



# Oranga Tamariki Update for Care Partners: COVID-19 edition #1

Dated 19 March 2020

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Kia ora koutou

In response to the changing situation with COVID-19, we will be producing regular updates for you, our providers and partners, including a series of updates specifically for our Care Partners.

Working together we provide an essential service to tamariki and their whānau and this will continue. We recognise that there are many scenarios that may unfold in the short to long term. We are assessing and working on these to ensure that we can continue to provide our important services to children and young people.

If you have any questions, please contact your PfO Advisor, contract or relationship manager here at Oranga Tamariki. We will provide responses to you as soon as we can and incorporate responses to the most common questions into the next email update.

## Your questions answered

### How do we prepare for COVID-19?

The Ministry of Health is leading the Government's and the country's response to COVID-19. You should visit their website as a trusted source for updates on the disease and information on how individuals and organisations can appropriately prepare and respond to developments in a nationally consistent way.

[Ministry of Health's information on COVID-19](#)

You can also visit the NZ Government site for additional information and advice relating to health, travel, education, business and community issues. You can expect these sites to be updated immediately following any Government announcements around actions you need to take and support you can access.

[NZ Government's COVID-19 website](#)

Partners will already have Business Continuity Plans in place. However, it is our experience that these will need to be updated to address the circumstances we now find ourselves in. We have provided a planning template as part of this update that you might find useful when updating your own plans. Please also feel free to contact your PfO Advisor, contract or relationship manager if you need assistance with updating your Business Continuity Plan.

We have been asked whether partners can use staff from across their services to update their Business Community and Pandemic Plans. We think it is appropriate for our provider partners to use their staff and other resources to meet the highest priorities they have at this time. Having an appropriate plan to manage a COVID-19 outbreak is currently a priority for critical services such as residences (including youth justice residences) and other care responses (group homes and caregiver responses).

Oranga Tamariki is finalising its own response plans for the different parts of our operation. In this update we have included the information that we are providing to Oranga Tamariki supported caregivers, which you can tailor for your own purposes if you would like to. We will share more information like this as it becomes available. We hope to provide information on home visiting in the next update.

### What about the under-delivery of contracted services?

It is important that we continue to work together to provide services and support to tamariki and whānau as best we can during this time. This said, Oranga Tamariki will not financially penalise provider partners should COVID-19 impact on the delivery of services.

Oranga Tamariki will not withhold or seek to recover contract funding in circumstance where a provider has had to temporarily reduce or cease providing a service, or deliver services in different ways, as a direct result of a coronavirus outbreak. We understand that provider partners will have on-going operating costs related to the service even though the service maybe compromised.

### Does the Government's support package apply to non-government organisations?

[Read the announcement about the Government's support package along with some related documents](#)

MSD has two payments available to support employers affected by COVID-19.

- The COVID-19 Leave Payment Scheme will provide support (through employers/to sole traders and the self-employed) for those people unable to work who are in self-isolation, are sick with COVID-19, or caring for others with COVID-19.
- To qualify for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, a business must have experienced a minimum 30% decline in actual or predicted revenue over the period of a month when compared with the same month last year, and that decline is related to COVID-19.

[Read the MSD's information sheet about the two support payments, who qualifies for them and how to apply](#)

[Access further workplace guidance for employers and employees on the MSD website](#)

### **Are the planned Oranga Tamariki hui going ahead?**

Oranga Tamariki has decided to cancel, postpone or deliver through virtual alternatives the following planned hui with providers and partners:

- The regional hui planned for Palmerston North, Lower Hutt and Whanganui
- The hui planned for the second round of engagement with care partners on the proposed changes in the partnered care space

We will let you know when the regional hui are rescheduled. Our Care Partners are still encouraged to provide their feedback on the proposed changes relating to partner delivered care through Dialogue, the online tool that we are using to support our engagement.

[View Dialogue. Oranga Tamariki's online consultation tool](#)

### **Will monitoring visits related to my contracts still go ahead?**

At this stage, contract monitoring visits by Oranga Tamariki staff will continue as normal. In some cases, the monitoring will have a focus on particular aspects of your operation, including your Business Continuity Plans. Given the rapidly changing circumstances, we are also looking at how monitoring could be conducted in alternative ways.

