

31 August 2026

s9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email, received on 29 July 2026, to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) requesting information on Reports of Concern that are investigated. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

You have requested:

I request the following general information under the Official Information Act 1982 concerning Reports of Concern that are investigated and closed with the outcomes “Not Found” and “No Further Action.”

- *Where a Report of Concern is investigated and closed as “Not Found” with “No Further Action,” but the investigation has caused significant disruption to a parent’s care of their children, employment, health and wellbeing, what responsibility does Oranga Tamariki have to acknowledge or remedy that harm?*
- *What processes exist to assess whether the report may have been knowingly false, malicious, made without reasonable care, or intended to harass or disrupt the parent?*
- *Where there is evidence suggesting deliberate misuse, does Oranga Tamariki investigate the reporting conduct or refer the matter to New Zealand Police or another appropriate authority? If not, why not?*
- *More generally, how does Oranga Tamariki ensure that the Report of Concern process cannot be repeatedly used as a weapon against a responsible parent, while still protecting people who make genuine reports in good faith?*
- *What safeguards, remedies and review rights are available to protect the affected parent’s privacy, family life, health, wellbeing and right to fair treatment?*

I have responded to each part of your request below.

IN-CONFIDENCE

- *Where a Report of Concern is investigated and closed as “Not Found” with “No Further Action,” but the investigation has caused significant disruption to a parent’s care of their children, employment, health and wellbeing, what responsibility does Oranga Tamariki have to acknowledge or remedy that harm?*

We are required under the Oranga Tamariki Act to assess and investigate reports of potential or actual harm to children. Through this process, we gather information to assess the circumstances of children and their families to determine the appropriate response to the concerns identified. A finding of ‘Not Found’ reflects that the assessment did not establish the concerns raised. It does not necessarily indicate that the concerns were inappropriate to raise, but that the available information did not support those concerns being substantiated. While we aim to work with families in a restorative, relational, and inclusive way, we recognise that actions we sometimes need to take to keep tamariki safe can be distressing for parents and carers.

We encourage feedback and people sharing their experiences with us, including when they have not been positive. This provides us with an opportunity to resolve issues and make changes if required, so that problems and misunderstandings do not occur again. If you wish to raise a complaint regarding your experience, you can do so by calling 0508 326 459 (0508 FAMILY), or by submitting your complaint via an online form on the Oranga Tamariki website. You can find guidance on submitting a complaint, as well as the online form, on our website here: <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/contact-us/feedback/>

- *What processes exist to assess whether the report may have been knowingly false, malicious, made without reasonable care, or intended to harass or disrupt the parent?*

We record information in our assessment findings and, where there are sufficient grounds, this may include observations that a Report of Concern (ROC) was made for reasons other than concern for the child. However, many (ROCs) are made in good faith and are not ultimately substantiated. A lack of substantiation does not, in itself, indicate that a ROC was been made maliciously. We always encourage anyone with serious concerns about a child to make a ROC.

- *Where there is evidence suggesting deliberate misuse, does Oranga Tamariki investigate the reporting conduct or refer the matter to New Zealand Police or another appropriate authority? If not, why not?*

Please refer to the response above that also responds to this question.

- *More generally, how does Oranga Tamariki ensure that the Report of Concern process cannot be repeatedly used as a weapon against*

a responsible parent, while still protecting people who make genuine reports in good faith?

We review relevant historical information when assessing new ROCs, including any patterns evident in previous reports. Where an assessment is undertaken following an allegation of abuse, we seek to understand the views and experiences of all key people involved.

- *What safeguards, remedies and review rights are available to protect the affected parent's privacy, family life, health, wellbeing and right to fair treatment? Where information is withheld, please identify the specific statutory withholding ground and explain how it applies. If another agency holds any part of the requested information, please transfer that part under section 14 of the Official Information Act and advise me. I prefer all communication concerning this request to be by email.*

Information relating to ROCs is collected, used, stored, and disclosed in accordance with applicable legislation, including the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 and the Privacy Act 2020.

The Privacy Act 2020 contains safeguards governing the collection, storage, use, accuracy, retention, and disclosure of personal information through a set of Information Privacy Principles. These principles require that personal information is collected for a lawful purpose, kept secure and accurate, used and disclosed appropriately, and retained only for as long as necessary. They also provide individuals with rights to access and request correction of their personal information, subject to any statutory grounds for withholding information. More information about the Privacy Act 2020 can be found [here](#).

The Privacy Act 2020 permits agencies to refuse access to personal information in certain circumstances, including where disclosure could endanger an individual's safety, involve the unwarranted disclosure of another person's affairs, or prejudice the maintenance of the law.

Individuals who have concerns about the handling of their personal information can raise those concerns with the agency concerned and can also make a complaint to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

Where a request for information is made under the Official Information Act 1982 and the information sought is more closely connected with the functions of another agency, the request, or part of it, may be transferred under section 14 of that Act. Requesters will be advised if a transfer occurs. Decisions made under the Official Information Act 1982, including decisions to withhold information, refuse a request, transfer a request, or extend the timeframe for responding, may be reviewed by the Ombudsman.

IN-CONFIDENCE

The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 contains safeguards relating to decision-making affecting children, young people, and their families. This includes rights of children, parents and guardians to participate in certain decisions, and to provide information or views that may be considered when decisions are made. The legislation includes an overriding provision that the well-being and best interests of children is the first and paramount consideration. You can find more information about the Children's Act [here](#).

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 or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



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Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children