

16 April 2026

s9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email, received on 19 March 2026, to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) requesting information on parental notification for overseas movement of children in care. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

I have responded to each part of your request below.

All current policies, guidelines, or standard operating procedures relating to notifying parents, guardians, or whānau before a child is taken or relocated overseas

Oranga Tamariki does not have any specific policies, guidelines, or standard operating procedures relating to the notification of parents, guardians, or whānau before a child is taken or relocated overseas as outlined in your request. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the documents alleged to contain the information requested does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

However, we do have requirements when tamariki or rangatahi are living outside their home country. Overseas placement is a guardianship decision, and the consent of all guardians must be obtained in writing prior to the placement being made. This includes consent from any additional guardians granted under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 or the Care of Children Act 2024. More information regarding when children and young people move which included overseas can be found on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre website [here](#) and [here](#).

As overseas placement is a guardianship decision and any child or young person under the age of 16 requires the consent of a parent or guardian before a passport can be issued, in some cases the Chief Executive may act as a sole or additional guardian. The requirements for issuing a passport to a child or a young person under the age of 16 years when they are under the guardianship of the Chief Executive are set out on the Passport Act 1992 which can be found [here](#). The role of a guardian in relation to overseas travel and passport applications can also be found on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre website [here](#).

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Any legal requirements, statutory obligations, or internal decision-making thresholds that must be satisfied before a child in care can be taken out of New Zealand.

Part 3A of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, which refers to trans-Tasman transfer of protection orders and protection proceedings, provides for the transfer of protection orders and protection proceedings from New Zealand to a State or Territory of Australia to New Zealand, ensuring that children or young persons who are subject of protection orders can continue to receive care or protection even though they move to or from New Zealand. You can find this part of the Act, with more detail about how such orders work, can be found on the New Zealand Legislation website [here](#).

Any guidance, protocols, or criteria outlining when notification to a parent may be delayed, withheld, or considered unnecessary, including any risk-based or court related justifications.

This part of your request is refused under section 18(e). Please refer to the response to part one of your request.

The number of complaints received by Oranga Tamariki in the past 3 years, where this information is held in a retrievable or aggregated form, relating to parents not being informed, or not being informed in a timely manner, before their child was taken overseas (provided in anonymised, aggregated form).

Our Feedback and Complaints system does not allow filtering in a way that allows us to identify specific complaints relating to parents not being informed, or not being informed in a timely manner, before their child was taken overseas. Identifying any complaints specifically about these matters would require a manual review of all complaints, which would constitute substantial manual collation. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Any internal reviews, audits, case reviews, or investigations conducted within the past 3 years, where this information is held in a retrievable or aggregated form, that relate to: (a) failures to notify parents prior to a child being taken overseas; or (b) complaints or concerns raised about lack or parental notification in such situations.

We have not identified any reviews, audits, or investigations relating to the notification of parents, guardians, or whānau before a child is taken or relocated overseas. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act.

Any reports, briefings, or advice provided to senior leadership or the responsible Minister within the past 3 years, where this information is held in retrievable or aggregated form, concerning risks, issues, or compliance concerns relating to parental notification for overseas travel or relocation of children in care.

We have not identified any reports, briefings, or advice provided to senior leadership or the responsible Minister within the past 3 years concerning risks, issues, or compliance concerns relating to parental notification for overseas travel or relocation

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of children in care. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act.

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 hope that I have understood your questions correctly and you have found this information useful. If you have some further follow up questions you are welcome to contact me on Ashley.seaford@ot.govt.nz. Thank you.

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 or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Seaford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ashley Seaford

Chief Advisor

Office of the Deputy Chief Executive

Chief Social Worker and the Professional Practice