



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

Ministry of Social Development, Bowen State Building, Bowen Street 6011, PO Box 1556, Wellington 6140
• Telephone: 0-4-916 3300 • Facsimile: 0-4-918 0099

1 JUL 2014

Keri Eagan
fyi-request-1688-55460b14@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Eagan

Thank you for your email of 13 May 2014 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information on the Self Start Grant:

- *In each of the years 2009 to 2013 how much of the total grant has been used to pay for assessments through either medical professionals such as Occupational Therapists, Adaptive Technology Specialists etc?*
- *For each of the above years what amount in total was paid to contractors assessing the business plan?*
- *Please provide a figure for the total amount for each year distributed via the Self Start Grant that paid for the support itself (such as support people, physical modifications, special software).*
- *Over the time period 2009-2013 what is the average that each disabled person actually receives to meet their need once all assessors and contractors in the assessment process are paid?*
- *How many applications over the 2009-2013 time period had their lifetime allocation of the Self Start Grant used up entirely by assessments (and therefore no longer have access to this resource perhaps through no fault of their own)?*

The Self Start Grant is a grant for support services that are needed when a disabled person or person with ill health goes into self-employment. Workbridge is contracted to administer the Self Start Grant on behalf of the Ministry of Social Development. Self Start Grants help meet extra costs such as:

- workplace modifications
- physical support including on the job physiotherapy or attendant care
- mentoring
- special equipment needed because of the person's disability or ill health
- additional costs of transport or parking.

A self-employed person may receive Self Start in addition to the Flexi-Wage Self Employment subsidy. Flexi-Wage is a wage subsidy that invests in a disadvantaged job seeker by making a temporary contribution to their wages and training to enable them to access and maintain employment.

When a combination of this assistance is used for disabled people or people with ill health, the combined maximum amount that can be paid to a person in any given year is \$16,900.

With regard to your request for information regarding the Self Start grant, the table below provides the total number of applications processed, the total amount spent on assessments, and the amount of support granted for the calendar years 2009 to 2013.

During this period, no one had their lifetime allocation of \$5,200 used up entirely by assessments.

Number of Self Start applications processed	15
Total spent on financial assessments	\$3,898
Total spent on disability needs assessments	\$2,171
Total spent on all assessments	\$6,070
Total spent on support (excluding assessments), including equipment, support people, transport and interpreters	\$33,583
Grand total for Self Start grants (assessments and support)	\$39,653

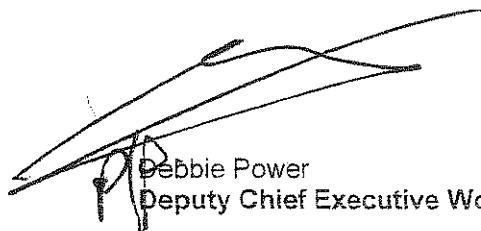
A small number of people have received this assistance, which means that providing you with this information broken down per year and the type of assessment undertaken could identify these individuals. As such, I am unable to release a breakdown of the information under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act, as to do so would breach the privacy of those individuals. I do not consider that the public interest outweighs the need to protect the privacy of natural persons in this instance.

You will note from the table above that the distribution of funds for assessments is 15 percent of the total amount provided for the Self Start grant.

I hope you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Debbie Power
Deputy Chief Executive Work and Income