

s7(2)(a)

Tēnā koe **s7(2)(a)**

Thank you for your email of 30 October 2024 to Te Kaunihera o Pōneke | Wellington City Council (the Council) requesting information regarding the Councils rates rebate. Your request has been considered under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). Please find my response below.

- 1. The number of people for the September 1 rates instalment dates in 2024, 2023 and 2022 who:**
 - a. Requested a rates rebate?**
 - b. Got approved for a rates rebate?**
 - c. Only paid some of their rates bills?**
 - d. Did not pay rates at all?**

The LGOIMA enables people to request official information from the Council. However, the LGOIMA only applies to information that is already held by the Council. There is no obligation on the Council to create information to respond to a request.

The information you are seeking in this case is not held by the Council but would need to be created to respond to your request. The Council does not record the number of rates rebate applications received and the dates that the rates rebate applications are received due to the nature in which applications are received (online, post, Arapaki Library and Service Centre etc). Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under 17(g) of the LGOIMA because the Council does not hold any official information.

The below table is for the number of people for the September 1 rates instalment date:

Rating years	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
Approved Rates Rebate	100 rebates approved by 01/09/24. (1,218 approved as of 15/11/24.)	17 rebates approved by 01/09/23. (1,952 approved for the total rating year.)	103 rebates approved by 01/09/22. (1,796 approved for the total rating year.)
Only paid some of their rate's bills	12,062	18,379	3,026
Did not pay rates at all?	4417	4656	1912

Notes:

- Data is at 15 November 2024.
- **The information provided reflects outstanding balances as of 1 September 2024.** It does not include subsequent receipts, which have settled approximately 64% of these balances.

- **Partial payments include ratepayers who pay via direct debit** on monthly, fortnightly, or weekly schedules. These balances will remain as partial payments throughout the year and are regularly assessed to ensure they are on track for full payment by year-end.
- Considering this, around 16%-20% of ratepayers with outstanding balances owe less than \$100. These typically pertain to small properties, often residual strips of land from development projects.

2. Also, has WCC taken any action over non-payment of rates on the September 1 instalment date?

In 2022, 2023 and 2024, the Council has only followed up with those ratepayers in arrears by calling or emailing the ratepayer to find a solution to make payments. No legal action has been taken in the 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 rating years.

Before the Council takes any legal action, we make attempts to find a solution with the ratepayers to pay the outstanding payments.

First Notices are sent for those accounts that are in arrears as of 30 June each year. A refusal to pay rates can result in legal action under the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002, ultimately culminating in the property undergoing a rating sale. Ratepayers are encouraged to engage with the Council to find an appropriate solution in times of financial stress.

Options that we encourage ratepayers to consider include:

- Setting up a direct debit
- Setting up payment arrangements
- Rates rebates
- Postponement of Rates Payments

More information can be found here: [Rates - Wellington City Council](#)

If, after a further 90 days, there is still a balance owing or the payment arrangement has been breached, and the property has a mortgage on it, then a final demand notice is sent to mortgagee pursuant to section 62(1)(c) of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002. In these instances, the mortgagee is required to make payment on behalf of the ratepayer, which would have implications on ratepayers' credit scores and future financing.

You have the right, by way of complaint under section 28(1) of the LGOIMA, to request an investigation and review of the Council's decision to refuse information by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you require further information, please contact official.information@wcc.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

Asha Harry
Official Information & Privacy
Wellington City Council

