



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2020-2021 Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Legal Affairs

FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND DISABILITY SERVICES

Hearing: Friday 26 February 2021

Answers due by: 24 March 2021

Budget Estimates secretariat

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FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND DISABILITY SERVICES

Questions from Hon Penny Sharpe MLC

1. How many children in OOHC are currently living overseas?

I am advised that information on children in OOHC living overseas is not readily available. My department is aware of all children in out-of-home care residing outside of NSW or overseas and this information is available within an individual child's record however this is not readily extractable. The department requires all children in out-of-home care to have prior approval before any overseas travel, including applications for passports. This includes any plans to relocate either temporarily or permanently.

2. The Child Death Report 2019 made recommendations regarding changes and errors in the date entry of children and young people into ChildStory?

(a) What action has been undertaken to correct errors in date of birth, cultural identity and relationship links?

I am advised that the Child Deaths 2019 Annual Report (page 68) described how in the process of completing serious case reviews about the deaths of children who were known to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), errors were noted by reviewing officers about a person's date of birth, their cultural identity and/or relationship links. All errors or anomalies were amended at the time it was noted, either by the reviewing officer directly, or by a request to the child protection practitioner who was working with the family or ChildStory support staff.

Information may be required to be updated at any point during or after DCJ's work with a family. Critical identifying information can be easily updated by users when are errors found.

3. What action is being undertaken to address the 22% caseworker vacancies in the New England area?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is working to fill vacancies by increasing the number of assessment centres and diversifying sourcing strategies. Between December 2020 and March 2021, DCJ conducted 9 assessment centres, assessed 44 candidates and made 11 offers to new caseworkers. DCJ is now conducting a minimum of one assessment centre per week. DCJ is sourcing new and additional candidates through an innovative digital marketing strategy utilising social media, as well as conventional strategies including job boards and LinkedIn to build the New England talent pipeline. Significant work has been undertaken to stabilise the caseworker workforce, including the conversation about temporary caseworkers to ongoing roles, analysis to understand the drivers of attrition and to inform proactive and retention plans

4. What action is being undertaken to address the 16% casework vacancies in Southern NSW?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is working to fill vacancies by increasing the number of assessment centres and diversifying sourcing strategies. Between December 2020 and March 2021, DCJ assessed 14 candidates and made 5 offers to new caseworkers. DCJ is continuing to conduct assessments as candidates come through the pipeline. DCJ is sourcing new and additional candidates through an innovative digital marketing strategy utilising social media, as well as conventional strategies including job boards and LinkedIn to build the Southern talent pipeline. Significant work has been undertaken to understand the drivers of attrition in Southern NSW, and retention plans have been put in place to address this.

5. In the current restructure of Strategy, Policy and Commissioning MOG, how many expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy have been received to date?

I am advised as at 26 February 2021, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning had received 158 expressions of interest for a voluntary redundancy.

Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

Together Home Initiative

6. How many people impacted by homelessness have been assisted by the Together Home Initiative to date?

I am advised since the commencement of the program, from 1 July 2020, 358 former rough sleepers have been supported by Together Home into long-term housing linked to wraparound supports.

7. What impact has the initiative had on the Premier's Priority to halve street homelessness by 2025?

I am advised since 1 July 2020, 358 former rough sleepers have been supported by Together Home into long-term housing linked to wraparound supports.

8. How many people assisted by the initiative have transitioned into long-term accommodation?

I am advised since 1 July 2020, 358 former rough sleepers have been supported by Together Home into long-term housing linked to wraparound supports.

9. How many young people have been assisted by the initiative?

I am advised as at 30 December 2020, 9 people under the age of 20 were participating in the program. A further 58 were aged between 20 and 29 years.

10. **Will additional funding be put towards reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness? If yes, which programs will receive additional funding and/or be developed?**

I am advised on 3 November 2020, the NSW Government announced a further investment of \$29m as part of the 2020-21 NSW Budget to expand the Together Home program.

This funding will support a further 400 people into housing and support packages.

The Together Home program is expanding in the Hunter Central Coast District for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 period with an investment of \$1.3m into an Aboriginal led model. This model was co-designed with local Aboriginal stakeholders.

Staying Home Leaving Violence

11. **Despite reviews evidencing their success (ANROWS, *National mapping and meta-evaluation outlining key features of effective “safe at home” programs that enhance safety and prevent homelessness for women and their children who have experienced domestic and family violence: Final report*, Horizons Research report, April 2016), Staying Home Leaving Violence programs are not available across NSW, and many areas have wait times.**

(a) Will the NSW Government fund the roll out of the Staying Home Leaving Violence program across NSW?

(b) If not, why not?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for response.

Community sector funding

12. **How much has funding for the Youth and Community sector increased in the past 5 years?**

I am advised all funding to community sector organisations across all programs has increased by 61% in the last five years.

13. **Community organisations which receive funding from the Department of Communities and Justice, including specialist Domestic Violence and Homelessness services, have reported finding significant difficulty in tracking whether funding has increased over time because funding buckets keep changing between Departments and funding categories. Why does the funding location and priority area keep shifting?**

I am advised that when contracts with DCJ expire they are recontracted or recommissioned to align with government priorities. Service providers are able to access and track changes to their contracts on DCJ's Contracting Portal.

14. According to the 2020-2021 Budget papers, almost 37,000 small businesses have accessed a \$3,000 grant to help them to adapt their business model to operate in a new COVID-safe environment, and \$366.0 million in COVID-19 Stimulus funding has been allocated to support New South Wales' economic recovery including the Small Business Recovery Grant Scheme, support for international students and quarantine arrangements for international travellers.

I understand that no additional funding has been provided to the community sector during the COVID-19 pandemic to pay for increased demand while covering core funding like rent and wages. Has the Government considered similar supports to NGOs that it has provided for small- businesses?

I am advised that the Government has provided \$50M in the Social Sector Transformation Fund (SSTF) to support small to medium not for profit organisations. The Fund will help organisations modernise their operations - with a focus on capacity building, better digital service delivery, remote working capabilities and improving business strategies - so they can remain efficient, effective and viable.

Employment of people with disability in the public sector

15. I understand that the target to employ 10,000 more people with disability in the public service became a Premier's Priority following the 2019 state election, before which there was a downward trend in employment of people with disability in the public sector.

Noting that the 2020 NSW Public Sector Report, which will contain statistics on employment since July 2019, hasn't yet been released, can you provide an update on the current statistics?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts.

16. Is the Government's public service disability inclusion target to employ 10,000 more people with disability by 2025 enforceable? Has this changed since it became a Premier's Priority?

17. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts. **During last year's hearings you mentioned that targeted training for managers, consultant work to identify how to better retain staff with disabilities, and development of recruitment guidelines were all underway.**

(a) Has there been a tangible impact on recruitment and retention since these processes were undertaken?

(b) What are the specific changes to hiring and retention practices, particularly for people that require adjustment?

(c) What has changed since this became a Premier's Priority?

18. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts. **The *See the Possibilities* campaign directs disabled jobseekers to contact a variety of job service providers, private and non-government organisations, but provides no contact point for people with disability to seek help or support from the NSW Government in any way.**

Are there any plans to back this campaign up with Government-provided services like career counselling, guidance through application processes, and mentoring for people with disability seeking a job in NSW, and particularly in the NSW public service?

I am advised that the Public Service Commission (PSC) is leading the work for the NSW Government to ensure 5.6% of government sector jobs are held by people with disability through, Jobs for people with disability: A plan for the NSW Public Sector. The PSC has a number of initiatives to increase the number of people with disability in the public sector. More information is available at: <https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/culture-and-inclusion/disability-employment>.

The See the Possibilities campaign was launched to improve employment opportunities for people with disability by changing the attitudes of employers. It aimed to do this by demonstrating the value proposition that people with disability could offer to businesses.

See the Possibilities website is still active <https://www.seethepossibilities.nsw.gov.au/> the website contains a number of ideas of success stories. It also includes some of the Employable Me content.

19. **What integration has been developed with the federal JobSeeker process to ensure that job providers are matching disabled jobseekers with NSW public sector jobs?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts. **Public Housing**

20. **Public housing tenants in Surry Hills are currently receiving eviction notices via post and being requested to vacate in 14 days due to rental arrears despite many having payment plans in place. We understand this is following the lift of evictions.**

- (a) **Why is the department forcing countless tenants to go to NCAT and potentially face eviction rather than resolve the matter via payment plans in the first instance?**
- (b) **Given the stress this letter puts the tenants under and the difficulty many tenants report in terms of contacting their client service officer, why aren't tenants being advised by face to face meeting or phone call to enable tenants to manage this risk immediately?**

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) provides safe and secure social housing for people across NSW. The majority of social housing tenants pay a subsidised rent - generally 25 per cent of their income. It is essential that tenants pay their rent.

When a tenant falls into rent arrears, DCJ will contact the tenant verbally or in writing to seek agreement to enter into and stick to an arrangement before a Notice of Termination is even contemplated. The Notice of Termination clearly explains that if the tenant reaches and sticks to an agreement to repay rent arrears, DCJ will not pursue termination of the tenancy.

DCJ will work closely with tenants to support them and help prevent their arrears from building to a level which threatens their tenancy. If any tenant has exceptional circumstances, DCJ will always consider those too.

DCJ has strong links to community services such as mental health, financial counselling and advocacy services, and actively works to connect tenants with available services.

There has been no change in DCJ policy and no abnormal number of notices sent out. DCJ is committed to supporting our tenants to maintain successful tenancies.

- 21. We know that there are significant issues relating to vermin and insect infestations in public housing across the state. What will you be doing to ensure this issue is resolved and a sufficient pest control program is put in place as this issue greatly affects tenant wellbeing?**

Questions in relation to pest control programs within public housing should be referred to the Hon. Melinda Pavey MP, Minister for Water, Property and Housing as these matters fall within her portfolio of responsibilities.

- 22. What provisions are in place to support the mental health of public housing residents in Glebe and South Eveleigh who have been informed that their homes will be demolished for redevelopment and that they will be forced to relocate during this process?**

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) will ensure each tenant in Glebe and South Eveleigh will have a dedicated specialist Relocations Officer who will assess their housing needs, identify suitable properties, help them to relocate, assist them to settle into their new home and link them to services in their new communities. With the tenant's agreement, Relocations Officers will undertake visits after their relocation to ensure tenants are settled and supported in their new home and community. DCJ Housing covers all reasonable relocation costs so tenants will not become distressed with out-of-pocket costs. DCJ Housing will conduct a detailed housing needs assessment for every tenant at the start of the relocation process, which is also reviewed every six months. Family and support service providers are encouraged to be involved in the development of a relocation plan, at the tenant's discretion.

Vulnerable tenants who have been identified will be offered case management, so that extra care and support is made accessible. DCJ Housing ensures that a tailored support package is available to each tenant. Relocation Officers show compassion and sensitivity when working with tenants and are committed to ongoing engagement with the remaining tenants, especially the elderly and vulnerable. Professional and confidential counselling services will be made available to all tenants

who request individual counselling. DCJ Housing covers the cost of additional referrals to professional counsellors outside GP referrals supported by Medicare.

DCJ Housing will coordinate, on a case by case basis, individual support to assist the tenants in Glebe and South Eveleigh. This includes a range of government, non-government and private provider services through agencies such as NEAMI, Partners in Recovery, Health and mental health services, Aged Care Assessment Team and many others. DCJ Housing will also engage Occupational Therapists to carry out individual assessments for tenants who are made offers of accommodation. The Occupational Therapist will be used to successfully tailor home modifications of relocated tenants.

Public Housing Transfer Applications

23. How many applications for transfers were received:

(a) in calendar year 2019?

(b) in calendar year 2020?

(c) in calendar year 2021 to date?

I am advised that transfer applications received (where registered date is within the period) are as follow:

2019: 4303

2020: 3916

2021 (as at 28 Feb 2021): 342

24. For each of the above, how many of the received applications were for disability access requirements?

I am advised that transfer applications approved due to disability (Transfer Disability - TDIS) or severe disability (Transfer Escalated Severe Disability - TEDS) are as follow:

2019: 52 TDIS and 80 TEDS

2020: 54 TDIS and 70 TEDS

2021 (as at 28 Feb 21): 4 TDIS and 7 TEDS.

25. How many applications for transfers have been actioned:

(a) in calendar year 2019?

(b) in calendar year 2020?

(c) in calendar year 2021 to date?

I am advised that out of 8,561 transfer applications registered since 1 January 2019:

- 3,641 have been housed,

- 848 have been closed,
- 3,723 are Active on the Transfer Register, and
- 349 are suspended.

26. For each of the above, how many of the actioned applications were for disability access requirements?

I am advised that out of 267 transfer applications registered since 1 January 2019 due to disability:

- 72 have been housed,
- 18 have been closed,
- 167 are Active on the Transfer Register, and
- 10 are suspended.

27. How many applications for transfers are outstanding which were received:

(a) previous to calendar year 2019?

(b) in calendar year 2019?

(c) in calendar year 2020?

(d) in calendar year 2021 to date?

I am advised that as at 28 Feb 2021, there are 10,256 active transfer applications on the Transfer Register.

- a) 6,533 have been registered before 1 January 2019.
- b) 1,441 registered during 2019
- c) 2,003 registered during 2020 and
- d) 279 registered during January and February 2021.

28. For each of the above, how many of these outstanding applications are for disability access requirements?

I am advised that as at 28 Feb 2021, there are 110 active TDIS and 221 TEDS applications on the Transfer Register.