If you would like to discuss or revisit the need for a monitoring visit at this time, please contact your Pfo Advisor, contract or relationship manager

### **Will my scheduled visit with a Family Start Quality Advisors go ahead?**

Due to a requirement to defer or decline non-essential air travel, any providers visits planned with Family Start Quality Advisors will need to be postponed until further notice. In the interim, we will look to other ways of supporting Family Start Providers such as using video/tele conferencing, Skype etc.

### **Will Oranga Tamariki “take over” the care of a child who is in the care of a contracted provider?**

Oranga Tamariki would only take over the care of a child from a contracted provider in extreme circumstances. It is our expectation that our care partners have plans in place to manage risks and will continue to provide responses to the best of their ability.

Oranga Tamariki has direct responsibility for a number of residential facilities, caregivers and services. Given we face similar challenges to you in maintaining these services and supporting our staff, we are committed to working with you to share information and develop joint responses to issues as they arise.

For any issues with the continued provision of responses for a child in your care you should first make contact with the child's social worker. If you are concerned about your organisation's ability to continue to deliver responses due to a COVID-19 outbreak please contact your PfO Advisor, contract or relationship manager.

## **How can I get my questions answered?**

Please approach your PfO Advisor, contract or relationship manager with any questions or concerns you have around your contracted service in the first instance.

We are having regular meetings with our staff to update them on any developments and discuss the issues you are raising with them. Alongside this, they are sending through your questions to a central point within Partnering for Outcomes, from where we will seek answers from the relevant parts of Oranga Tamariki.

As a result of this process, you can expect your contact person to get back to you with a response to your question as soon as possible. We will also provide regular updates like this one, with responses to the most common questions. As you can imagine, we are likely to receive questions relating to a wide range of quite specific circumstances. We do ask for your patience as we work through an appropriate response to your specific context.

## **Keeping us informed**

We want to monitor the status of all children in our care, including children placed with care partners. To enable this, we ask that that you inform us of any incidents where a child in your care, their caregiver or other person in the same household, group home or residence is confirmed to have, or is suspected to have, an infectious disease, or is in self-isolation.

In the first instance, we ask you to immediately inform the child's social worker, and as soon as possible after, we also ask you to inform your PfO Advisor, contract or relationship manager.

This will ensure that we can adequately monitor both the welfare of the child and the impact of the outbreak on our critical services. You can also let us know about confirmed or suspected cases that impact non-care related services as it will improve our overall awareness of the impact of the outbreak.

## **Information you might find useful**

### **Business Continuity Planning**

#### *A guide to preparing your workplace for a disruption*

Business continuity prioritises critical activities and services that must be maintained during and after a disruption or an incident. It prioritises the steps we need to take to continue to operate, even if it is at a reduced capacity. These steps can include workarounds and reprioritisation of resources.

#### 1 Conduct a Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

A good BIA is the first step in successfully responding to a business disruption. Knowing your business and what you depend on to get stuff done, helps you to come up with a good plan to get back on your feet quickly and easily when your work is interrupted.

The purpose of a BIA is to determine the organisation's important and time-critical functions, the resources required, interdependencies and the impact of non-delivery. In practice, this means:

- Outlining at a high level, the functions performed by the organisation

- Thinking about how long it would take for an outage of these functions to impact your organisation. What would these impacts be?
- Listing all the resources (including people, place, technology and important documentation) needed to do the functions
- Outlining who are the stakeholders and recipients the functions (including dependencies)
- At the end of this process, the organisation will have a clear picture of their time critical functions and an idea of what scenarios they will probably need to plan for.

2 Writing a Business Continuity Plan (BCP)

- Your Business Impact Analysis (BIA) will have highlighted several high impact and predictable scenarios that you will need to plan for in advance. These scenarios will focus on the loss of critical resources (e.g. loss of facilities – where you are going to work from, loss of key staff – who do you need to do the work or loss of systems/resources – what do you need) that could impact your team’s time critical functions and services.
- Your Business Continuity Plan should include a good action plan that clearly lists all the actions required to get a function or service up and running, in practical, detailed, and easy to follow steps.
- The BCP is generic and not scenario based, so rather than planning for specific hazards such as weather events or earthquakes it is more effective to plan for the consequences these hazards would have on your business i.e. Loss of staff, facilities and/or building.
- Some specific consideration for you as care partners may include:
  - making sure that caregivers are aware of what they need to do, who they need to contact about what and when, and how you will keep them updated of any changes to advice
  - ensuring that you review the availability of emergency or respite carers to support caregivers, how you’ll provide additional support for caregivers etc.
- One way you could structure your planning is:

