāwaka

s9(2)(a) [redacted]

Our ref: OIA 2627-0337

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a) [redacted]

Response to your Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 7 September 2026 to the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (the Ministry) requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

> *Under the Official Information Act, I request information (from your Ministry) relating to staff who have received employer-funded allowances, payments, or other financial assistance intended to support travel or commuting to their normal workplace.*
>
> *For the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026, please provide:*

1. *The number of staff who have been approved for any allowance, reimbursement, subsidy, or payment intended to support travel or commuting to their office or usual place of work.*
2. *For each staff member*
    - *The region/location in which they were based.*
    - *The office/workplace they were expected to attend.*
    - *The type of allowance or payment approved.*
    - *The amount approved and, where applicable, the total amount paid.*
    - *The date the arrangement was approved.*
    - *Whether the arrangement was approved before or after the staff member commenced employment.*
    - *Whether the arrangement arose because the staff member relocated or chose to reside outside the area of their designated workplace.*
3. *Where an allowance or payment was approved following a staff member's decision to relocate, move residence, or remain living away from their designated workplace, the reasons the agency approved the arrangement.*
4. *Any policies, guidelines, delegations, or criteria used to assess and approve such allowances or payments.*
5. *The number of staff currently employed by the agency who continue to receive these allowances or payments.*
6. *The number of staff who have received such allowances or payments during the requested period but have since left the agency.*

Proactively released by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities

The Ministry has interpreted the part of your request relating to allowances, payments or other financial assistance as referring specifically to assist staff with travel to, and commuting between, their home and their usual place of work from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026.

In response to your request, although the Ministry has policies in place for staff that are required to travel for business reasons, the Ministry does not have specific policies relating to allowances or payments for staff commuting to their usual place of work, decision to relocate, move residence, or remain living away from their designated workplace.

As such, the Ministry has not approved any allowances, payments or other financial assistance intended to support travel or commuting to their normal workplace or for staff to relocate, move residence, or remain living away from their designated workplace from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Under section 28 of the OIA, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my response relating to this request. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please note, due to the public interest in our work, the Ministry may publish responses to requests for official information on our website, shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: Ministerial@ethniccommunities.govt.nz.

Ngā mihi



Edward Firth
Director, Ministerial Services

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