Questions from Mr David Shoebridge MLC

Overrepresentation

29. How many children are currently in OOHC in NSW?

(a) How many of those, and what proportion, are identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander?

I am advised that as at 30 June 2020 there were 16,160 children in OOHC. Of this number, 6,688 children were Aboriginal (41%).

30. How many children entered care in the 2019/2020 financial year?

(a) And to date in the 2020/2021 financial year?

(b) How many of those, and what proportion, were identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander on entry into care?

I am advised that during 2019-20 there were 2,206 children who entered into OOHC. Of this number, 952 children were Aboriginal (43%).

Quarterly data on children entering OOHC for the September 2020 quarter will be available on the caseworker dashboard in April 2021:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/caseworker-statistics/dashboard>

Guardianship and Adoption

31. How many guardianship orders have been made by consent in:

(a) 2019-20?

(b) 2018-19?

(c) 2017-18?

(d) 2016-17?

(e) Of these orders, how many of these relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children?

I am advised that the process for obtaining parental consent as part of proceedings is different in the Children's Court where Guardianship orders are made, than the Supreme Court, where adoption orders are made, and this is because there are differences in the legislation. An important distinction to make is that the legislative amendment allowing guardianship by consent under s38 of the Act is not the same as parents being able to give their consent, or them agreeing to the Court making a permanent care order for their child.

The legislative amendment introduced streamlined processes for the making of guardianship orders, minimising the time children and families spend in court, it did not replace the processes which exist for engaging parents in the process, and their right to have their views made known to the Court when permanency is being considered. In 2019-20 there were few orders made by way of the new process, however it is well understood that there were many more cases where parents were supportive of guardianship orders being made for their child, and this is done by the parent signing the child's care plan and the plan being registered with the Court. The

information about parents agreeing to the guardianship orders is captured within file notes, and is not in an extractable format. In all matters where permanent orders of adoption or guardianship are made, parents are able to have their views known and understood by the court through the process, and before a determination is made.

With adoption, if the child is under 12 years old there is a requirement for each parent to formally consent, or for their consent to be dispensed with. Where the child is over 12 years, they can consent to their own adoption. In all cases where parents are intending on giving consent, they are required to attend registered counselling before formally signing consent, and for Aboriginal parents, they must also be offered Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Counselling in addition to the registered counselling. Where children are consenting, the counsellor provides a Capacity Report confirming that the child has the capacity and understands the effects of giving consent.

Family Preservation Support Packages

- 32. How many intensive family preservation support packages were provided to Aboriginal families following restoration in:**
- (a) 2019-20?**
 - (b) 2018-19?**
 - (c) 2017-18?**
 - (d) 2016-17?**

I am advised that the number of children who received intensive family support services (broken down by Aboriginality) from 2016-17 to 2018-19 is published in the Annual Statistical Report 2018-19.

- (a) 2019-20: This data will be published in the Annual Statistical Report 2019-20 in April 2021.
- (b) 2018-19: 4,761 Aboriginal children (unreported, see below)
- (c) 2017-18: 5,639 Aboriginal children
- (d) 2016-17: 5,580 Aboriginal children.

Please note, the drop between 2017-18 and 2018-19 relates to the changeover in reporting and data management systems for the non-government intensive family support services minimum dataset which led to underreporting in 2018-19.

OOHC

33. Last financial year, how many children leaving OOHC at age 18 were referred to homelessness support services within 12 months of leaving care?

(a) How many were referred to social housing services?

I am advised that the department does not maintain ongoing contact with all young people after they leave care. There is no automatic right to access their contact details because there are no court orders in place and care leavers may not want to engage with services.

Young people who are at risk of homelessness are able to access a range of supports, including the Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP), the Premiers Youth Initiative (PYI) and Rent Choice Youth (RCY).

As at 30 June 2019, PYI had supported a total of 545 young people since the program's commencement in 2016, of which 104 were new referrals made in the 2019-20 financial year).

In 2019-20, 123 young people accessed Rent Choice Youth, noting some of the young people may have also accessed temporary accommodation, depending on their needs and level of engagement with services.

In 2019-20, of the 70,372 clients assisted by specialist homelessness services, 251 clients (0.4 percent) identified their reason for seeking assistance as 'Transition from foster care and child safety residential placements'. The age of these clients is not published.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) specialist homelessness services annual report 2019-20, Data tables; Table CLIENTS.20: Clients, by reasons for seeking assistance, 2019–20.

34. Under *Their Futures Matter*, how much total funding is allocated across agencies in 2019-20 for program expenditure on children, young people and families initiatives? How is this forecast to change over 2020-21 to 2022-23?

(a) Of this total funding, how much is spent on programs for:

- i. OOHC (permanency support)**
- ii. intensive family preservation and restoration programs**
- iii. early intervention programs relating to child protection and wellbeing?**

I am advised in 2021 the Stronger Communities Cluster will invest \$2.5 billion in the Children and families thrive outcome including:

- \$1.4 billion supporting children and young people in OOHC, including ensuring that these children achieve permanency through restoration, guardianship or open adoption.
- \$799 million on statutory child protection and family preservation. This includes delivering the NSW Government statutory child protection response which in the first instance provides casework focussed on keeping children safe with their families and a wide range of family preservation programs which are funded to work with families to enable children and young people at risk to remain at home where it is safe to do so.

- \$161 million on Targeted Early Intervention, supporting vulnerable children, young people, families and communities experiencing or at risk of vulnerability to prevent escalation into more intensive services, including child protection.
- \$160 million on Family and Domestic Violence to deliver a range of programs and resources to help and support victims of domestic and family violence, reduce domestic and family violence re-offending and support victim safety.

35. How much total funding is allocated for programs addressing social and affordable housing and homelessness in 2019-20?

(a) How is this forecast to change over 2020-21 to 2022-23?

I am advised that in 2019-20 the Department of Communities and Justice invested \$977m in addressing social and affordable housing and homelessness and the 2020-21 budget provides \$1 billion. Forecast spend for years beyond 2020-21 will be advised through the budget allocation process each year.

Children at Risk of Significant Harm

36. What is the Government doing to manage the increase of children at ROSH?

I am advised that to respond to the increase of children reported at risk of significant harm (ROSH) in NSW, the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is committed to seeing more children. I am advised that in 2019-20 35,241 reported at ROSH were seen by DCJ caseworkers. This is an increase of 13.9% (or 4,292 more children) compared to children seen by DCJ caseworkers in 2018-19.

In 2017-18 the NSW Government invested \$63 million over four years to boost the number of caseworkers, with an addition \$42.1 million invested over four years, from 2018-19, for additional caseworkers and casework support workers.

In 2019-20, family preservation programs provided more than 4,500 contracted places to keep families together, which delivered services to more than 16,000 children – around a third of whom were Aboriginal children.

37. Why is the number of children at ROSH, whose cases have been closed without an assessment not publicly available

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) publishes extensive and detailed data on its website in various dashboards. Information which is publicly available undergoes extensive quality assurance and validation before it is released. As the dashboards can include disaggregation by demography or location, if the data is deemed to be incomplete or not fit for reporting it would not be released.

Information on children at risk of significant harm (ROSH) by highest level of assessment received is available for 2016-17 and earlier years in the 2017-18 Annual Statistical Report (ASR).

Children who received an office based assessment but did not go on to receive a subsequent face to face assessment would be regarded as falling under the category of “competing priorities”. These children are shown as “SAS1 completed –closed in the ASR dashboard. For example in 2016-17, 41% of children at ROSH received an office based assessment and did not go on to receive a subsequent face-to-face assessment.

Information for 2017-18 and 2018-19 was not published due to data quality issues as a by-product of the implementation of ChildStory, and changes to policy and business processes that made this data not comparable to earlier years and unfit for public reporting. These issues will also preclude release of 2019-20 data.

38. Why was there no direct government funding allocated to children who meet ROSH criteria when NCOSS expects this number to rise by 24.5% due to Covid 19?

I am advised in 2021 the Stronger Communities Cluster will invest \$2.5 billion in the Children and families thrive outcome including:

- \$1.4 billion supporting children and young people in OOHC, including ensuring that these children achieve permanency through restoration, guardianship or open adoption.
- \$799 million on statutory child protection and family preservation. This includes delivering the NSW Government statutory child protection response which in the first instance provides casework focussed on keeping children safe with their families and a wide range of family preservation programs which are funded to work with families to enable children and young people at risk to remain at home where it is safe to do so.
- \$161 million on Targeted Early Intervention, supporting vulnerable children, young people, families and communities experiencing or at risk of vulnerability to prevent escalation into more intensive services, including child protection.
- \$160 million on Family and Domestic Violence to deliver a range of programs and resources to help and support victims of domestic and family violence, reduce domestic and family violence re-offending and support victim safety.

39. How are children who meet Risk of Significant Harm criteria protected from further abuse if the cases are closed by DCJ in " competing interest"?

I am advised that to respond to the increase of children reported at risk of significant harm (ROSH) in NSW, the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is committed to seeing more children.

I am advised that in 2019-20 35,241 reported at ROSH were seen by DCJ caseworkers. This is an increase of 13.9% (or 4,292 more children) compared to children seen by DCJ caseworkers in 2018-19.

I am advised that cases are reviewed prior to closure, and there are a number of reasons why cases are closed. This includes where the assessment of risk indicates that no further intervention

is required, where assistance has been provided, or where a case is referred to an external agency for case management to provide an agreed response to reduce risk for a child.

Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the Opposition)
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Ageing and Disabilities Commission

40. **What is the total amount of funding spent in 2019-2020 on the Ageing and Disabilities Commission?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

41. **What is the total amount of funding allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget on the Ageing and Disabilities Commission?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

42. **As of 26 February 2021, what is the total amount of FTE staff employed by the Ageing and Disability Commission?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

43. **In 2019-2020, what was the total amount of funding spent on consultancies in relation to policy or operations of the Ageing and Disabilities Commission?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

44. **What is the total amount allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget towards consultancies in relation to policy or operations of the Ageing and Disabilities Commission?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

45. **What is the total number of people who contacted the Ageing and Disabilities Commission in 2019-2020?**

46. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission. **Of these, how many pertained to:**

- (a) Aged care?**
- (b) Elder abuse?**
- (c) Health facilities for the aged?**
- (d) Housing for the aged?**
- (e) Discrimination against the aged?**

47. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission. **As of 26 February 2021, what is the total number of people who have contacted the Ageing and Disabilities Commission in the 2020-2021 financial year?**

48. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission. **Of these, how many pertained to:**

- (a) Aged care?
- (b) Elder abuse?
- (c) Health facilities for the aged?
- (d) Housing for the aged?
- (e) Discrimination against the aged?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission. **Ageing Strategy 2021-2031**

- 49. **Given the Strategy covers a period of ten years, will the NSW Government issue an interim report or update in the next decade?**
- 50. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors. **What specific funding allocations are allocated in 2020-2021 associated with the delivery of the NSW Ageing Strategy 2021-2031?**
- 51. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors. **What was the total amount of funding spent in the 2019-2020 financial year on developing the Ageing Strategy 2021-2031?**
- 52. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors. **What was the total amount of funding spent in the 2020-2021 financial year on developing the Ageing Strategy 2021-2031?**
- 53. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors. **What was the total number of FTE staff employed in the development of the Ageing Strategy 2021-2031 in the 2020-2021 financial year?**
- 54. I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors. **As of February 26 2021, in the 2020-2021 financial year, what is the total amount of funding spent on consultancies associated with the development of the Ageing Strategy 2021-2031?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors.
COVID-19 and volunteer funding

- 55. **What issues has the NSW Government identified with the recruitment, training and recognition of volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

I am advised the following impacts, as a result of the COVID19 pandemic, were identified: decrease in volunteers and volunteer opportunities (related to Public Health Orders); contraction of fundraising opportunities; challenges in maintaining connection with their volunteers; and changes in volunteer personal circumstances relating to fear of contracting the COVID-19 and personal health concerns.

- 56. **What specific funding was provided by the NSW Government to support volunteer organisations during the COVID-19 health and economic crisis in the 2019-2020 financial year?**

I am advised in May 2020, the Government announced its support for a new Emergency Volunteering Platform (emergency.volunteer.com.au) by providing \$30,000 (ex GST) to the Centre for Volunteering. The platform has the capacity to be utilised during times of emergency now and beyond COVID19. The NSW Government has partnered with the Centre for Volunteering to provide the platform which also operates in Western Australia and Victoria. Volunteers were empowered to provide welfare checks, deliver supplies and offer essential services to vulnerable people through this online platform, linking members of the community members with charities and councils in need of support. The platform is designed to provide informal volunteering opportunities, and supports volunteer-driven organisations that are supporting vulnerable members of the community. The Platform allows individuals to register online. An organisation in the local area then gets in touch to offer volunteering opportunities as they arise.

57. What is the total amount of specific funding allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget to support volunteer organisations during the COVID-19 health and economic crisis?

I am advised government agencies provide financial and other supports to volunteer organisations. In addition, I am advised that under the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030, the NSW Government is investing \$2 million over 10 years to deliver the Strategy, this includes any support to volunteer organisations during the COVID-19 health and economic crisis.

58. What specific organisations received funding support to manage the COVID-19 health and economic crisis in the 2019-2020 financial year, and how much did each receive?

