

17 April 2025

s9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your call, received on 31 March 2025, to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) requesting information on Oranga Tamariki policies and procedures for engaging with māmā with newborn pēpi. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

You have requested:

*What provisions have been put in place to ensure women, particularly mothers, are treated respectfully in sensitive environments such as hospitals*

Since 2017 Oranga Tamariki has made a number of significant changes to its practice framework to improve how we engage with tamariki, māmā, and whānau in sensitive situations. These changes include introduction of our [Practice Approach](#) and [Practice Standards for Engaging with Whānau](#).

Our current practice approach is grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and guided by Te Ao Māori principles of oranga (wellbeing). It promotes a mana-enhancing paradigm for practice that is relational, respectful, and restorative, with a focus on building trust and ensuring dignity in all interactions.

Our practice standards have required social workers to engage with whānau, caregivers, and others in a manner that is respectful and culturally responsive. This includes using tikanga Māori where appropriate, considering the setting of engagement, and putting effort into developing trusting relationships.

Several practice resources have been developed and updated to specifically guide staff when working with mothers and very young children including:

- [Strengthening our response to unborn and newborn pēpi](#)
- [Breastfeeding: caring for and nurturing a pēpi](#)
- [Working with tamariki aged under 5 years](#)

These materials reinforce the importance of culturally safe and trauma-informed approaches in sensitive settings such as hospitals.

IN-CONFIDENCE

These changes reflect our ongoing commitment to improving the way we support tamariki, māhā, and whānau. We recognise the need for continuous learning and development, and we are working to ensure past incidents are not repeated by embedding respectful and culturally responsive practices across all areas of our work.

I understand that your broader complaint is currently being handled by our Feedback and Complaints Team, and they'll be in touch with you as soon as possible.

Oranga Tamariki may make the information contained in this letter available to the public by publishing this on our website with your personal details removed.

I trust you find this information useful. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise them with Oranga Tamariki. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about this is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Michelle Malyon

**General Manager Public Information and Ministerial Services  
System Leadership**