

20 October 2023

s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 22 September 2023, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. *How many people started a first home grant application in the last year.*
2. *How many people that started a first home grant application in the last year completed that application to the point of acceptance and to the point of decline?*
3. *How many people were accepted and actually got a first time grant in the last year?*
4. *How many people started a first home partnership application in the last year?*
5. *How many people completed a first home partnership application in the last year.*
6. *How many people got a first home partnership in the last year.*
7. *How many complaints has Kāinga ora received about its processes, people and online services for first home grants has Kāinga ora received in the last year?*
8. *How many complaints has Kāinga Ora received about its processes, people and online portal application for first home partnership have been received in the last year.*

Kāinga Ora - Homes and Communities has considered your request under the OIA, and I provide the information requested in parts 1 – 6 of your request in the tables, below.

Table 1: First Home Grant applications from 1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023

Number of First Home Grant applications received	28,693
Number of applications pre-approved without a sale and purchase agreement	17,630
Number of applications approved for the purchase of a specific property	11,437
Number of applications declined	3,237
Number of First Home Grants paid out to individuals who purchased properties	10,782

Table 2: First Home Partner applications from 1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023

Number of First Home Partner applications created	3,105
Number of First Home Partner applications submitted for eligibility	1,453
Number of First Home Partner applications deemed eligible	1,020
Number of First Home Partner applications declined	173
Number of households who purchased a home using First Home Partner	317

I am declining parts 7 and 8 of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA, *the information does not exist*. This is because Kāinga Ora does not centrally record the numbers of complaints received about its home ownership products, including First Home Grant and First Home Partner.

Kāinga Ora responds to all complaints and enquiries as and when these are raised with us. Our experience is that most complaints relate to an application being declined. In these situations we speak with the complainant to ensure that they understand the reason their application was declined, and their options.

As you are aware, the First Home Partner scheme is now fully subscribed due to recent unprecedented demand and Kāinga Ora is no longer accepting any new applications.

The rapid surge in demand follows a number of policy changes announced by the Government earlier this year. The changes, which came into effect on 14 August 2023, included extending eligibility to existing homes and increasing income caps to help more people access the scheme.

In the six weeks since the changes were implemented, we received a significant increase in the number of First Home Partner applications. In one month, the average number of applications that we usually receive increased by more than 450 percent.

Prospective first home buyers are encouraged to consider the other home ownership products administered by Kāinga Ora. For more information on these products, I refer you to our website here: [Home ownership :: Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities \(kaingaora.govt.nz\)](https://kaingaora.govt.nz)

I understand that on 11 October 2023 you emailed the Chief Executive about the difficulties your whānau experienced applying for First Home Partner and a First Home Grant. I can advise that Kāinga Ora is looking into your concerns, and you will receive a full response to your email in due course.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of my decision on your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that Kāinga Ora proactively releases its responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request may be published at <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/publications/official-information-requests/>, with your personal information removed.

Nāku noa, nā



p.p. Rachel Kelly
Manager Government Relations