Name of service

<b>Objective:</b>		<i>The objective you want to achieve, for example “Ensure a child remains safe when they, or their caregiver or another household member is confirmed to have an infectious disease”</i>	
<b>Time Objective</b>		<i>Timeframe for action</i>	
<b>Minimum level of service</b>		<i>What is the minimum level of the service that will achieve the objective?</i>	
<b>Time</b>		<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>
1	e.g. <i>Immediately/within 2 hours/within 1 day</i>	<i>Action to be taken</i>	<i>Who must undertake the action</i>
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Communications

Key messages	When	Who
<i>E.g. Follow the guidance of the child's social worker.</i>		
<i>E.g. Consistent with MoH guidelines for managing infectious diseases.</i>		

Resources and documents

3 Have accessible information

As well as a copy of their BCP, Managers should hold a collection of handy information their team would need in an emergency, including:

- Up-to-date site contact lists/phone trees for staff and key stakeholders
- copies of any agreements you have with external partners for use of their resources in an emergency e.g. printed copies of key templates/forms
- a copy of any processes that may be used in a disruption, including manual steps for if a system is unavailable.

4 Helpful Information

For more information here are some helpful websites to explore:

- [Guidance on getting your organisation prepared for an emergency](#)
- [Free practical guides on building resilience](#)

**Care giver information email (week commencing 16 March 2020)**

The following email has been sent to Oranga Tamariki caregivers this week. You may wish to draw on this to provide information to your caregivers. We will continue to provide you with these care giver updates for your information.

We'll be also be updating the [information for caregivers](#) on our website.

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Kia ora koutou,

I'm getting in touch to update you on our response to COVID-19. It's an uncertain time for all of us, and we're committed to making sure you have the information you need to keep yourself and the children in your care safe and well.

**We're here to support and guide you**

I've been working with our Caregiver Recruitment and Support teams to ensure we have robust plans in place to support you. This includes information for you about what to do in a range of scenarios – including what to do if you, a child in your care, or another member of your household has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. This information will be available soon via our website and your caregiver social worker. We'll also be sending it out via email early next week.

In the meantime, the most important things you need to do are:

- Follow [Ministry of Health guidance on COVID-19](#).
- Contact your caregiver social worker and your child's social worker immediately if someone in your household becomes ill, so that we can give you the support you need as soon as possible.
- Visit our website for our [latest updates for caregivers](#).

Please be assured that if someone in your household falls ill, we will work with you to develop an emergency support plan.

### **Support networks and emergency care**

To make sure you have as much support on hand as possible, we suggest you check in with the people who currently help you with respite care, and those who've been vetted as regular household visitors. If you don't have a regular support person, please make contact with your caregiver social worker. They'll help you work through the options that might be available.

If there is someone you would like to have approved as an emergency caregiver for you, please get in touch with your caregiver social worker or local Oranga Tamariki Site. Our teams will prioritise these applications. [Find the contact details for all of our sites](#).

### **Returning from overseas and your travel plans**

If you - or anyone in your household - is returning from overseas it is now mandatory to self-isolate for 14 days, unless you have travelled from the Pacific. You will need to follow the [self-isolation guidance](#) on the Ministry of Health website.

We also advise that you avoid domestic and international air travel unless it is absolutely necessary. If you have plans to travel outside of New Zealand, please contact both your caregiver social worker and the child's social worker for advice.

### **Access meetings**

For access meetings with biological parents, you will need to be guided by your caregiver social worker and your child's social worker. They will be able to advise you on the frequency of visits, how to manage social distancing, and what happens if someone is in self-isolation.

### **Caregiver training sessions**

Some of you may be booked to attend training sessions in various places around the country. For now, there are no restrictions on small gatherings of people, so we encourage you to still attend if you are able.

If you, or someone in your home are unwell, please call the Ministry of Health 24/7 Healthline on 0800 358 5453 to check if you can attend.

### **We'll be in touch weekly**

I'll be emailing you every week to keep you updated on our response to COVID-19 and what we can do to support you. It's really important that we stay calm, follow the latest advice from the Ministry of Health, and reassure children and young people that we are here to keep them safe and well. We also need to make time to play, exercise and enjoy our beautiful country.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact your caregiver social worker, your child's social worker, or call us on 0508 CARERS.

### **Thank you and take care**

Thank you for the on-going love and support you are giving to the tamariki in your care. Please take care of yourself and reach out for support if you need it.

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