



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

08 DEC 2020

Jessica Dellabarca

fyi-request-14111-bcfefd1b@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Jessica Dellabarca

On 11 November 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information on the Ministry's benefit appeals processes, over a 24-month period:

Internal Benefit Review Committee

1. *The number and outcome of the decisions of the BRC broken down by no representation, client representation, lay-person advocate, and legal advocate.*
2. *The process in which a "community member" of the review committee is chosen, the duration for this term and the number of community members in each region.*
3. *Are there any publicly available benefit review committee decisions? If so, could I please have access to these or the process in which the decision is reached.*
4. *Any policy and training documents about how these reviews are carried out.*

Social Security Appeal Authority

1. *The number and outcome of the decisions of the SSAA broken down by no representation, client representation, lay-person advocate, and legal advocate.*
2. *Policy documents provided to the members of the appeal authority in guiding their decisions.*
3. *The process by which SSAA members are appointed.*

Medical Appeal Board

1. *Policy documents provided to the members of the board in guiding their decisions.*
2. *The process by which MAB members are appointed*
3. *The number and outcome of the decisions of the MAB broken down by no representation, client representation, lay-person advocate, and legal advocate.*
4. *Are there any publicly available MAB decisions? If so, could I please have access to these or the process in which the decision is reached.*

Appeals to the High Court

1. *The number and outcome of the decisions of the High Court broken down by no representation, client representation, lay-person advocate, and legal advocate.*
2. *Any documents provided to beneficiaries or MSD representatives before attending a trial.*

On 16 November 2020, the Ministry emailed you to advise that the following questions had been transferred onto the Ministry of Justice for response:

Social Security Appeal Authority

1. *The number and outcome of the decisions of the SSAA broken down by no representation, client representation, lay-person advocate, and legal advocate.*
2. *Policy documents provided to the members of the appeal authority in guiding their decisions.*
3. *The process by which SSAA members are appointed.*

Appeals to the High Court

1. *The number and outcome of the decisions of the High Court broken down by no representation, client representation, lay-person advocate, and legal advocate.*

This letter is to advise you that the Ministry has received your request, however requires more time to respond to this request. In accordance with section 15(1) and 15A of the Official Information Act, the Ministry's decision will be with you no later than 4 February 2021.

The reason for the extension is that your request is for a large quantity of information and it will take longer than the 20 working day time limit to collate the material you have requested and assess whether any interest might be prejudiced by its release.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz

I will respond to you sooner if I am able to.

Ngā mihi nui



Stephanie Short
**Manager, Official and Parliamentary Information
Ministerial and Executive Services**