



Te Tari Taiwhenua Internal Affairs

16 May 2024

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Flow ir in

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Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request (OIA 2324-0781)

I refer to your request for information dated 3 April 2024 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Social Development, which was subsequently transferred to the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) on 17 April 2024. You requested the following information:

- *can you please tell me who signed off for Jacinda Ardern's maternity leave.*
- *Specifically I'd like to know who authorized the magnitude of the payment. I'm given that it was more than any person in New Zealand was legally entitled to receive, can you confirm what the normal entitlement is and what limits there are and what ardern received.*
- *If she received more than the usual legal entitlement can you please tell me why.*
- *if she received the entitlement too soon after taking up her job can you please tell me why.*
- *Can you please confirm the normal limits and requirements for receiving maternity pay in New Zealand*

Response to your request

Please note that the Department does not hold information relating to the majority of your questions. However, in the spirit of the Act I can provide the following advice regarding the rules that applied when the Rt Hon Dame Jacinda Ardern was Prime Minister.

The Rt Hon Dame Jacinda Ardern served as Prime Minister from 26 October 2017 to 25 January 2023. As Prime Minister, she was not classified as an employee of the Department.

Remuneration for all Members of Parliament, including the role of Prime Minister, is determined by an independent body – [the Remuneration Authority](#). The *Remuneration Authority Act 1977* sets out the criteria the Authority must consider when setting the salaries for the Prime Minister, other members of the Executive and Members of Parliament. As the highest officer, the salary paid to the Prime Minister is set by legislation. You can view the current salaries for Ministers here: www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2020/0327/latest/LMS438252.html#LMS438252

The Department is responsible for processing and administering the payment of Ministerial expenses and entitlements in accordance with the relevant legislation (referred to above). This includes ensuring there is transparency and accountability by collating and releasing information about Ministerial expenses. You can find information about Ministers' expenses here: www.dia.govt.nz/Ministers-expense-releases

As the Rt Hon Dame Jacinda Ardern continued to hold the office of Prime Minister during the six-week leave of absence in 2018, she therefore met the legislative requirements relating to remuneration. I can confirm she continued to receive her full salary during this period. I have attached a link to the letter published on the Beehive website between the then Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister which outlines working arrangements put in place during her absence: [Letter to DPM regarding Acting PM arrangements FINAL and SIGNED.pdf \(beehive.govt.nz\)](#)

We may publish this OIA response on www.dia.govt.nz (with your personal details having been removed). Publishing responses to OIA requests increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the purpose of the Act to enable effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies, and to promote the accountability of Ministers and officials.

If you have any concerns with the information in this response, you have a right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. Information on how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Briget Ridden
General Manager – Ministerial Services
Te Haumi – Enterprise Partnerships
Te Tari Taiwhenua – The Department of Internal Affairs