In relation to volunteer organisations, I am advised in May 2020, the Government announced its support for a new Emergency Volunteering Platform (emergency.volunteer.com.au) by providing \$30,000 (ex GST) to the Centre for Volunteering. The platform has the capacity to be utilised during times of emergency now and beyond COVID19..

59. As of 26 February 2021, what specific organisations received funding support to manage the COVID-19 health and economic crisis in the 2020-2021 financial year, and how much did each receive?

In relation to volunteer organisations, I am advised nil. OzHarvest, Foodbank, Neami National, a number of homelessness organisations and over 120 domestic and family violence service providers have received COVID-19 stimulus funding through the \$10m NSW Charities Fund. In September 2020, an additional \$8.3m stimulus was allocated to Food Relief organisations to extend provision of support until 30 June 2021.

Elder Abuse Hotline

60. How many reports were made to the Elder Abuse Hotline in:

(a) 2018-2019?

- (b) 2019-2020?
- (c) To date in 2020-2021?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

61. How many reports made to the Elder Abuse Hotline resulted in investigation in:

- (a) 2018-2019?
- (b) 2019-2020?
- (c) To date in 2020-2021?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

62. How many reports made to the Elder Abuse Hotline resulted in prosecution in:

- (a) 2018-2019?
- (b) 2019-2020?
- (c) To date in 2020-2021?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

63. What is the total amount of funding spent in 2019-2020 to operate the Elder Abuse Hotline?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

64. What is the total amount of funding allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget to operate the Elder Abuse Hotline?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission

65. As of 26 February 2021, what is the total amount of FTE staff employed by the Ageing and Disability Commission and working solely on the Elder Abuse Hotline?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission

66. How did COVID-19 impact the number of reports of elder abuse to the Elder Abuse Hotline?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Ageing and Disability Commission

Funding for peak bodies

67. Will the Minister guarantee funding for peak bodies after 30 June 2021?

In November 2020 I advised housing, homelessness, child and family and community peaks funded through the Sector Development/State Peaks Program that funding under this program will continue until 30 June 2023.

68. What is the total amount of funding allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget for peak bodies?

I am advised that information regarding grants payments is published in the department's Annual Report each year.

69. What was the total amount spent in 2019-2020 on funding for peak bodies?

I am advised that information regarding grants payments is published in the department's Annual Report each year.

70. Given that the Volunteers and Ageing strategies now run for a 10 year period, will the Minister offer 10 year funding agreements to peak bodies?

(a) If not, why not?

I am advised housing, homelessness, child and family and community peaks are being funded until end June 2023. This has been a standard funding cycle for the peaks and aligns with Budget processes.

Questions relating to the NSW Ageing Strategy: 2020-2030 should be directed to the Minister for Seniors.

Indigenous participation in volunteering programs

71. What programs or initiatives does the NSW Government run to recruit, train and recognise indigenous volunteers in NSW?

I am advised all programs and initiatives under the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030 are inclusive of Indigenous volunteers. A copy of the strategy can found at:

https://www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/784273/NSW-Volunteering-Strategy-2020-2030.pdf

72. In 2019-2020, what was the total amount of funding spent on these initiatives and programs?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 71.

- 73. What is the total amount allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget for these initiatives and programs?**

Please refer to response to supplementary question 71.

Legal Pathways

- 74. What is the total amount allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget for the Legal Pathways Program?**

I am advised \$50,400 was the total amount with \$37,800 paid by the Department of Communities and Justice from the Ageing budget and \$12,600 paid by Legal Aid.

- 75. What was the total amount spent in the 2019-2020 financial year on the Legal Pathways program?**

I am advised the program was funded directly by Legal Aid.

- 76. Will the Minister guarantee funding for the Legal pathways program after 30 June 2021?**

I am advised the budget for 2021-2022 has not been allocated at this time.

Older womens' homelessness

- 77. As of 26 February 2021, what is the Government's estimation of the number of women aged 55 and over in NSW who are homeless?**

I am advised information about homelessness in New South Wales, including for older women, is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Data on clients accessing specialist homelessness services is published annually by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

- 78. What was the Government's estimation of the number of women aged 55 and over in NSW who are homeless as of 30 June 2020?**

I am advised information about homelessness in New South Wales, including for older women, is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Data on clients accessing specialist homelessness services is published annually by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

- 79. As of 26 February 2021, how many women aged 55 and over are currently listed on the general housing wait list?**

Information about NSW Housing Register applicants is published annually as at 30 June. I am advised that as at 30 June 2020 there were 7,017 women aged 55 and over who were general applicants on the Housing Register.

- 80. As of 26 February 2021, how many women aged 55 and over are currently listed on the priority housing wait list?**

Information about NSW Housing Register applicants is published annually as at 30 June. I am advised that as at 30 June 2020 there were 869 women aged 55 and over who were priority applicants on the Housing Register.

- 81. As of 26 February 2021, how many women aged 55 and over submitted an application for housing?**

Information about NSW Housing Register applicants is published annually as at 30 June. I am advised that as at 30 June 2020 there were 7,017 women aged 55 and over who were general applicants on the Housing Register and 869 women aged 55 and over who were priority applicants on the Housing Register.

- 82. As of 26 February 2021, how many women aged 55 are tenants of Aboriginal housing?**

I am advised that as at 28 Feb 2021, there are 1,104 AHO tenancies with the woman 55 and over as a head tenant.

- 83. As of 26 February 2021, how many women aged 55 are tenants of community housing?**

I am advised there were a total of 15,728 women aged 55 and older in properties managed by community housing identified as the head tenant.

- 84. Does the Government plan to reduce the age threshold for being listed for priority housing from 80 years of age?**

I am advised that the NSW Housing Register classes applicants eligible for the HEP (Housing Elderly Person code) as priority 3 on the NSW Housing Register, following clients approved for Emergency Temporary Accommodation and Priority Housing. The threshold for eligibility for this designation is 80 years and older for Non Aboriginal applicants, and 55 and over for Aboriginal applicants.

If a person of HEP qualifying age (or any other age) has more urgent needs or additional risk factors they are assessed for Priority Housing status. This ensures that the most vulnerable applicants, including older applicants, are always prioritised.

- 85. How many women aged 55 or older accessed the Link2Home referral service in:**

(a) 2016-2017?

(b) 2017-2018?

(c) 2018-2019?

(d) 2019-2020?

(e) To date in 2020-2021?

I am advised the number of unique women aged 55 and over who accessed Link2Home referral service in:

- (a) 2016-2017 - 1,573
- (b) 2017-2018 - 1,465
- (c) 2018-2019 - 1,197
- (d) 2019-2020 - 940
- (e) 2020-2021 - 637

86. How many women aged 55 or older accessed the Ask Izzy service in:

- (a) 2016-2017?**
- (b) 2017-2018?**
- (c) 2018-2019?**
- (d) 2019-2020?**
- (e) To date in 2020-2021?**

I am advised that Ask Izzy is owned and managed by Infoxchange. It is not a NSW Government product.

87. How many women aged 55 or older accessed specialist homelessness services in:

- (a) 2016-2017?**
- (b) 2017-2018?**
- (c) 2018-2019?**
- (d) 2019-2020?**
- (e) To date in 2020-2021?**

I am advised data on clients accessing specialist homelessness services is published annually by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

88. In 2019-2020, how many women over 55 years of age have accessed the:

- (a) Private rental subsidy (RentChoice?):**
- (b) RentStart Bond Loan program?**

I am advised that:

- a) 42 women aged 55 and over have been assisted with Rent Choice Start Safely; and 143 with Private Rental Subsidy (PRS) during 2019-20
- b) 214 women aged 55 and over were assisted with Rent Start Bond Loan during 2019-20

89. Will the Government establish a state-wide older people's housing support service? If not, why not?

I am advised Link2home is the state-wide homelessness information and referral telephone service. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program

90. What was the total amount expended in 2019-2020 to run the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program?

I am advised under the NSW Volunteering Strategy, in FY2019-2020, \$5,000 was put towards the implementation of the 2019 Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program.

91. What is the total amount allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget for the operation of the Premier's Recognition Program?

I am advised under the NSW Volunteering Strategy, in FY2020-2021, \$10,000 has been allocated towards implementation of the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program, to be administered by the NSW Centre for Volunteering.

92. As of 26 February 2021, what is the total amount of money spent in the 2020-2021 financial year on the Premier's Recognition program?

I am advised under the NSW Volunteering Strategy, in FY2020-2021, \$10,000 has been allocated towards implementation of the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program, to be administered by the NSW Centre for Volunteering. No funds have yet been expended,...

93. What was the total number of volunteers recognised in 2019-2020?

I am advised the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program operates on a calendar year basis, it did not run in 2020. In 2019, the program recognised and thanked 8,310 student volunteers.

94. What is the total number of volunteers recognised to date in 2020-2021?

I am advised the Premier's Volunteer Recognition program operates on a calendar year basis, it did not run in 2020. In 2021, the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program has not yet commenced. In 2021 the program will be administered by the NSW Centre for Volunteering.

- 95. What specific additional funding did the NSW Government spend in 2019-2020 or allocate in 2020-2021 to recognise volunteers and encourage recruitment and participation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

I am advised under the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030 budget allocation (\$2million over 10 years) funds are set aside to support key ongoing recognition initiatives, including: \$40,000 annually for the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards (run by the NSW Centre for Volunteering); and \$10,000 annually for the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program.

- 96. In 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, what is the total amount of sponsorship of the program provided by Clubs NSW?**

I am advised Clubs NSW does not provide any funding or sponsor the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program.

Sports and Ageing Funding

- 97. In 2019-2020 how much money was spent by the Department of Communities and Justice facilitating walking versions of team sport or programs to encourage the participation of seniors in sport?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors and to the Minister for Sport.

- 98. How much is allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget to facilitate walking versions of team sport or programs to encourage the participation of seniors in sport?**

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Seniors and to the Minister for Sport.

Staffing: Volunteers Team, Department of Communities and Justice

- 99. As of 26 February 2021, what is the total number of FTE staff employed within the Volunteers Team at the Department of Communities and Justice?**

I am advised the Youth and Volunteering team includes positions focused on to delivering the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030. This team is supported, at times, by other DCJ staff to support the implementation of the Strategy.

- 100. As of February 2021, what is the total amount of money spent in 2020-2021 on consultancies related to Volunteers policy?**

I am advised nil

- 101. What was the total amount of money spent in 2019-2020 on consultancies related to Volunteers policy in NSW?**

I am advised nil

Student volunteering

102. What was the total amount expended in 2019-2020 to run the up2now website encouraging high school students to volunteer for local organisations?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

103. What is the total amount allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget for operation of the up2now website encouraging high school students to volunteer for local organisations?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

104. As of 26 February 2021, what is the total amount of money spent in the 2020-2021 financial year on the operation of the up2now website encouraging high school students to volunteer for local organisations?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

105. As of 26 February 2021, how many schools are registered to use the up2now website?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

106. How many schools were registered as of 30 June 2020?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

107. As of 26 February 2021, how many students have accessed the up2now website in the current financial year?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

108. How many students used the website in 2019-2020?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

109. In 2019-2020, how many students have attained a Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program Certificate?

I am advised the program operates on a calendar year. Under the 2019 round of the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program 8,310 students were provided with a certificate.

110. As of 26 February 2021, how many students have attained a Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program Certificate in 2020-2021?

I am advised the program operates on a calendar year basis. The program provides certificates to students and adults. The Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program did not operate in 2020. The forthcoming 2021 round of the program is yet to commence.

Volunteer Recruitment Portal

111. What was the total amount expended in 2019-2020 to operate the Volunteer Recruitment Portal?

I am advised under the NSW Volunteering Strategy budget allocation, the cost to operate the Volunteer Recruitment Portal was \$25,000.

112. What is the total amount allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget for the operation of the Volunteer Recruitment Portal?

I am advised the funding amount allocated under the NSW Volunteering Strategy to operate the Volunteer Recruitment Portal is \$25,000.

113. As of 26 February 2021, what is the total amount of money spent in the 2020-2021 financial year on the operation of the Volunteer Recruitment Portal?

I am advised under the NSW Volunteering Strategy budget allocation, the cost to operate the Volunteer Recruitment Portal is \$25,000.

114. As of 26 February 2021, how many organisations are registered to use the volunteer recruitment portal?

I am advised as at 9 March 2021, there are 2,331 organisations registered (listed) on the NSW Volunteer Recruitment Portal.

115. How many volunteers have accessed the volunteer recruitment portal in the following financial years:

(a) 2018-2019?

(b) 2019-2020?

(c) To date in 2020-2021?

I am advised since the NSW Volunteer Recruitment Portal was launched in November 2017, the portal has had a total of 452,428 visits, 362,127 visitors, 32,334 expressions of interest submitted for available volunteering opportunities (total as at end February 2021). This includes the following breakdown. In 2018-19, there were 149,042 visits, 117,417 visitors and 11,134

expressions of interest submitted for available volunteering opportunities. In 2019-20, there were 131,237 visits, 104,891 visitors and 8,828 expressions of interest submitted for available volunteering opportunities. In 2020 - 21, as at end February 2021, there have been 91,577 visits, 74,118 visitors and 5,446 expressions of interest submitted for available volunteering opportunities. Expressions of interest go directly to the volunteering organisation that posted the available volunteering opportunity. Volunteer organisations then respond directly to the applicants (persons interested in volunteering). The pandemic has had an impact on the number of volunteering opportunities posted on the volunteering recruitment portal as many volunteer involving organisations suspended recruitment activities; this in turn has impacted the number of expressions of interest submitted, the number of visits and visitors to the site.

