



13 February 2023

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 28 November 2022 to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting information about staff Christmas parties. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). We have addressed each of your questions below.

- *The total budget for your department's Christmas party/parties for 2022 and 2021. Please separate costs for each year.*

Oranga Tamariki employs over 4,000 people. Christmas functions give us the opportunity to appreciate, acknowledge and thank our staff for their efforts throughout the year. Oranga Tamariki policy provides for a contribution of up to \$20 dollars (including GST) per employee towards Christmas functions. This contribution can include any costs associated with venue hire, catering, and/or activities but does not include any contribution to alcohol. Any costs over and above the contribution are self-funded by employees.

The contribution is a one-off payment and is not available for consultants and contractors or for staff not attending the organised function or event.

The total Oranga Tamariki contribution towards staff Christmas parties for 2021 was \$46,149. As at 27 January 2023, the total contribution for 2022 parties was \$47,004.

- *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.*

Oranga Tamariki does not hold this information as it is not typically recorded in Oranga Tamariki's databases. Individual departmental Christmas parties held are largely self-funded and organised at the individual department manager's discretion. As this information is not available this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as this information does not exist.

- *A breakdown of the costs by expense type for each year's party/parties, including (where applicable) but not limited to the following:*

## IN-CONFIDENCE

- *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*

When preparing invoices for events, our finance systems do not automatically record individual expenses such as accommodation and catering costs. Invoices that include these figures – for example catering for a party - will also incorporate other costs, such as hire costs of the venue. As our systems do not break down these individual expenses, our staff would have to manually review a large number of financial statements to provide you with the separate costings for the requested information, and this would disrupt the Ministry's operations. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act in that the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Oranga Tamariki leaders are encouraged to make prudent financial decisions when organising Christmas functions. Where staff may be required to travel to Christmas functions the function will be arranged at a suitable time and venue to maximise having people together and other opportunities for business related socialization.

Oranga Tamariki intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the public. We will do this by publishing this letter on our website. Your personal details will be deleted and we will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

I trust the information provided is useful. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with us directly by contacting [OIA\\_Requests@ot.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@ot.govt.nz). Alternatively you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Julie Miller  
**General Manager Public, Ministerial and Executive Services**