



13 January 2023

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s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)
Ref: H2022017746

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 29 November 2022. You requested:

- *The total budget for your department's Christmas party/parties for 2022 and 2021. Please separate costs for each year.*
- *The number of parties that were or will be held in each year.*
- *The number of staff who attended (or are expected to attend) each year's party/parties.*
- *The location of the venue/s for each year.*
- *A breakdown of the costs by expense type for each year's party/parties, including (where applicable) but not limited to the following:*
 - *Accommodation*
 - *Catering (e.g., beverages, crockery, food, glassware)*
 - *Consultation with relevant stakeholders*
 - *Decorations (e.g., Christmas tree, lights)*
 - *Entertainment (e.g., guest speaker/s, live music)*
 - *Planning*
 - *Travel to and from the venue (e.g., bus hire, flights)*
 - *Venue.*

Each year the Manatū Hauora Executive Leadership Team considers an appropriate approach and amount to be spent on Christmas and end-of-year functions. In 2021 and 2022, the prevalence of COVID-19 throughout the country has influenced the approach approved by the Executive Leadership Team.

In 2021 the Director-General hosted an online quiz for all staff. This incurred no cost. Business groups also arranged events adhering to Alert Level restrictions. The Ministry contributed a maximum of \$20 per person (which was not spent on alcohol). This contribution was not available for contractors, consultants, or people not attending the planned event. These celebrations included a mix of on and offsite locations. The total amount spent was \$10,941 (excluding GST).

In 2022, the Executive Leadership Team again approved a contribution of up to \$20 per person. For Wellington staff, this contribution was intended to be used for a Christmas function to be held at the Ministry's head office on Molesworth Street on 15 December 2022. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 daily case numbers rising sharply in the weeks leading up to the function, the decision was made to cancel the staff end of year celebration in order to minimise the risks associated with a single large indoor gathering. Prior to cancellation, the Ministry spent \$1,600 (excluding GST) on booking Karaoke entertainment, which is now a credit for the next Manatū Hauora end-of-year celebration. Additionally, \$205 (excluding GST) was spent on decorations that can be re-used for Christmas 2023. Costs relating to other events in our regional offices are not centrally recorded.

The Ministry is unable to provide the balance of the detailed breakdown you have requested under section 18(g) of the Act as, where it exists, the information is not recorded in a way that it can be reported. However, I hope the information that I have provided above satisfies your interest in the matter. You may wish to contact the Ministry at oiagr@health.govt.nz if there is more information that would assist you.

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Turner
Deputy Director-General
Government and Executive Services | Te Pou Whakatere Kāwanatanga