Volunteer Strategy 2020-2030

116. Given the Strategy covers a period of ten years, will the NSW Government issue an interim report or update in the next decade?

I am advised the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030 states that every two years the NSW government will publish a Report Card. The Report Cards will highlight initiatives commenced, completed, achievements to date and relevant case studies. The Report Cards will be publically available on the NSW Volunteering Website (volunteering.nw.gov.au) and other related websites as appropriate. Also, the Strategy states that the NSW Government will publish an Interim Evaluation Report in FY2025-26 and a Final Evaluation Report in 2030.

117. What specific funding allocations are allocated in 2020-2021 associated with the delivery of the NSW Volunteer Strategy?

I am advised the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030 is allocated \$2million over ten years.

118. What was the total amount of funding spent in the 2019-2020 financial year on developing the Volunteer Strategy 2020-2030?

I am advised in 2019-20, \$17,000 was spent on the development of the Strategy.

119. What was the total amount of funding spent in the 2020-2021 financial year on developing the Volunteer Strategy 2020-2030?

I am advised the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030 was launched on 7 July 2020. No funding has been spent on the development of the Strategy in the current financial year.

120. What was the total number of FTE staff employed in the development of the Volunteer Strategy in the 2020-2021 financial year?

I am advised the Youth and Volunteering team includes positions focused on delivering the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030. This team is supported, at times, by other DCJ staff to support the implementation of the Strategy.

121. As of February 26 2021, in the 2020-2021 financial year, what is the total amount of funding spent on consultancies associated with the development of the Volunteer Strategy?

I am advised, nil.

Volunteer Support Services funding

122. In the 2019-2020 financial year, what was the total amount of funding redirected from Volunteer Support Services to the Targeted Intervention program?

I am advised, nil.

123. What was the total amount of funding spent in the 2019-2020 State Budget on the Targeted Intervention program?

I am advised: \$160million.

124. Of this funding, how much was accessed by volunteer organisations and peak bodies?

I am advised in 2019-2020 the Targeted Intervention program funded non-government organisations to deliver services under the program. The program does not directly fund volunteer organisations or peak bodies.

125. What is the total amount of funding allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget for the Targeted Intervention program?

I am advised: \$161million.

126. Is money within the Targeted Intervention Program sequestered for use by volunteering organisations only?

I am advised the Targeted Intervention Program does not directly fund volunteering organisations.

Social Housing Properties

127. How many public housing properties are there in NSW as at February 2021

(a) From this, how many properties are owned / managed by a Community Housing provider?

(b) How many social housing properties are owned / managed by the Government?

(c) How many properties are owned / managed by Aboriginal Housing?

I am advised that information on public housing, community housing and AHO properties are available on the Social Housing Residential Dwellings Dashboard:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/social-housing-residential-dwellings/facs-quarterly-statistics-social-housing-dwellings>

- 128. In the estimates hearing Mr Vever's suggested there was 140,000 social housing properties in NSW. Please provide the number of social housing properties including community and Aboriginal housing in each LGA of NSW as at February 2021?**

I am advised that information on public housing, community housing and AHO properties broken down by DCJ District are available on the Social Housing Residential Dwellings Dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/social-housing-residential-dwellings/facs-quarterly-statistics-social-housing-dwellings>

Social Housing Waitlist

- 129. How many applicants are currently considered priority on the NSW housing waitlist register as at 30th June 2019?**

- (a) How many people aged over 55 are currently on the housing priority waitlist?**
- (b) How many males aged over 55 are currently on the housing priority waitlist?**
- (c) How many females aged over 55 are currently on the housing priority waitlist?**
- (d) How many people identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander are currently on the housing priority waitlist?**

I am advised that:

- a) as at 30 June 2020 there were 1,802 people aged 55 and over who were priority applicants on the housing wait list
- b) as at 30 June 2020 there were 932 men aged 55 and over who were priority applicants on the housing wait list
- c) as at 30 June 2020 there were 869 women aged 55 and over who were priority applicants on the housing wait list (there was one priority applicant whose gender was not known)
- d) as at 30 June 2020 there were 108 Indigenous people aged 55 and over who were priority applicants on the housing wait list.

Temporary Accommodation

- 130. How many individuals received temporary accommodation from 1 July 2019 to 2021 Current date?**

- (a) Of these individuals how many have secured permanent tenancy in social housing?
- (b) Of these individuals how many people were placed in transitional accommodation?
- (c) Of these individuals how many people were assisted into private rental?
- (d) How many individuals received more than 28 days of temporary accommodation?
- (e) How many nights of temporary accommodation have been provided FY 2011-2012 to current, with current being the most recently available data

I am advised:

	2019-20	1 July – 31 December 2020
Total households assisted	26,965	15,006
Total individuals assisted	40,556	21,655
Total households that secured a tenancy in social housing	2,504	1,270
Total individuals that secured a tenancy in social housing	3,963	2,123
Total households placed in transitional accommodation	N/A	N/A
Total individuals placed in transitional accommodation	N/A	N/A
Total households assisted into private rental	3,866	1,493
Total individuals assisted into private rental	7,177	2,180
Total households accessed more than 28 days	1,463	

Financial year	TA nights
2011/12 – 2015/16	N/A
2016/17	178,402
2017/18	212,958
2018/19	227,716
2019/20	392,168
2020/21 (as at 31 Jan 2021)	187,773

131. In the estimates hearing you were unable to provide data on how many people have returned to homelessness from temporary accommodation.

- (a) How is the Government going to address this gap in information?

(b) What plans does the Government have to support those individuals leaving temporary accommodation with no permanent tenancy or provisional accommodation?

(c) How will the Government record this information in the future?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) works with clients in temporary accommodation to identify longer term suitable accommodation options. This includes support to apply for and access social housing (including priority assistance where appropriate), support to secure a private rental (including tenancy facilitation and financial support) and support to access other accommodation options, such as transitional accommodation with a Specialist Homelessness Service, or a headleased property through the Together Home Program.

132. What is the total expense of transportation associated with temporary accommodation from 1 July 2019 to current?

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice does not hold this information.

Temporary accommodation assistance provided through Link2home will always try to accommodate a client close to their location.

In cases where clients require assistance with transport, Link2home will explore all options, including public and community transport through NGOs and other support services. Link2home will offer and pay for transportation in circumstances where the client is at risk and there are no other available options.

133. Assertive Outreach Programs are currently being delivered by the Department of Communities and Justice in what LGA's in NSW.

(a) What further opportunities has the Government identified to introduce more Assertive Outreach programs in NSW?

- i. Which LGA's have been identified for more assertive outreach programs in NSW?**
- ii. When will they commence?**
- iii. By what date will all LGA's in NSW have Assertive Outreach Programs operational?**
- iv. If not, why not?**

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and Community Housing Providers are currently operating Assertive Outreach Services in the following 58 local government areas:

Ballina Shire
Byron Shire
Clarence Valley Council
Kyogle Council
City of Lismore
Richmond Valley Council
Tweed Shire
Kempsey Shire Council
Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
Coffs Harbour
Tamworth Regional Council
Moree Plains Shire Council
City of Campbelltown
City of Canterbury-Bankstown
City of Liverpool
City of Fairfield
City of Wollongong
City of Shellharbour
Municipality of Kiama
Eurobodalla Shire
Bega Valley Shire
Goulburn Mulwaree Council
Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council
Bathurst Region
City of Orange
Dubbo Regional Council
City of Albury
City of Wagga Wagga
City of Sydney
Inner West Council
Waverley Council
Woollahra Municipal Council
Randwick City Council
Sutherland Shire Council
Georges River Council
Burwood Council
Bayside Council
Strathfield
North Sydney Council
Willoughby City Council
Lane Cove
Hunters Hill
City of Ryde
Hornsby Shire
Ku-Ring-Gai
Northern Beaches
Central Coast Council
City of Lake Macquarie
City of Parramatta
Blacktown City Council

City of Penrith
Newcastle
Blue Mountains
Lithgow
Hawkesbury
Cumberland
The Hills Shire
Griffith

Assertive Outreach locations are chosen based on results from the annual NSW street count and information of where people are experiencing street homelessness from housing and homelessness services and local stakeholders including local councils and police. DCJ regularly adjusts its Assertive Outreach locations in response to changes in where people are experiencing street homelessness. DCJ does not currently plan to operate Assertive Outreach services in all local government areas as some areas do not have evidence of street homelessness which requires an Assertive Outreach response.

134. Has the Department undertaken an audit of all Temporary accommodation provider across the state to ensure the safety of people who stay there?

- (a) What are the results of this audit?**
- (b) Has the Department deemed any temporary accommodation unsafe?**
- (c) How many providers of temporary accommodation are there in each LGA?**
- (d) Please list each LGA and the number of temporary accommodation providers?**

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) has the following policies and process in place to mitigate risks to clients placing them with particular providers:

- DCJ seeks the views of NSW Police and Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) service providers regarding the appropriateness of temporary accommodation facilities for women, including women escaping DFV. DCJ only sends women to facilities that are considered appropriate by police and DFV providers.
- DCJ staff periodically inspect facilities to ensure they continue to be in reasonable condition.
- DCJ uses a checking system to ensure, to the extent possible, that all clients are placed in the most appropriate facility (for example, that a woman fleeing DFV is not placed in a facility that is only appropriate for single men).

As at 5 March 2020, DCJ uses over 350 temporary accommodation providers across the state. It is not appropriate to list the number of TA providers by LGA as doing so risks identifying individual providers and therefore risks client safety and privacy.

NSW Carers Strategy: Caring in New South Wales 2020 – 2030

135. Given that there are no specified targets in the NSW Carers Strategy, how do you plan to measure the success of the strategy by 2030?

I am advised as set out in the Strategy (p27), partner agencies and organisations will provide the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) with yearly reports against actions, and a mid-term review of the Strategy will be undertaken and publicly reported in 2025/26. The Strategy identifies what we want to achieve for all carers by 2030, and these outcomes will be mapped against the NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework to capture how the Strategy has contributed to carer wellbeing. Outcome measures will be identified for all projects in each two year Action Plan under the Strategy.

136. What is the proposed budget for the implementation of the NSW Carers Strategy for 2020-2030? What is the allocation for 2021-22?

I am advised the Strategy will be implemented within existing identified resources. The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) has a budget of \$4.9m pa to support carers. This covers implementation of the Strategy, the NSW Carers Advisory Council, Carers Investment Program and peak funding for Carers NSW, and the delivery of the NSW Companion Card Program. The Carers Investment Program budget of \$1.85m pa will support the delivery of the NSW Carers Strategy priorities including actions identified in the first Action Plan.

137. How does the NSW Government intend to rebuild carer's trust in Aged Care Facilities after a December 2020 research paper from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety revealed in December 2020 that "Around 39.2 per cent of people living in Australian aged care facilities experience elder abuse in the form of neglect, emotional abuse or physical abuse"?

I am advised the response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government.

138. How are carers who choose not to keep their loved ones in the care of Aged Care Facilities due to disturbing experiences and alarming recent statistics being supported?

I am advised the Commonwealth Government is responsible for providing community based aged care services and for delivering specific carer support services through the Commonwealth Carer Gateway. Through the NSW Carer Strategy and the funded activities of the peak body for carers Carers NSW, carers of older people in NSW are being encouraged to utilise Carer Gateway services, and being provided with information to support them.

The NSW Carers Advisory Council provides direct advice on issues impacting carers in NSW, and through Action 8 in the NSW Carers Strategy: Action Plan 2020-2022, we commit to working closely with the Commonwealth to monitor the Carer Gateway, NDIS and My Aged Care, and to advocate to the Commonwealth on gaps and priorities for carers in NSW (including respite).

139. How do you intend to achieve a thorough implementation of all the components set out in the NSW Carers Strategy Action Plan when there is no indication of funding or staffing to achieve its targets?

I am advised the 29 actions in the NSW Carers Strategy Action Plan 2020-2022 are being delivered by a range of government and non-government agencies, and many can be delivered within existing budgets. The Strategy will be implemented within existing identified resources.

140. The NSW Carers Strategy Action Plan prioritises four actions:

- (a) Carers have better access to information, services and supports**
- (b) Carers will be recognised, respected and empowered**
- (c) Carers have improved financial wellbeing and economic opportunities; and**
- (d) Carers have better health and wellbeing.**
- (e) How are these four priorities ranked when it comes to funding and staffing?**

I am advised actions against each of these priority areas are set out in the NSW Carers Strategy Action Plan 2020-2022. These priorities are not ranked.

COVID-19

141. During the COVID-19 pandemic how has the government assisted carers who are potentially unable to provide the care they have been providing to their loved ones because they themselves get sick or because they are required to self-isolate?

I am advised information has been available to carers through the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), Carers NSW, and the Commonwealth Carer Gateway. Carers have also been directed to NSW Health's COVID-19 advice.

142. Many carers receiving the Carer Payment who are concerned and upset that their needs have not been sufficiently considered in income support measures which have been introduced to compensate for the impact of the coronavirus. The fortnightly Coronavirus Supplement of \$550 was not extended to carers receiving the Carer Payment or to recipients of Disability Support Pension and Age Pension. Did you as Minister make any representations to the Commonwealth to support carers in NSW about the appropriateness of extending the supplement to carers?

I am advised Carers NSW and the national peak body Carers Australia have advocated on this matter.

