

16 November 2021

C142199

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Tēnā koe Nicolas

Thank you for your email of 1 October 2021 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa (Corrections), requesting the following information:

Please provide me with the total number of instances of prisoners being released to work outside of prison per week, since January 1, 2019. Please break this down by prison. Please give me this information in an excel spreadsheet.

How much money has been paid to prisoners on release to work as a part of the government's Covid-19 wage subsidy scheme?

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

As you aware, your request for, 'How much money has been paid to prisoners on release to work as a part of the government's Covid-19 wage subsidy scheme' was transferred to the Ministry of Social Development on 14 October 2021, under section 14 of the OIA.

Employment and industry training, including our Release to Work (RtW) programme, are hugely beneficial avenues for people in prison to gain real work experience and employment skills, making it easier for them to find work on release. Having a job means someone is able to provide for themselves and their family, connect with pro-social support and it gives them a sense of pride.

The RtW programme allows minimum security prisoners, who are assessed as suitable, to engage in paid employment in the community where they can gain experience, employment skills and job stability to support them into work on release. People employed on RtW are paid at a full market rate determined by their employer, and have previously taken part in unit and prison-based activities and education to ensure they are well-prepared for community-based employment and that the public are safe.

In addition to the training and employment opportunities in prison, we operate our own recruitment service where specialised consultants help place people into jobs in preparation for their release from prison, or while they are serving a community sentence.

We also have employment support service, which includes a more intensive support package for people in prison due for release and for people on community sentences. This includes case management and six months of in-work support, in addition to job placement.

Appendix One provides a breakdown of the total number of people released through RtW from 1 January 2019 to 1 October 2021, broken down by week and prison. When interpreting the data, RtW activities are suspended during COVID-19 Alert Levels 4 and 3.

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections' website. Typically, responses are published quarterly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi



Rachel Leota
National Commissioner