

20 October 2021

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 8 September 2021 to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *I require a copy of the CYRAS operation, procedural manual/criteria to detail correct recording*
- *Criteria/policy that explains the do's and don't's that apply to all file recordings and case records as according to the privacy act it must adhere to*

On 5 October 2021, we contacted you to advise that due to consultations necessary to make a decision on your request, we were extending the time to respond to 20 October 2021, in accordance with section 15A(1)(b) of the Act.

CYRAS is the main case management system of Oranga Tamariki. The operational and procedural guidance for CYRAS users is available on our practice centre, which is publicly available, and outlines our practice standards for recordskeeping. As such, your request is refused under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information you have requested is already in the public domain. To assist you, I have outlined where this information is available below.

The Oranga Tamariki policy on recording can be found at the following link:

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/policy/case-recording/>

For all children and young people, their family, whānau, hapū and iwi that we work with, social workers have a requirement to maintain full and accurate records under the terms of their professional registration. This requirement is across all stages of our work with them. The recording is done in CYRAS, the online case recording system used by Oranga Tamariki.

Social workers must meet the Practice Standards and National Care Standards in their engagement with tamariki and their families/whānau or caregivers.

Social workers must record their engagement and the reasons for their decisions throughout assessment and decision-making. Recording is a vital element of good social work practice.

The information stored in CYRAS is a record of the story of the child or young person's life during the time we were working with them, and it helps us understand what has happened in their life. It must always be up to date, accurate, relevant, and the language used to be child-centred and free from jargon and must differentiate opinion from fact. People whose information is recorded in case records have the right to ask for access to information about themselves including the child or young person.

Our practice guidance and policy regarding record keeping is available on our website. Please follow the links below to find information related to your request.

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/practice-standards/keep-accurate-records/keep-accurate-records-guidance/>

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/previous-practice-centre/policy/recording/key-information/recording-considerations/>

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/our-work/practice-tools/intake-decision-response-tool/recording-decision-responses/>

The Practice Standards include expectations for social workers' engagement with tamariki and engagement with whānau, wider family, and caregivers. These practice standards can be found here:

www.practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/practice-approach/practice-standards/

Keeping Accurate Records is one of the Practice Standards by which social workers are required to document key actions and decisions for each tamaiti they are working with in order to ensure significant decisions are clearly evidenced and transparent.

This standard is met through case notes, assessments, plans and reports that clearly document key decisions made or actions taken, who was involved and the rationale for, and response to those decisions.

In addition to the recording policy and Practice Standard, there are several other key policies that include requirements for recording information including:

www.practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/practice-approach/practice-standards/

www.practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/our-work/care/caring-for-tamariki-in-care/maintaining-a-record-of-important-life-events/

www.practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/policy/visiting-and-engaging-with-tamariki-in-care/

Recording is also an important aspect when we engage with the Family Court. Social workers are expected to write accurate, informative, clear, and concise affidavits, reports and plans for the Family Court and others engaged in the Court process.

We expect our social workers to complete assessments that are thorough, detailed, and accurate in order to describe the current situation and circumstances of the tamariki and whānau.

Oranga Tamariki policy on information sharing can be found at the following link:

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/policy/sharing-information/>

The information sharing policy applies when considering disclosing information under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, the Family Violence Act 2018, and the Privacy Act 2020.

Oranga Tamariki intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the wider public shortly. We will do this by publishing this letter on our website. Your personal details will be deleted and we will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@ot.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. Information about this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Steve Groom
General Manager Public, Ministerial and Executive Services