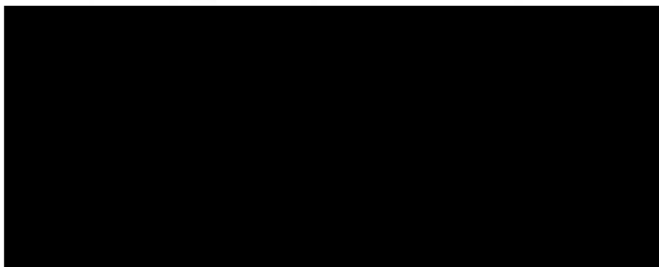


27 AUG 2019

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### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 18 July 2019 requesting:

*"Could I please make a request for the following information as soon as it is able to be made available:*

*How many requests has the MOH received over the past five years for housing access modifications*

*What is the value for the above requests*

*What type of modifications did these relate to*

*How many requests has the MOH granted for housing access modifications over the past five years*

*What is the value of the above grants*

*What reasons were provided in denying the remaining applications*

*How many applications have been waiting longer than three months to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications*

*How many applications have been waiting longer than six months to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications*

*How many applications have been waiting longer than one year to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications*

*How many applications have been waiting longer than two years to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications"*

The information held by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) pertaining to your request is set out below.

*How many requests has the Ministry received over the past five years for housing access modifications? What is the value for the above requests?*

The Ministry does not hold information relating to the number of requests received, however please see below for the number of requests that have been approved for the last five years.

Year	Number of housing modifications (inclusive of access modifications) approved by the Ministry	Value of housing modifications (inclusive of access modifications) approved by the Ministry
2014-15	2,034	\$9.7 million
2015-16	2,845	\$10.4 million
2016-17	2,521	\$9.7 million
2017-18	2,735	\$9.9 million
2018-19	3,181	\$13.1 million

*What type of modifications did these relate to?*

<b>Basic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handrails</li> <li>• Internal door widening</li> <li>• Lever taps</li> <li>• Threshold ramp</li> </ul>
<b>Complex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access modifications</li> <li>• Bathroom – level access shower, accessible vanity and hand basin, bidet, reconfiguration of bathroom</li> <li>• Hoist – free standing or ceiling track</li> <li>• Removal of wall to increase circulation space and widening doorways</li> <li>• Fencing for a safe play area</li> <li>• Kitchen for independence</li> </ul>
<b>Access (Basic or Complex)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy steps</li> <li>• Pathways</li> <li>• Ramp</li> <li>• Handrails</li> <li>• Lifts – stair, low rise</li> <li>• Through floor</li> <li>• Automatic door opener</li> </ul>

*How many requests has the Ministry granted for housing access modifications over the last five years? What is the value of the above grants?*

Year	Number of requests for housing access modifications approved by the Ministry	Value of requests for housing access modifications approved by the Ministry
2014-15	1162	\$3.2 million
2015-16	1347	\$3.6 million
2016-17	1329	\$3.8 million
2017-18	1471	\$3.9 million
2018-19	1692	\$4.7 million

*What reasons were provided in denying the remaining applications?*

The Ministry does not hold information on the declined applications, therefore this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act. However, you may find the following information useful.

An application can be denied at any stage of the process. Applications may be declined when the client does not meet the disability eligibility and access criteria.

The modifications approved must meet the eligibility and access criteria and are for a disabled person to remain in their own home or to support the main carer of a dependent person.

The housing modification process starts with an assessment from an Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) Assessor, which is usually an occupational therapist. In some cases, there is a waiting period before the assessment process begins as the EMS Assessors are generally employed within the local district health boards, which often have waiting lists.

Once the client's needs have been identified and solutions proposed, the EMS Assessor will consult with an EMS professional advisor then a service request is submitted and the building process can commence. This is carried out in accordance with all the relevant building standards and council processes.

*How many applications have been waiting longer than three months to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications?*

*How many applications have been waiting longer than six months to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications?*

*How many applications have been waiting longer than one year to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications?*

*How many applications have been waiting longer than two years to be granted/denied – what is the value of these applications?*

The Ministry does not hold information on the number of applications waiting longer than three months or six months and one year or two years, therefore these four parts of your request are refused under section 18(g) of the Act. However, you may find the following information useful.

Once a request has been approved, there are a number of steps involved in completing the modification. Some of these steps include:

- Preparation of plans which may involve an architect
- Council consent processes
- Seeking quotes from contractors
- Builder availability to commence work
- The need to complete remedial maintenance work prior to modification starting
- Code of compliance requirements

The EMS providers have expected time frames for the modifications to be completed from the time a service request is accepted. The table below sets out approximately the average percentage achieved for each category of house modifications over the last five years.

<b>Modification</b>	<b>Expected days for completion</b>	<b>Percentage achieved</b>
Basic	20 days	84%
Complex	120 days	90%

The majority of service requests are completed within the expected time frame once received by the EMS provider. The requests that take longer to complete may be due to:

- A disagreement regarding the scope of the modifications to be funded
- The complexity of the recommended modifications
- The client's circumstances

I trust that this information fulfils your request. Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry's website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adri Isbister', with a large initial 'A' and a stylized 'I'.

Adri Isbister  
**Deputy Director-General  
Disability**