143. Supplies of PPE were sometimes difficult to source during the pandemic though it is appreciated that supermarkets often tried to do the right thing. It is often hard for carers to register for the priority deliveries as they are applying on behalf of someone else. Also,

many carers cannot get the essentials they need for many reasons, and often deliveries of things like sanitary products unavailable due to shortages. What has the NSW Government done to assist carers?

I am advised Carers Advisory Council and Carers NSW advocated on this issue and the practice of supermarkets did improve during the pandemic to better recognise carers, for example, enabling them to shop on behalf of someone else during priority shopping hours.

144. Carers who are caring for people with continence issues are having particular difficulty getting sanitary products. There has been no program to assist, and things like adult absorbent underwear and toilet paper are essential for hygiene and health of these people. What has the NSW Government done to assist carers?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Health.

145. During the pandemic there was a significant focus on aged care facilities but much less on those who are in their homes. Home care workers have reported a lack of PPE, and this was putting workers and those they care for at risk. Additionally, many people cancelled some of these services concerned that they may introduce the virus to their loved ones – and thereby stretching their families and carers further. What did the NSW Government do to assist carers?

I am advised Aged care services are a responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. These issues were a concern and the NSW Government responded by providing information targeted to carers on the DCJ Coronavirus website. Information was also provided through the funded peak body Carers NSW's regular COVID updates for carers. The NSW Carers Advisory Council reached out to Carers with social media messages
<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/advisory-councils/carers/chapters/caring-for-carers-during-covid-19>

146. During the pandemic, carers reported that being cut off from visiting loved ones in facilities are resulting in detrimental outcomes for patients and residents. As you know, family members are still very much relied on for feeding and extra caring within facilities. Even now, some larger facilities strictly manage contacts between residents and visitors. What advice has the NSW Government provided to carers who find themselves in this situation?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 145.

147. Respite can provide benefits for carers in relieving their caring burden and supporting them to continue in their role. During the COVID-19 pandemic some centres refused

temporary respite due to the safety concerns. The ongoing burden of the caregiving role means that some carers experience a higher than normal level of stress and anxiety even when other wellbeing and health domains improve through supports. What has the NSW Government done to assist carers to date, and what plans have been made concerning respite services, were another pandemic outbreak occur?

I am advised respite services are the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. The NSW Government has promoted the Carer Gateway through our *It's Caring* social media campaign commenced in October 2020, to encourage carers to engage with available support services, including counselling and respite. <https://www.caring.dcj.nsw.gov.au/>

Carers Investment Program

148. The NSW Carers Strategy 2014-19 included \$5.6 million for a Carers Investment Program over three years (from 1 July 2018) for projects that will improve the well-being of carers in NSW.

(a) Given this funding ends on 30 June 2021, do you think we now know everything there is to learn about the challenges facing carers and how to better support them?

(b) If the answer is no:

(c) Why was additional funding not included in the current NSW Carers Strategy: *Caring in New South Wales 2020 – 2030*?

(d) What do you say to recipients of grants from the Carers Investment Program, such as researchers at UTS' Centre for Carers Research who will not receive funding after 30 June 2021?

(a) (b) and (c)

I am advised funding agreements for the first round of projects funded under the Carers Investment Program since 2018 will end on 30 June 2021, but funds will be reinvested to support the priorities in the NSW Carers Strategy 2020-2030. The Carers Strategy will be delivered using existing identified resources, which include reinvestment of the Carers Investment Program.

(d)

I am advised, Carers Investment Program recipients were advised that the funding was time-limited. Sustainability strategies are being developed so that the learnings and evidence from the CIP projects are used to inform future funding.

Aged Care Royal Commission

149. The interim report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety found “In the interim, there is a clear and present danger of declining function, inappropriate hospitalisation, carer burnout and premature institutionalisation because necessary services are not provided” and “For carers, too, the wait for care at home can cause considerable stress. The carer worries that the older person is at home alone, or they struggle to balance their caring responsibilities with their own jobs and families.”

(a) What is the NSW Government doing to address carer burnout?

(b) What is the NSW Government doing to help carers alleviate the stress from waiting for MyAgedCare to provide services?

(a) I am advised, the NSW Carers Strategy Action Plan includes five actions under Priority 4 - Carer Health and Wellbeing, and further actions will be developed over the course of the ten year NSW Carers Strategy. All actions in the Strategy are aimed at supporting carers, across all four priority areas identified in the Strategy. Improved information for carers about the services available to them is critical. The first deliverable of the NSW Carers Strategy Action Plan 2020-2022 was the launch in October 2020 of a new guide for carers on the Service NSW website. This responded to feedback from carers during the co-design of the Carers Strategy that simple, practical information for carers was needed. The Service NSW page provides concise information about services, programs, payments and concessions carers may be eligible for.

(b) I am advised the Commonwealth Government is responsible for aged care services.

Young Carers

150. Other than counselling provided through the Counselling Gateway, what support is available to young carers?

(a) How many young carers have sought support through the Young Carers program and what plans are there to extend its availability to more young carers?

I am advised that DCJ funds Carers NSW \$292,326pa to deliver the state-wide Young Carers Program. This program provides information via website and newsletter, young carer awareness training and capacity building, e.g. in schools and health services, and support, advice and referral.

Over a 12 month period (July 1 2019 to 30 June 2020) 2,117 instances of support were provided to young carers. 2,551 young carers subscribe to Young carer eNews.

Concessions

151. What concessions are provided by the NSW Government for carers?

- (a) For example, Concessional car parking fees at NSW public hospitals are provided to some patients and their carers in recognition of long term hospitalisation and treatment. The cost in 2021-2 is \$14 million – what proportion of that is attributable to carers, rather than patients?**
- (b) Patients and carers who are experiencing financial hardship, but do not meet the eligibility categories, are also entitled to concessional car parking. How many carers sought concessional car parking during the pandemic?**
- (c) What have you done, as Minister, to ensure carers are aware of the entitlement, and to make it easier to access?**
- (d) What consultations have been conducted about the concessions available?**
- (e) Does the minister believe the eligibility criteria should be reviewed or whether some concessions should be extended?**

I am advised the Service NSW Carers Guide which was launched together with the NSW Carers Strategy 2020-2030: Caring in NSW in October 2020, includes a section on concessions for which NSW carers may be eligible. There are links to 27 concessions including concessional car parking at hospitals, and also medical and other energy rebates, carer car registration refund, appliance replacement offer and many more.

(a) and (b) NSW Health administers this Program.

(c) and (d) The Service NSW Carers Guide has brought information about 27 relevant concessions together for carers to easily access on a site that everyone in NSW uses - Service NSW. The content was developed with direct input of carers, and feedback is that many carers were not previously aware of some of these concessions. The Government will continue to promote this website to carers and further work is planned with Service NSW through Actions in the Carers Strategy - including pop-ups at Service NSW centres and upskilling of Service NSW Cost of Living Specialists to better support carers.

(e) These rebates are not administered by my department.

Social Housing in the Swansea Electorate

152. How many general and priority applicants are on the NN02 Lake Macquarie/East waiting list?

I am advised that figures for people on the Housing Register as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

153. How many general and priority applicants are on the NN20 Wyong waiting list?

I am advised that figures for people on the Housing Register as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

154. How much did the Government spend on property maintenance for social housing properties located in the Swansea electorate during the:

(a) 2018/2019 financial year?

(b) 2019/2020 financial year?

(c) 2020/2021 financial year?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

155. How much did the Government spend on property maintenance for social housing properties located in NN02 Lake Macquarie/ East allocation zone during the:

(a) 2018/2019 financial year?

(b) 2019/2020 financial year?

(c) 2020/2021 financial year?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

156. How much did the Government spend on property maintenance for social housing properties located in the NN20 Wyong allocation zone during the:

(a) 2018/2019 financial year?

(b) 2019/2020 financial year?

(c) 2020/2021 financial year?

I am advised that this question should be referred to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

Newcastle Social Housing

157. How many FTE staff were employed by the Newcastle office of Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), Housing in each of the following years:

- (a) 2011;
- (b) 2012;
- (c) 2013;
- (d) 2014;
- (e) 2015;
- (f) 2016;
- (g) 2017;
- (h) 2018;
- (i) 2019;
- (j) 2020; and
- (k) 2021?

I am advised that the number of staff located at the Newcastle Office (Hunter Access Team and the Newcastle Tenancy Team) averaged 50 at the end of financial years of 2018, 2019 and 2020. Data for prior years is not readily available

158. As of 2/3/21 how many people are on the General Housing Register in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that figures for people on the housing wait list as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

159. As of 2/3/21 how many people are on the Priority Housing Register in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that figures for people on the housing wait list as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

160. What is the average wait time for a studio/1 bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that figures for people on the housing wait list as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

161. What is the average wait time for a 2 bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that figures for people on the housing wait list as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

162. What is the average wait time for a 3 bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that figures for people on the housing wait list as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

163. What is the average wait time for a 4+ bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that figures for people on the housing wait list as at 30 June 2020 are available on the Expected Waiting Times dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times>

164. As of 2/3/21 how many public housing properties does DCJ housing manage in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that the number of public housing properties managed by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) in the Hunter region is publicly available on the DCJ Social housing residential dwellings dashboard - <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/social-housing-residential-dwellings/facs-quarterly-statistics-social-housing-dwellings>.

165. As of 2/3/21 how many public housing properties in the NN07 Newcastle zone were vacant?

I am advised that the number of vacant public housing properties changes frequently as properties are vacated by tenants and prepared for reletting.

166. On average, how many properties does a Client Service Officer in the Newcastle DCJ Housing office manage?

I am advised that information on the number of properties a Client Service Officer within NSW may manage is available on the Department of Communities and Justice website at <https://careers.dcj.nsw.gov.au/careers/client-service-officer>.

167. What impact will this year's efficiency dividend have on the Newcastle DCJ Housing office?

- (a) **Will there be any reduction in staff at the Newcastle DCJ Housing office as a result of efficiency dividend?**

I am advised that there are no planned changes to the DCJ Newcastle Housing office.

168. How many tenants in the NN07 Newcastle zone received compensation/rental refund due to maintenance issues in each of the following years:

- (a) **2011;**
- (b) **2012;**
- (c) **2013;**
- (d) **2014;**
- (e) **2015;**
- (f) **2016;**
- (g) **2017;**
- (h) **2018;**
- (i) **2019;**
- (j) **2020 and**
- (k) **2021?**

I am advised:

2014 - 2

2015 - 1

2016 - 6

2017 - 15

2018 - 6

2019 - 4

2020 - 4

2021 - 1

Please note – the above figures are tenancies who have had their rental account adjusted due to compensation from maintenance issues.

169. How many people are currently homeless in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised information about homelessness in New South Wales is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Data on clients accessing specialist homelessness services is published annually by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

170. What is the average wait time for a transfer in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised that as at 30 June 2020, the median wait time for transfer in NN7 Allocation zone was 11.7 months.

171. How many cases of anti-social behaviour were investigated in the NN07 Newcastle zone in each of the following years

(a) **2011;**

(b) **2012;**

(c) **2013;**

(d) **2014;**

(e) **2015;**

(f) **2016;**

(g) **2017;**

(h) **2018;**

(i) **2019;**

(j) **2020; and**

(k) **2021?**

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Management policy came into effect in February 2016. I am advised that DCJ does not have ASB data prior to this and does not collect data specific to the NN07 Newcastle zone. Cumulative ASB data is available on the ASB Dashboard, published twice a year on the DCJ website.

172. What action is being taken to reduce anti-social behaviour in Hamilton South?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) manages ASB in accordance with its Antisocial Behaviour Management Policy, published on the DCJ website.

DCJ Housing in Hamilton South have been:

- Working collaboratively with community partners including NSW Police, mental health services, NGO service providers.
- Conducting joint DCJ Housing and Police walk throughs around this estate including targeted visits to address significant concerns and managing squatter issues.
- DCJ Housing staff continue to prioritise client service visits which assist in early positive action towards reducing ASB in these unit blocks.
- DCJ Housing staff operate out of the estate satellite office each week.
- DCJ Housing staff attend community meetings at Hamilton South to strengthen positive relationships with tenants, service providers and advocates.

173. What action is being taken to address anti-social behaviour in the Bar Beach Housing complexes?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Housing in Bar Beach have:

- An active presence in the area, collaborating with community partners including mental health services and NSW Police.
- Conducting joint DCJ Housing and Police walk throughs around this estate including targeted visits.
- Staff continue to prioritise client service visits which assists in early positive action towards reducing antisocial behaviour in these unit blocks.

174. How many tenants in NN07 Newcastle zone have had action taken against them for anti-social behaviour in the NCAAT in each of the following years

- (a) **2011;**
- (b) **2012;**
- (c) **2013;**
- (d) **2014;**
- (e) **2015;**
- (f) **2016;**
- (g) **2017;**
- (h) **2018;**
- (i) **2019;**
- (j) **2020; and**
- (k) **2021?**

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Management policy came into effect in February 2016. I am advised that DCJ does not have ASB data prior to this and does not collect ASB or NCAAT data specific to the NN07 Newcastle zone. Cumulative ASB data is available on the ASB Dashboard, published twice a year on the DCJ website.

175. How many NN07 tenants brought action against DCJ Housing in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal in each of the following years

- (a) **2011;**
- (b) **2012;**
- (c) **2013;**
- (d) **2014;**
- (e) **2015;**
- (f) **2016;**
- (g) **2017;**
- (h) **2018;**
- (i) **2019;**
- (j) **2020; and**

(k) **2021?**

I am advised that the NN07 allocation zone is managed by the Hunter New England District. The following information relates to tenant initiated NCAT cases managed by the Hunter New England District.

