

20 September 2022

Section (9) (2) (a)

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Our ref: OIA 98339

Tēnā koe Section (9) (2)

### Official Information Act 1982 request: Family Court data

Thank you for your email of 12 August 2022, requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), statistics on family court data. On 30 August 2022, we contacted you to clarify your request to include the number of separation cases made by de-facto couples for the years 2018 to 2021. On 8 September 2022, we advised you that the information had not yet been finalised for release. Please accept my apologies for the delay in getting this information to you. Your specific requests and my responses are below:

- 1. For the years 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, the nationwide number of divorce/separation/de-facto cases heard in both the Family Court and the High Court. If possible, it would be very helpful to know how many of those cases involved resolving guardianship disputes.*
- 2. For the years 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, the nationwide number of cases heard for child custody arrangements (including hearings for revision of an existing arrangement and hearings for new arrangements).*

As this information is publicly available, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(d) of the Act. Please find a link that provides you with the family court information requested. [justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/justice-statistics/data-tables/](https://justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/justice-statistics/data-tables/)

- 3. For the years 2020 and 2021, the nationwide number of cases heard to resolve disputes between caregivers, parents, and guardians regarding their stance on child vaccination.*

The Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) does not hold this information. It may be held on the court file; however, courts are not subject to the Act under the provisions of section 2(6)(a). I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information is not held by the Ministry, or any other agency subject to the Act.

4. *For the years 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, the nationwide average number of days for [all types of] cases to be heard (from filing to the hearing date)*

Please refer to **Table 1** which provides you with the average number of days for cases to be heard (disposed) between 2018 and 2021.

5. *For the years 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, Auckland's Metro Courts [North Shore, Waitakere, Auckland, Manukau, Papakura and Pukekohe] average number of days for cases to be heard from the date of filing.*

Please refer to **Table 2** which provides you with the average number of days for cases to be heard (disposed) in the Auckland Metro area.

6. *National split for family proceedings between the key issues being assets only versus guardianship or assets and guardianship. [Assets being relationship property, mutual property, financial joint funds, shares, bonds and gold]*

Information for family proceedings regarding both guardianship and property (assets) only, is publicly available. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(d) of the Act. Please find a link that provides you with the family court information requested. [justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/justice-statistics/data-tables/](https://justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/justice-statistics/data-tables/)

For information regarding family proceedings where assets and guardianship are dealt with together, the Ministry does not hold this information. This information may be held on the court file; however, as stated earlier, courts are not subject to the Act. I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information is not held by the Ministry, or any other agency subject to the Act.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Ombudsman may be contacted by phone on 0800 802 602 or by email to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Nāku noa, nā



Bruce Findlay  
**Acting Group Manager, Courts and Tribunals, Regional Service Delivery**

**Table 1: Average disposal age (days) for all Family Court applications nationwide, by disposal date, by calendar year 2018 - 2021**

	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Average Disposal Age</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>160</b>

Notes:

- This data may differ from previously released or published data. This data was extracted from the case management system as at 4 August 2022.
- This data only counts applications which have been disposed and counts them in the calendar year of the disposal.
- Calendar year is from 1 January to 31 December.
- Disposal age is a count of days between application filing date and disposal date.

**Table 2: Average disposal age (days) for all Family court applications within the Auckland Metro area, by disposal date, by calendar year 2018 - 2021**

Court	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Auckland</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Manukau</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>198</b>
<b>North Shore</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Papakura</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>247</b>
<b>Pukekohe</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Waitakere</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>171</b>

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- Calendar year is from 1 January to 31 December.
- Disposal age is a count of days between application filing date and disposal date.

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- This data only counts the disposal age for the Auckland Metro courts:
  - Auckland District Court
  - Manukau District Court
  - North Shore District Court
  - Papakura District Court
  - Pukekohe District Court
  - Waitakere District Court

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