


17 September 2020



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 23 July 2020 to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *I would like to know the amount of money Oranga Tamariki has spent on youth justice residences over the past five years, broken down by year and location please.*
- *I'd also like to know the amount per night and per young person that Oranga Tamariki spends on these youth justice residences.*
- *Can I please also have the amount spent on remand homes for youths over the past five years broken down by year and location, and the amount per night and per young person spent on these remand homes.*
- *What are the overall operating costs for remand homes per year, over the past five years?*

On 20 August 2020, we contacted you to advise that the timeframe for responding to your request had been extended, in accordance with section 15A(1)(b) of the Act as the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

Please find our response to your request for information below.

The Youth Justice system operates to a set of principles that sets it apart from the adult criminal justice system. The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 sets in law the fact that a child or young person's age should be a mitigating factor in determining the level of sanctions to be applied, and that those sanctions should be the least restrictive, promote the development of the child or young person and strengthen their whānau.

Our four Youth Justice residences provide a safe, secure and supportive environment where young people can get their lives back on track and improve their prospects for the future. Each young person at the residence gets their own room, with meals, clothing and education all provided during their stay. As part of the school based 'structured day' that all young people must attend whilst in residence, we also deliver programmes that allow young people to learn life skills like managing their money, and practical skills like woodwork, art, music and computer skills. Specialist services are also provided where required, such as, health services (including mental health, access to psychologists), alcohol and drug services, counselling, and anger management. We also work with the young person, their family/whānau and their social worker to make a plan for when they leave the residence. Please refer to Table One below for the total amount spent on our Youth Justice residences for the past five financial years, broken down by residence and year.

Table One: Total amount spent on Youth Justice residences for the past five financial years, broken down by year and residence.

Youth Justice Residence	F2016	F2017	F2018	F2019	F2020
Korowai Manaaki - Auckland	\$10,469,045	\$10,766,580	\$11,411,548	\$11,483,612	\$13,306,588
Te Au rere a te Tonga - Palmerston North	\$7,437,022	\$7,745,944	\$8,701,649	\$9,186,168	\$12,039,836
Te Puna Wai ō Tuhinapo - Christchurch	\$9,122,674	\$9,178,759	\$11,011,901	\$11,020,293	\$12,500,864
Te Maioha o Parekarangi - Rotorua	\$7,259,281	\$7,349,339	\$7,964,512	\$8,336,311	\$9,310,645
Total	\$34,288,022	\$35,040,623	\$39,089,611	\$40,026,384	\$47,157,933

Oranga Tamariki has nine community-based remand homes around the country, which are strategically placed to ensure geographical coverage. These homes enable, where appropriate and safe, young people that have been remanded into the custody of the Chief Executive, to remain in a community-based setting prior to their hearing in the Youth Court. This reduces the need for custodial remands and placements in the residences and instead keeps young people closer to their whānau, friends and community, where they can be supported through the Youth Justice system and continue or re-connect with education and other positive activities. It also means they remain close to where their court hearing will be, thus avoiding often long escort trips for relatively short residential stays.

Our first community-based remand home opened in 2018; therefore, we have only provided information for the past three financial years. Furthermore, in the 2019/20 financial year, we opened an additional five remand homes in Hamilton, Tauranga, Havelock North and Auckland (2). We are unable to provide the total yearly operating costs for these homes as the costs are only part year. Please refer to Table Two below for the total amount spent on community-based remand homes for the past three financial years, broken down by remand home and year.

Table Two: Total amount Oranga Tamariki has spent on community-based remand homes for the past three financial years, broken down by remand home and year.

Remand home	F2018	F2019	F2020
Mahuru - Kaikohe	-	\$965,452	\$1,080,215
Te Kohanga - Rotorua	-	\$985,558	\$837,857
Te Whare Awhi - Palmerston North	-	\$847,830	\$834,051
Will Street home - Dunedin	\$875,000	\$900,000	\$1,000,000
Total	\$875,000	\$3,698,840	\$3,752,123

You have requested the amount Oranga Tamariki spends per young person in our Youth Justice residences and community-based remand homes for the past five financial years. Hundreds of young people enter our residential facilities and remand homes each year and the amount of time each young person spends with us varies depending on their individual circumstances. Information regarding the amount of time each young person has spent in our residential facilities or remand homes is held in the case notes of their individual files. The provision of this information would require us to review, in detail, thousands of individual files, as in order to calculate the average amount spent per young person, we would

firstly need to determine the average amount of time a young person spends in a residence each year. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. It is important to note that in the vast majority of cases, costs are fixed and are present even if the young people are not.

You have also requested the amount Oranga Tamariki spends per night on our Youth Justice residences. The number of beds occupied in our residences fluctuates, which makes the cost per night difficult to determine. As such, for the purpose of this response we have interpreted your request to mean the cost per 'bed night'. The cost per bed night refers to the cost per night to keep the bed in the residence. This cost includes the overall costs to run the Youth Justice residence, such as personnel costs (administrators, chefs, cleaners and all frontline staff), operating costs (administration, vehicles, travel, escorting costs) and residential costs (programmes, client costs, consumables, laundry and food). Please refer to Table Three below for the nightly cost per bed at our Youth Justice residences, broken down by year and residence. It is important to note that increases in the nightly cost per bed and the overall yearly costs of our Youth Justice residences accounts for changes made within the Youth Justice space over the past five years. These changes include an increase in the Youth Justice age to include 17-year olds (from 1 July 2019), an increased need for additional night staff as well as more programmes being brought on board for young people, both resulting in an increase in personnel costs, and lastly an increase in staffing salaries due to pay equity work.

Table Three: Nightly cost per bed at our Youth Justice residences, broken down by year and residence.

Youth Justice Residence	F2016	F2017	F2018	F2019	F2020
Korowai Manaaki - Auckland	\$624	\$641	\$680	\$684	\$793
Te Au rere a te Tonga - Palmerston North	\$679	\$707	\$795	\$839	\$825
Te Puna Wai ō Tuhinapo - Christchurch	\$833	\$838	\$754	\$755	\$856
Te Maioha o Parekarangi - Rotorua	\$663	\$671	\$727	\$761	\$850

Finally, you have requested the amount Oranga Tamariki spends per night on our community-based remand homes. It is important to note that our remand homes are run using a variety of operating models. Some are run by Oranga Tamariki

employees, some by Service Delivery Partners, and some have a mixture of the two. Some remand homes run their own programmes, while others will bring in contracted providers to deliver services. Due to this diverse method of service delivery, it is inappropriate to compare costings. In addition, as with Youth Justice residences, it is very difficult to accurately determine a cost per night due to the number of young people utilising the homes, and again, taking into account the differing operating models employed across the country. The provision of this information would require us to thoroughly examine the individual circumstances of each remand home, as this information is not centrally recorded by Oranga Tamariki. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Steve Groom', written in a cursive style.

Steve Groom
General Manager Public, Ministerial and Executive Services