Please note that DCJ had no way of capturing data in relation to tenant initiated NCAT matters prior to 2017. There are now rigorous monitoring structures in place to track all tenant initiated NCAT cases state-wide.

2017 - 10

2018 - 43

2019 - 53

2020 - 31

2021 - 4

176. How many people were removed from the social housing/community housing wait list in each of the following years for not responding to contact made by DCJ?

(a) **2011;**

(b) **2012;**

(c) **2013;**

(d) **2014;**

(e) **2015;**

(f) **2016;**

(g) **2017;**

(h) **2018;**

(i) **2019;**

(j) **2020; and**

(k) **2021?**

i. **What action is taken to before a person is removed from the waitlist?**

ii. **How are people contacted?**

I am advised:

Closed or no contact or no reply to review

- (a) 2011 - 4,003
- (b) 2012 - 16,777
- (c) 2013 - 9,384
- (d) 2014 - 8,289
- (e) 2015 - 5,491
- (f) 2016 - 4,377
- (g) 2017 - 9,787
- (h) 2018 - 5,666
- (i) 2019 - 8,238
- (j) 2020 - 5,914
- (k) 2021 - 1,153

Total closed applications

- (a) 2011 - 9,880
- (b) 2012 - 24,226
- (c) 2013 - 14,631
- (d) 2014 - 13,045
- (e) 2015 - 9,692
- (f) 2016 - 9,643
- (g) 2017 - 14,384
- (h) 2018 - 9,684
- (i) 2019 - 13,268
- (j) 2020 - 10,670
- (k) 2021 - 1,617

Data Source: HOMES/EDW as at 28Feb2021

i. What action is taken to before a person is removed from the waitlist?

The Department of Communities and Justice Housing Contact Centre (HCC) conduct regular application reviews asking clients if they would like to remain on the NSW Housing Register. If unable to successfully establish contact with clients on the first contact attempt, further attempts will be made to try establish contact. Should these attempts continue to be unsuccessful, a warning letter is sent to clients requesting they make contact with the Department within 14 days or their application will be closed.

ii. How are people contacted?

An SMS, email or postcard is initially sent to the client. A minimum of two outbound calls are made to all of the client's listed phone numbers. A warning letter is posted to all applicants that do not respond to any of the contact attempts. If a client has a valid reason for not responding – for example that they were homeless or in custody – their application will be reinstated to its original date.

Stockton Centre

177. What are the plans for the future of the Stockton Centre lands now that the facility has been closed?

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice is currently assessing the condition of the land and buildings and alignment with the local councils' land use strategy prior to any decisions being made regarding future use.

178. Will the Government consult with the community about the future uses of the site?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 177.

179. Are there any plans to sell the land?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 177.

180. Will the history of the site be recognised in any future development?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 177.

181. Will the construction of social and affordable housing at the site be considered?

(a) **If not, why not?**

Please refer to response to supplementary question 177.

Newcastle Community Services

182. How many children at risk of significant harm were in the Hunter New England District for each of the following years:

(a) **2011;**

(b) **2012;**

(c) **2013;**

(d) **2014;**

(e) **2015;**

(f) **2016;**

(g) **2017;**

- (h) **2018;**
- (i) **2019;**
- (j) **2020;**
- (k) **2021?**

I am advised that statistics on children reported at risk of significant harm (ROSH) up to 2018-19 are available in the Annual Statistical Report 2018-19:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/statistical-report-2018-19>.

I am advised that more recent statistics on children reported at ROSH are available on the caseworker dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/caseworker-statistics/dashboard>

183. How many children at risk of significant harm in the Hunter New England District were seen by a caseworker for each of the following years:

- (a) **2011;**
- (b) **2012;**
- (c) **2013;**
- (d) **2014;**
- (e) **2015;**
- (f) **2016;**
- (g) **2017;**
- (h) **2018;**
- (i) **2019;**
- (j) **2020;**
- (k) **2021?**

I am advised that statistics on children seen by caseworkers up to 2018-19 are available in the Annual Statistical Report 2018-19: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/statistical-report-2018-19>

I am advised that more recent statistics on children seen by caseworkers are available on the caseworker dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/caseworker-statistics/dashboard>

Homelessness

184. In 2020-21 the Budget committed \$291.8m for specialist homelessness services, is that correct?

(a) **How much of an increase in historical funding does this represent over the last five years?**

(b) **Does this investment cater to increased demand?**

I am advised in 2020/21, \$291.8 million will be invested in specialist homelessness services, referral services such as Link2home, enhancements for youth refuges and after hours DFV services, and Homelessness Strategy initiatives.

The Report of Government Services (Table 19A.1) identifies the increased investment in homelessness services by the NSW Government over the last five years.

Decisions about the investment of additional funding made available for homelessness programs and services takes into account a range of information, including changing needs.

185. The Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services 2021 identified that 21,790 people had been unable to access crisis accommodation in NSW, representing a 40.8% increase since 2015-16.

(a) **Can the Minister clarify whether, in light of a significant increase in the number of vulnerable people being unable to access crisis accommodation provided by Specialist Homelessness Services, whether funding for specialist homelessness services will increase at a commensurate rate?**

(b) **What is the NSW Government's plan to address the shortfall in crisis accommodation?**

(c) **Do you consider that in the midst of a health crisis, that it is acceptable that more than 20,000 people were unable to access emergency accommodation?**

I am advised in 2020/21, \$291.8 million will be invested in specialist homelessness services, referral services such as Link2home, enhancements for youth refuges and after hours DFV services, and Homelessness Strategy initiatives.

To respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and as part of the second stage of the NSW Government's \$1 billion health and economic stimulus package, \$34 million in funding was

made available to prevent people from experiencing homelessness.

- \$14 million for temporary accommodation for clients to support self-isolation, including supporting people sleeping rough into accommodation, or providing additional accommodation options for people staying in congregate care facilities
- \$20 million for rental subsidies to enable people to access or sustain private rental accommodation.

Enhanced temporary accommodation (TA) was introduced from 1 April 2020, increasing TA capacity and revising TA policy to extend eligibility and duration of TA support.

The NSW Government has also committed \$65 million in new funding for the Together Home program which incorporates best practice Housing First approaches to provide long term housing with wraparound supports for people sleeping rough.

186. Can you outline whether the funding announced in the Budget has been prioritised to regions most at risk of increased homelessness as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis?

I am advised the NSW Government has invested substantial additional funding to ensure essential services, including homelessness services, continued to respond to service demand during the COVID-19 situation. Details of the NSW Government's response, including details about the prioritisation of funding, during COVID 19 can be found at <https://www.coronavirus.dcj.nsw.gov.au/home>.

187. Given the impacts of rising homelessness are felt right across the service system, what additional resources has the NSW Government made available to support communities most significantly impacted?

I am advised the NSW and Commonwealth Governments have invested significantly to assist individuals and the sector through the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding has been distributed based on needs data and in line with evidence based approaches.

This includes \$65 million in new funding for the Together Home program which incorporates best practice Housing First approaches to provide long term housing with wraparound supports for people sleeping rough.

188. The Together Home initiative has been an important partnership between NSW Government and the community sector to keep rough sleepers safe by securing long term housing in the private rental market. But in many areas of NSW, particularly those along the coast, the private rental market is squeezed and there are no affordable rental properties available.

- (a) **Is the Government monitoring this situation?**
- (b) **Are there figures available on where this problem is most acute?**
- (c) **Is there a plan to manage this situation?**
- (d) **Will the NSW Government commit to increasing the level of funding for frontline specialist homelessness services beyond 2020-21, to address rising demand due to COVID-19 and pre-existing funding shortfalls for this critical part of the sector?**

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is working with the Community Housing Providers (CHPs) to monitor the rental properties available across NSW, including coastal areas.

In locations where the rental vacancy rate is low, DCJ is working with CHPs to find solutions to assist in sourcing properties, such as looking into social housing options and increasing the geographical boundary of the program.

189. How is the Together Home Initiative tracking and will more money be put into reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness?

I am advised since August 2020, 358 former rough sleepers have been supported by Together Home into long-term housing linked to wraparound supports.

On 3 November 2020, the NSW Government announced an additional \$29 million to expand Together Home as part of the 2020/21 NSW Budget, bringing the total investment of new funding for the program to \$65 million.

Sector funding support

190. Regarding the NSW Government commitment to invest \$50m through the Social Sector Transformation Fund:

- (a) **How many organisations do you expect will benefit from the Social Sector Transformation Fund?**
- (b) **Can you explain why an investment of only \$50m has been made?**
- (c) **Do you consider that a one-off fund of \$50m is sufficient to address a decade of underinvestment by the NSW Government?**

- (d) **Will the NSW Government commit to further investment in community sector capacity beyond 2020-21, to address rising demand due to COVID-19 and pre-existing funding shortfalls for this critical part of the sector?**
- (e) **How much of the Social Sector Transformation Fund will go to social services and how much to health services?**

I am advised that more than 12,000 small to medium not for profit organisations are likely to be eligible for a Social Sector Transformation Fund (SSTF) grant.

NSW Treasury's modelling indicated that the Fund will provide a significant economic stimulus to the small to medium not for profit sector. Any eligible not for profit in the social services and health services sectors can apply for a SSTF grant.

191. Regarding the decision by the NSW Government to incorporate a 1.4% rate of indexation into funding agreements the Department of Communities and Justice has with community sector organisations:

- (a) **How was the 1.4% rate determined?**
- (b) **Why this indexation rate less than NSW Health-funded NGOs?**
- (c) **Does the Government agree that at the very least the rate should cover wage increases determined by the Fair Work Commission?**
- (d) **Does the Government intend to lift the rate of indexation for these organisations?**

i. If not, why not?

I am advised the Government recently announced that the rate of indexation for 2020-21 would be 1.75%, paid in a number of instalments, to be consistent with NSW Health. The rate of 1.4% previously announced was to meet the increase to the wages component of funding, estimated at 80% of the total funding, to support the fair work commission wage increases.

192. Considering increased demand for NGO services during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery, has the NSW Government considered similar supports to NGOs that it has provided for small-businesses?

- (a) **If so, what are the supports that have been provided?**

I am advised that the Government has provided \$50 million in the Social Sector Transformation Fund to support small to medium not for profit organisations.

Leaving care support for young people leaving out-of-home care (OOHC)

- 193. During the Budget Estimates hearing into the Families, Communities and Disability Services portfolio on the 26th February 2021, Minister Ward remarked: “a lot of the things that Home Stretch are doing are simply pushing down the road the issues that children and young people will have in their lives and the experiences they will have, rather than investing in that young person” and that the advice regarding this statement originated in a briefing note. What was the title and who were the authors of the research that formed the basis of this briefing note and/or advice?**

I am advised that a summary of the most relevant research includes:

Dworsky, A. & Courtney, M. E. (2010). *Assessing the Impact of Extending Care beyond Age 18 on Homelessness: Emerging Findings from the Midwest Study*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Midwest_IB2_Homelessness.pdf

The Chapin Hall study found that an extension to 21 delayed rather than avoided homelessness. By age 23-24 there was no difference on the prevalence of homelessness.

The study found ‘young people who are allowed to remain in foster care until age 21 are no less likely to become homeless during the first 30 months after exiting’. It went on to say ‘perhaps states would be doing nothing more than postponing homelessness by extending foster care.’

JoAnn S. Lee, Mark E. Courtney, Emiko Tajima (2014). *Extended foster care support during the transition to adulthood: Effect on the risk of arrest*.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2014.03.018>

Extended care is associated with a lower risk of arrest in the first year, but appears to have a declining effect over time.

- 194. How many of the 1,757 young people who received financial support from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) during 2019-20 and who had lived in out-of-home care until turning 18:**

- (a) **received leaving care/aftercare financial support for the first time in 2019-20 after leaving care?**
- i. How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
 - ii. How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
 - iii. How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**

- iv. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (a) (i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that during 2019-20:

147 young people who were aged 18 accessed TILA in NSW.

462 young people who were aged 18 received an aftercare allowance.

364 young people who were aged 18 received at least one aftercare contingency payment.

In 2019-20, a total of 1,757 care leavers aged 18 and over received \$8.3 million in aftercare assistance, and a total of 540 young people received TILA.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

(b) had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care in 2018-19?

- i. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- ii. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- iii. **How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- iv. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that is not described was questions 12 (b)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that in 2018-19, 1,375 young people aged 18 and over received \$5.5 million in aftercare assistance.

516 young people received TILA.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

(c) **had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care in 2017-18?**

- i. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- ii. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- iii. **How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- iv. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (c)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that in 2017-18, 1,107 young people aged 18 and over received over \$4.3 million in aftercare assistance.

317 young people received TILA.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

(d) **had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care in 2016-17?**

- i. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- ii. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- iii. **How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- iv. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that is not described was questions 12 (d)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not directly related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that in 2016-17, 1,004 young people aged 18 and over received over \$3 million in aftercare assistance.

341 young people received TILA.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

(e) had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care in 2015-16?

- i. How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- ii. How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- iii. How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- iv. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (e)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not directly related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that in 2015-16, 896 young people aged 18 and over received over \$2.1 million in aftercare assistance.

389 young people received TILA.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

(f) had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care in 2014-15?

- i. How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- ii. How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- iii. How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- iv. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (f)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not directly related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that TILA and aftercare financial data is not available.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

(g) had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care in 2013-14?

