

24 December 2015

Lee M

fyi-request-3314-bda8aa39@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Lee M

Official Information Act 1982 Request - Response

Thank you for your request of 3 November 2015 asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (Act):

Question 1: Does ACC put claimants on a communication plan?

Question 2: Does the AC Act, regulations, policies, procedures and/or guidelines provide for the ACC putting claimants on a communication plan?

Question 3: If the answer to the above mentioned question is no then why is there no statutory or internal policy, procedure or guideline for putting claimants on a communication plan. What safeguards are in place that would prevent a claimant from being frivolously and/or veraciously put on a communication plan?

Question 4: How many ACC claimants were put on a communication plan in the 10 years between 2005 and 2015?

Question 5: If ACC cannot answer the above mention question because it does not collect such data, then why does it not collect such data?

Question 6: If ACC does put claimants on a communication plan is there any statutory review and/or appeals process from such an administrative decision? If not, why not?

Question 7: What claimants are likely to be put on a communication plan? What are the more common reasons for putting someone on a communication plan?

Question 8: If claimants are put on a communication plan ACC would need to have good cause and reason to do this. Has ACC identified any particular cause or reason for doing this. What alternatives, if any, have been considered and explored by ACC.

Question 9: Does ACC think it is the highest practicable standard of service and fairness to put claimants on communication plans.

Question 10: Do claimants on communication plans have their records and files held by ACC flagged or uniquely identified to indicate they are on a communication plan? How do claimants access a copy of such a record?

Response

ACC is happy to provide the following response to your questions:

Questions 1, 7, 8 and 9

As part of the day to day management of its clients operations, ACC will sometimes implement a communication plan for dealing with correspondence and interactions with clients. Although each circumstance is different, communication plans are generally put in place where:

- there is a large volume of correspondence and or interaction with the client;
- the circumstances surrounding the client's cover, care or relationship with ACC are complex, or a dispute exists.

ACC implements communications plans for the purpose of ensuring that clients receive the best possible claim management where client interaction may be placing an undue strain on our resources and ability to meet our legislative obligations. In turn this allows us to ensure that our resources are appropriately managed for the benefit of all our clients.

Question 2

Decisions about the management of communication with a client are made by ACC Branch Managers. There is no specific policy, procedure or legislation relied on when making such decisions. In general, such a decision would be made to assist both the staff and a client who has high levels of contact with the Corporation. It provides the client with one key contact and enables one staff member to have an understanding of that client, their needs, and their interactions with ACC.

Questions 3 and 6

Where a client is unhappy about being put on a communication plan they have the ability to lodge a complaint with the office of the Complaints Investigator under the Code of ACC Claimants Rights.

Questions 4 and 5

ACC does not collect data about which clients are placed on communication plans. To enable ACC to provide the information requested, it would need to manually search a large number of individual client files from the past ten years. Accordingly, ACC is considering declining this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. If you still require information about this topic, please consider refining the scope of your request significantly.

If you have any questions, ACC will be happy to work with you to answer these. You can contact us at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz or in writing to *Government Services, PO Box 242, Wellington 6140*.

You have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsmen. You can call them on 0800 802 602, 9am to 5pm weekdays, or write to:

The Office of the Ombudsmen
P O Box 10 152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely

Government Services