- i. How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- ii. How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- iii. How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- iv. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (g)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not directly related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that TILA and aftercare financial data is not available.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

(h) had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care in 2012-13?

- i. How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- ii. How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- iii. How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- iv. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (h)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- v. How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not directly related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that TILA and aftercare financial data is not available.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

- (i) **had been receiving leaving care/aftercare financial support since leaving care prior to 2012-13?**
 - i. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
 - ii. **How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
 - iii. **How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
 - iv. **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (h)(i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that TILA and aftercare financial data is not available.

Financial support for adults in addition to aftercare support is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

195. How many young people received financial support from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) during 2019-20 who had left out-of-home care after the age of 15 and before turning 18, did not leave care as a result of an order for restoration, guardianship or adoption, and had been in the parental responsibility of the Minister immediately before leaving care?

- (a) **How many of these young people received financial support under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?**
- (b) **How many of these young people received financial support under the Aftercare Allowance?**
- (c) **How many of these young people received financial support under a One-off Aftercare Payment?**
- (d) **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not described in questions 12 (a) (i)-(iii), though was otherwise specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**
- (e) **How many of these young people received financial support from DCJ under a program that was not specifically related to leaving out-of-home care?**

I am advised that young people aged 15-17 who self-place are still legally in statutory care, unless the care order allocating parental responsibility to the Minister is rescinded. These young people have access to support and assistance within their case plan. This is not Aftercare which only begins when the order allocating parental responsibility expires, at age 18.

In 2019-20, a total of 1,757 care leavers aged over 18 received \$8.3 million in aftercare assistance.

Young people aged 15-17 can however access the Australian Government's Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA).

Financial support for young people (for example the youth allowance) is a responsibility of, and provided by, the Australian Government.

196. What is the average length of time a young person in NSW receives the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?

I am advised that there is no average length of time. TILA is a one off payment from the Australian Government of up to \$1,500 which can also be provided in instalments tailored to individual needs. The majority of young people access the full \$1,500.

197. What is the median length of time a young person in NSW receives the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)?

I am advised that there is no median length of time. TILA is a one off payment from the Australian Government of up to \$1,500 which can also be provided in instalments. The majority of young people access the full \$1,500. What is the average length of time a young person in NSW receives the Aftercare Allowance?

198. What is the average length of time a young person in NSW receives the Aftercare Allowance?

I am advised that based on an audit of a sample of 90 care leavers, the average length of time a young person receives an after care allowance is 7.1 months.

199. What is the median length of time a young person in NSW receives the Aftercare Allowance?

I am advised that based on an audit of a sample of 90 care leavers, the median length of time a young person receives an after care allowance is five months.

200. What was the average amount of money young people in NSW received under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) during 2019-20?

I am advised that TILA is a one off payment from the Australian Government of up to \$1,500 which can also be provided in instalments as required. The majority of young people access the full \$1,500.

201. What was the median amount of money young people in NSW received under the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) during 2019-20?

I am advised that TILA is a one off payment from the Australian Government of up to \$1,500 which can also be provided in instalments as required. The majority of young people access the full \$1,500.

202. What was the average amount of money young people in NSW received under the Aftercare Allowance during 2019-20?

I am advised that in 2019-20, the average aftercare allowance payment was \$2,391.86.

203. What was the median amount of money young people in NSW received under the Aftercare Allowance during 2019-20?

I am advised that in 2019-20, the median after care allowance payment was \$1,527.86.

204. What was the average amount of money young people in NSW received under the One-off Aftercare Payment during 2019-20?

I am advised that in 2019-20, the average contingency payment was \$5,190.84

205. What was the median amount of money young people in NSW received under the One-off Aftercare Payment during 2019-20? 2019-20?

I am advised that in 2019-20, the median contingency payment was \$1,500.

206. What was the full expenditure by the NSW Government on the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) during the years:

(a) 2019-20?

(b) 2018-19?

(c) 2017-18?

(d) 2016-17?

(e) 2015-16?

I am advised that TILA is funded by the Australian Government.

207. What was the full expenditure by the NSW Government on the Aftercare Allowance during the years:

(a) 2019-20?

- (b) 2018-19?**
- (c) 2017-18?**
- (d) 2016-17?**
- (e) 2015-16?**

I am advised that detailed payment data is only available for the past two years.

2019-20, total aftercare allowance and contingency payments total \$8.3 million. Of this, allowance payments total \$1 million.

2018-19, total aftercare allowance and contingency payments total \$5.5 million. Of this, allowance payments total \$797,225.

2017-18, total aftercare allowance and contingency amounts equalled \$4.3 million.

2016-17, total aftercare allowance and contingency amounts equalled \$3 million.

2015-16, total aftercare allowance and contingency amounts equalled \$2.1 million.

208. What was the full expenditure by the NSW Government on the One-off Aftercare Payment during the years:

- (a) 2019-20?**
- (a) 2018-19?**
- (b) 2017-18?**
- (c) 2016-17?**
- (d) 2015-16?**

I am advised that detailed payment data is only available for the past two years.

2019-20, total aftercare allowance and contingency payments total \$8.3 million. Of this, the total contingency payments total \$7.3 million

2018-19, total aftercare allowance and contingency payments totally \$5.5 million. Of this, contingency payments totalled \$4.7 million.

2017-18 total aftercare allowance and contingency amounts totalled \$4.3 million.

2016-17, total aftercare allowance and contingency amounts totalled \$3 million.

2015-16, total aftercare and contingency amounts totalled \$2.1 million.

209. How many young people were receiving ongoing case management and support from a caseworker after leaving out-of-home care for a reason other than adoption, guardianship or restoration during:

- (a) 2019-20?
- (b) 2018-19?
- (c) 2017-18?
- (d) 2016-17?
- (e) 2015-16?

I am advised that all care leavers can access support and assistance at any time from the department or a Non-Government Organisation, from the Care Leavers Line or through the Specialist Aftercare Program.

Not all young people require or need ongoing case management. Young people may also be referred to other specialist services and programs for support e.g. mentoring, health or mental health services.

210. To be eligible to receive the Aftercare Allowance for up to 3 months at a time, a care leaver must be studying full-time (or part time if balancing study with health issues or parenting responsibilities) and be at risk of homelessness without financial assistance. What ongoing assistance is available from DCJ for care leavers who are not studying but are at risk of homelessness without financial assistance?

I am advised that all care leavers receive a tailored plan developed with the young person, parents, carers and significant others providing the services, resources and supports the young person needs as they transition to adulthood. Plans are reviewed and amended as circumstances change until the young person reaches age 25 and beyond where necessary.

Care leavers can access support and assistance at any time from the department or a Non-Government Organisation, from the Care Leavers Line or through the Specialist Aftercare Program.

Not all young people require or need ongoing case management. Young people may also be referred to other specialist services and programs for support e.g. mentoring, health or mental health services.

211. How much money was allocated to each of the following Specialist Aftercare Services for the purpose of providing aftercare services during 2019-20:

- (a) **Aboriginal Aftercare State Wide Service**

- (b) **CatholicCare After Care Program**
- (c) **Family Spirit After Care**
- (d) **Relationships Australia (NSW), Central Coast**
- (e) **Relationships Australia (NSW), Nepean/Blue Mountains, Northern Sydney & Western Sydney**
- (f) **Uniting ACE AfterCare, Illawarra Shoalhaven**
- (g) **Uniting ACE AfterCare, Mid North Coast**
- (h) **Uniting ACE AfterCare, South Western Sydney**
- (i) **Uniting AfterCare Services, Western Sydney**

I am advised the total budget for the Specialist Aftercare Program in 2019-20 was \$3,052,416 broken down as follows:

- (a) Aboriginal Aftercare State Wide Service: \$325,744
- (b) CatholicCare After Care Program: \$146,918
- (c) Family Spirit After Care: \$664,427
- (d) Relationships Australia (NSW), Central Coast: \$300,338
- (e) Relationships Australia (NSW), Nepean/Blue Mountains, Northern Sydney & Western Sydney: \$469,311
- (f) Uniting ACE AfterCare, Illawarra Shoalhaven: \$427,258
- (g) Uniting ACE AfterCare, Mid North Coast: \$104,176
- (h) Uniting ACE AfterCare, South Western Sydney: \$472,014
- (i) Uniting AfterCare Services, Western Sydney: \$142,230

212. How many young people received aftercare services from the following Specialist Aftercare Services during 2019-20:

- (a) **Aboriginal Aftercare State Wide Service**
- (b) **CatholicCare After Care Program**
- (c) **Family Spirit After Care**
- (d) **Relationships Australia (NSW), Central Coast**

- (e) **Relationships Australia (NSW), Nepean/Blue Mountains, Northern Sydney & Western Sydney**
- (f) **Uniting ACE AfterCare, Illawarra Shoalhaven**
- (g) **Uniting ACE AfterCare, Mid North Coast**
- (h) **Uniting ACE AfterCare, South Western Sydney**
- (i) **Uniting AfterCare Services, Western Sydney**

I am advised that for 2019/20:

- (a) Aboriginal Aftercare State Wide Service 59
- (b) CatholicCare After Care Program 67
- (c) Family Spirit After Care 46
- (d) Relationships Australia (combined programs) 133
- (f) Uniting ACE Aftercare, Illawarra Shoalhaven 69
- (g) Uniting ACE Aftercare, Mid North Coast 28
- (h) Uniting ACE Aftercare, South Western Sydney 89
- (I) Uniting Aftercare Services, Western Sydney 22

Note: Data represents the number of cases which may be slightly higher than the number of young people as some may have exited a service and returned as a new case in the same year.

Leaving care plans

213. How many young people who are at the following ages and are living in out-of-home care have not commenced their leaving care plan:

- (a) **15 years old?**
- (b) **16 years old?**
- (c) **17 years old?**

I am advised that planning should commence at age 15 - this is when the goal in ChildStory changes to 'leaving care' and caseworkers begin assessing the young person's goals, needs, capacity and skills through conversations over time.

The leaving care plan is 'finalised' at 18 and includes any financial assistance and entitlements.

Young people may have their plan amended and updated when things change or at any time up to the age 25 and beyond where necessary. Young people may also access the Transition to Independent Living (TILA) allowance at this age.

214. How many young people in NSW left out-of-home care, and did not leave care as a result of an order for restoration, guardianship or adoption, without having a leaving care plan during the years:

- (a) 2019-20?
- (b) 2018-19?
- (c) 2017-18?
- (d) 2016-17?
- (e) 2015-16?

I am advised section 166 of the NSW *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) 1998 Act* requires the preparation of a plan before a young person leaves out-of-home care. Planning commences at age 15 when the goal in ChildStory changes to 'leaving care' and caseworkers begin assessing the young person's goals, needs, capacity and skills through conversations over time.

Plans are not static documents and if a person exits care without a leaving care plan and later requests aftercare assistance, a plan is prepared at that time by the agency that last supervised their placement. Support tailored to each care leaver is available until age 25 and beyond where necessary.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in care

215. What proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people who are currently living in out-of-home care (OOHC):

- (a) are case managed by DCJ?
- (b) are case managed by an NGO provider?

I am advised that as at 30 June 2020, there were 6,688 (41%) Aboriginal children in OOHC. Of the Aboriginal children in OOHC, 57% were case managed by DCJ and 43% were case managed by NGO.

216. What proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people who are currently living in out-of-home care (OOHC) and case managed by an NGO provider:

- (a) are case managed by an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation?
- (b) are case managed by a non-Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation?

I am advised that as at 30 June 2020, of the 2,851 Aboriginal children case managed by an NGO, 48% were with an Aboriginal service provider.

- 217. How many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people living in out-of-home care (OOHC) do not currently have a Cultural Plan?**
- (a) **How many of these children and young people have been living in OOHC for 0-3 months?**
 - (b) **How many of these children and young people have been living in OOHC for 3-6 months?**
 - (c) **How many of these children and young people have been living in OOHC for 6-12 months?**
 - (d) **How many of these children and young people have been living in OOHC for more than 12 months?**

I am advised that in 2019-20, 56% of Aboriginal children in OOHC had a current cultural support plan. A higher percentage of Aboriginal children may have a cultural support plan but the plan is not counted unless the plan has been reviewed annually and that the review is recorded correctly in ChildStory. My department is aware of some policy and practice gaps in this area and work is being completed to clarify our expectations to ensure Aboriginal children have a plan in place to support ongoing connection to family, culture and community.

Time taken to complete investigations

- 218. According to the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services 2021 (Part F, Section 16, Table 16A.11), the proportion of investigations that are completed within 7 days has decreased from 46.5% of investigations in 2011-12 to 10.9% of investigations in 2019-20. What are the reasons for this change?**

I am advised the statement is incorrect. ROGS reports on both investigations commenced and investigations completed.

Investigations commenced is measured as <= 7 days, 8-4 days etc

Investigations completed is measured as <= 28 days, 29-62 days etc

For commenced within 7 days it was 57.1% in 2019-20 versus 53.1% in 2011-12

For completed within 28 days, it was 10.9% in 2019-20 versus 46.5% in 2011-12

The data for investigations completed is not comparable between 2011-12 and 2019-20.

Investigations data for 2011-12 included both office based assessments and field assessments. In 2017-18, a change took effect to only include field (face-to-face) assessments. Data for investigations completed for 2019-20 is only comparable to 2018-19 (7.8% for completed within 28 days).

Free Safe Drivers Course

- 219. How many young people who are or were previously living in out-of-home care attended a free Safe Drivers Course during 2019-20?**

I am advised that the Safer Drivers Course is administered by Transport for NSW. This question should be referred to the Minister for Transport and Roads.

Fee-Free Training Scholarships

- 220. How many young people who are or were previously living in out-of-home care received a Fee-free Training Scholarship during 2019-20 by State electorate?**

- (a) **How many young people applied for a Fee-free Training Scholarship during 2019-20 by State electorate?**
- (b) **What was the full cost of Fee-free Training Scholarships provided to young people who are or were previously living in out-of-home care during 2019-20?**

I am advised that Smart and Skilled fee free training scholarships are administered by Training Services NSW, a division of the NSW Department of Education. This question should be referred to the Minister for Education.

DCJ Scholarships

- 221. Applications for the 2021 DCJ Scholarships closed at 5pm on the 19th February 2021. How many eligible young people applied for a DCJ Scholarship by State electorate?**

- (a) **How many applicants were successful in 2021 by State electorate?**

I am advised 1365 complete new applications were received for the 2021 round of DCJ Scholarships and are currently being assessed.
Application outcomes will be available at the end of April 2021.

- 222. How many eligible young people applied for a DCJ Scholarship in 2020 by State electorate?**

- (a) **How many applicants were successful in 2020 by State electorate?**

I am advised in 2020, 907 complete New applications were submitted and assessed.
556 New scholarships were awarded - refer to Attachment A for breakdown by State electorate.
341 Returning students were also awarded scholarships.

- 223. How many eligible young people applied for a DCJ Scholarship in 2019 by State electorate?**

- (a) **How many applicants were successful in 2019 by State electorate?**

I am advised in 2019, 1118 complete New applications were submitted and assessed.
365 New scholarships were awarded - refer to Attachment A for breakdown by State electorate.
265 Returning students were also awarded scholarships.

224. How many eligible young people applied for a DCJ Scholarship in 2018 by State electorate?

(a) How many applicants were successful in 2018 by State electorate?

I am advised in 2018, 570 complete New applications were submitted and assessed.
304 New scholarships were awarded - refer to Attachment A for breakdown by State electorate.
96 Returning students were also awarded scholarships.

225. How many eligible young people applied for a DCJ Scholarship in 2017 by State electorate?

(a) How many applicants were successful in 2017 by State electorate?

I am advised in 2017, 768 applications were submitted and assessed.
365 New scholarships were awarded - refer to Attachment A for breakdown by State electorate.
First program year, so no returning students.

Case closures

226. How many cases were opened by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) because of one or more Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) report during the following financial years:

- (a) 2019-20?**
- (b) 2018-19?**
- (c) 2017-18?**
- (d) 2016-17?**
- (e) 2015-16?**

I am advised that statistics on children reported at ROSH up to 2018-19 are available in the Annual Statistical Report 2018-19: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/statistical-report-2018-19>

I am advised that more recent statistics on children reported at ROSH are available on the caseworker dashboard: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/caseworker-statistics/dashboard>

227. How many cases that were initiated by one or more Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) report were closed by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) due to the reason 'current competing priorities' during the following financial years:

- (a) **2019-20?**
- (b) **2018-19?**
- (c) **2017-18?**
- (d) **2016-17?**
- (e) **2015-16**

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice publishes extensive and detailed data on its website in various dashboards. Information which is publicly released undergoes extensive quality assurance and validation before it is released. As the dashboards can include disaggregation by demography or location, if the data is deemed to be incomplete or not fit for reporting it would not be released.

Information on children at ROSH by highest level of assessment received is available for 2016-17 and earlier years in the 2017-18 Annual Statistical Report (ASR). Children who received an office based assessment but did not go on to receive a subsequent face to face assessment would be regarded as falling under the category of “competing priorities”. These children are shown as “SAS1 completed –closed in the ASR dashboard. For example in 2016-17, 41% of children at ROSH received an office based assessment and did not go on to receive a subsequent face-to-face assessment.

Information for 2017-18 and 2018-19 was not published due to data quality issues as a by-product of the implementation of ChildStory, and changes to policy and business processes that made this data not comparable to earlier years and unfit for public reporting. These issues will also preclude release of 2019-20 data.

228. What proportion of cases were closed by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) due to the reason 'current competing priorities' during 2019-20 in the following districts:

- (a) **Central Coast?**
- (b) **Hunter?**
- (c) **Far West?**
- (d) **Murrumbidgee?**
- (e) **Western NSW?**
- (f) **Illawarra Shoalhaven?**
- (g) **Southern NSW?**
- (h) **Mid North Coast?**
- (i) **New England?**

- (j) **Northern NSW?**
- (k) **Nepean Blue Mountains?**
- (l) **Western Sydney?**
- (m) **South Western Sydney?**
- (n) **Northern Sydney?**
- (o) **South Eastern Sydney?**
- (p) **Sydney?**

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice publishes extensive and detailed data on its website in various dashboards. Information which is publicly released undergoes extensive quality assurance and validation before it is released. As the dashboards can include disaggregation by demography or location, if the data is deemed to be incomplete or not fit for reporting it would not be released.

Information on children at ROSH by highest level of assessment received is available for 2016-17 and earlier years in the 2017-18 Annual Statistical Report (ASR). Children who received an office based assessment but did not go on to receive a subsequent face to face assessment would be regarded as falling under the category of “competing priorities”. These children are shown as “SAS1 completed –closed in the ASR dashboard. For example in 2016-17, 41% of children at ROSH received an office based assessment and did not go on to receive a subsequent face-to-face assessment.

Information for 2017-18 and 2018-19 was not published due to data quality issues as a by-product of the implementation of ChildStory, and changes to policy and business processes that made this data not comparable to earlier years and unfit for public reporting. These issues will also preclude release of 2019-20 data.

229. How many of the cases closed by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) during 2019-20 due to the reason 'current competing priorities' were closed without the child who was the subject of the report having seen a caseworker prior to their case being closed?

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) publishes extensive and detailed data on its website in various dashboards. Information which is publicly released undergoes extensive quality assurance and validation before it is released. As the dashboards can include disaggregation by demography or location, if the data is deemed to be incomplete or not fit for reporting it would not be released.

Information on children at risk of significant harm (ROSH) by highest level of assessment received is available for 2016-17 and earlier years in the 2017-18 Annual Statistical Report (ASR). Children who received an office based assessment but did not go on to receive a subsequent face to face assessment would be regarded as falling under the category of “competing priorities”. These

children are shown as “SAS1 completed –closed in the ASR dashboard. For example in 2016-17, 41% of children at ROSH received an office based assessment and did not go on to receive a subsequent face-to-face assessment.

Information for 2017-18 and 2018-19 was not published due to data quality issues as a by-product of the implementation of ChildStory, and changes to policy and business processes that made this data not comparable to earlier years and unfit for public reporting. These issues will also preclude release of 2019-20 data.

230. Of the 38.6% of children who were re-reported within 12 months of case plan closure in 2019-20, what proportion of those children had their case previously closed for the reason ‘current competing priorities’?

I am advised that the 38.6% relates to a cohort of children and young people whose case plans were closed with a closure reason of "caseplan goal achieved" or "Assessment of risk indicated no further intervention required". No children in this cohort had their plans closed for the reason "current competing priorities".

Child deaths

231. How many of the 97 children and young people who died in 2019 and were known to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) had their cases closed by DCJ within the twelve months prior to their death, other than for the reason that the child or young person had died?

I am advised of the 97 children who died 33 had their cases closed by the Department of Communities and Justice within the 12 months prior to their death.

Restructure Management Plan (RMP)

232. The Premier’s Priorities include: ‘Protecting our most vulnerable children’, ‘Increasing permanency for children in out-of-home care’, ‘Reducing domestic violence reoffending’, and ‘Reducing homelessness’. How will reducing more than 20% of Strategy, Policy and Commissioning (SPC) aid in DCJ meeting the targets in these priorities?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice remains committed to delivering on all Premier’s Priorities.

233. When will the business case for the Restructure Management Plan (RMP) be finalised?*

I am advised the draft Restructure Management Plan is open for consultation and will be finalised after consultation closes on 16 March 2021.

234. How will DCJ manage the increased workloads to frontline staff due to the loss of support functions of the roles being reduced in the RMP?

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice does not anticipate an increased workload to frontline staff due to roles being reduced through the Restructure Management Plan.

Re-reporting of children at Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH)

235. Reports show that only 31 per cent of children at Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) are seen by a caseworker. Nearly 40 per cent of children are re-reported within 12 months of their case plan being closed.

- (a) How many children were re-reported through the Child Protection Helpline within 12 months of their transfer to a private out of home care organisation during 2019-20?**

It is unclear if this question relates to children in the Premier's Priority re-reports cohort or all children in OOHC.

I am advised the Premier's Priority re-reports cohort comprises children whose case plans were closed with a closure reason of "case plan goal achieved" or "Assessment of risk indicated no further intervention required". Children who are in OOHC do not have closed case plans, so therefore do not form part of this cohort.

Caseworker workloads

236. The department handles thousands of subpoenas each year (e.g. 2,500 in 2018-19) and under current arrangements, the processing work required for these documents is expected to be done by the relevant local caseworkers. This is creating large amounts of additional administrative work for caseworkers, which is reducing the amount of time they are able to spend out in the field directly supporting vulnerable children and young people. As an example, in 2020, caseworkers in Coffs Harbour estimated that 500 hours was spent on processing subpoenas in just one month. What work is being done to reduce the amount of work being performed by caseworkers to process subpoenas?

I am advised the Department of Communities and Justice is working to reduce the administrative burden for caseworkers and is considering various strategies to better manage processing subpoenas. Work is underway to identify a longer term strategy that will both increase the accuracy of information produced and decrease caseworker time spent on processing subpoenas. This includes training for caseworkers, the use of external providers, and the development of a specialised team.

Workers compensation

237. What were the costs to DCJ for workers compensation for staff members during the years:

(a) **2017-18?**

(b) **2018-19?**

(c) **2019-20?**

I am advised the costs to NSW Treasury for workers compensation for staff members across all policies during the following years:

(a) 2017-18 - \$47 million

(b) 2018-19 - \$56 million

(c) 2019-20 - \$93 million

These figures are based on the new pricing model, APA - Annual Performance Adjustment which started on 01.07.2019. The previous years that looked at 5 year hindsight will be incorporated into the financials over the next few years and take into consideration deficits/credits that may apply. Contributions were fully funded by Treasury however APA credits or deficits are the budget responsibility of DCJ commencing with invoices in July 2021.

The increase in the cost of the policy has arisen more so due to the increased cost of psychological injuries rather than an actual increase in the injury rate. Whilst the injury rate for all of DCJ increased between FY17/18 and FY18/19, the rate has stabilised and, in some cases reduced in FY19/20 and to date in FY20/21.

Source: iCare pricing data report that is supplied in February of each year (publicly available)

238. What were the costs to DCJ for workers compensation for the psychological injury of staff members during the years:

(a) **2017-18?**

(b) **2018-19?**

(c) **2019-20?**

I am advised the workers compensation premium contribution cost is calculated based on actuarial analysis and modelling of workers compensation performance. The total premium contribution and APA cost that is shared by iCare with DCJ is presented as a total amount and data as to the split of contribution of APA cost by physical and psychological injuries is not available.

For FY19/20, iCare has supplied DCJ with detailed reporting as to general workers compensation performance, hence it is clear that across all policies, psychological injuries attract a higher wages cost due to a longer absence from the workplace, hence psychological injuries are a more significant driver of cost than physical injuries.

Alternative Care Arrangements

239. How many children and young people living in out-of-home care are currently housed in an Alternative Care Arrangement (ACA?)

(a) How many of these were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and young people?

I am advised that of the 85 children in an ACA as at 16 February 2021, there were 42 Aboriginal children (49.4%). This is the current operational data that is subject to change following further data quality processes.

Carer authorisations

240. How many of the 314 applications for carer authorisation that were refused during 2019-20 were refused due to the quality of housing or accommodation of the applicant?

(a) What work was performed to assist the applicants to find appropriate housing prior to their application being refused?

I am advised the designated agency where the individual has applied to be authorised as a carer is responsible for recording information on the NSW Carers Register. The reason for applicant refusals are held in the agencies' own records.

241. Does the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) or the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) record the reasons an applicant decides to withdraw their application for carer authorisation where there are no concerns regarding their application?

(a) If DCJ or the OCG do not collect this information, why is this the case?

(b) If DCJ or the OCG does collect this information, how many of the 1,417 applications for carer authorisation that were withdrawn without concerns during 2019-20 were withdrawn due to delays in the application process?

I am advised the designated agency where the individual has applied to be authorised as a carer is responsible for recording information on the NSW Carers Register. The reason for applicant withdrawals are held in the agencies' own records.

Northcott Enterprise Agreement

242. Can the Minister confirm whether frontline disability services staff transferred to Northcott under the NSW NDIS Enabling Act stand to lose between 10% (for transferred Disability Support Workers with more than 5 years' experience) and 25% (for transferred Team Leaders) in pay, plus further reductions in employment conditions as a result of the Northcott's new enterprise agreement?

- (a) **How will paying front line disability workers less benefit people with disability in care?**

I am advised that a recent dispute between the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) and Northcott (one of the service transfer providers) has been heard by the Federal Court of Australia. The decision is *Community and Public Sector Union, NSW Branch v Northcott Supported Living Limited* [2021] FCA 8