



**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Children

IN-CONFIDENCE

Oranga Tamariki Child Protection Policy

November 2025

Version control

Version	Date	Change Reason
1.0	November 2025	Reviewed and replaced the Oranga Tamariki Child Protection Policy dated November 2020

POLICY LEAD	Chief Advisor, People Culture and Enabling Services
POLICY OWNER	DCE People, Culture and Enabling Services
POLICY SPONSOR	Chief Social Worker
DATE APPROVED	26 November 2025
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	November 2028

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1. Objective

- 1.1 This policy sets out the responsibilities and organisational commitment of Oranga Tamariki to child protection. It outlines the expectations for all kaimahi to act, and the action to take, when they have worries about the oranga, including safety, of any tamariki or rangatahi.
- 1.2 The Child Protection Policy, which includes the Standard Operating Procedure:
- meets the Children's Act 2014 requirement that prescribed state services adopt a child protection policy that contains provisions on the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect in accordance with [section 15](#) of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.
 - supports compliance with legislative requirements of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi – the Treaty of Waitangi, and the Oranga Tamariki practice standards.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff, secondees and contractors (referred to as kaimahi in this document) employed or engaged on any basis by Oranga Tamariki, whether they are casual, fixed term or permanent, full-time or part-time.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to contracted service providers who are required to have their own child protection policies in place.

3. Policy statements

- 3.1 This policy expresses the commitment of Oranga Tamariki to the following principles:
- **All tamariki and rangatahi have a right to be protected from all forms of harm.** Tamariki and rangatahi have the right to feel loved and supported, have a safe loving home, be free from harm or ill-treatment, and be able to spend quality time with people and places important to them.
 - **All Oranga Tamariki kaimahi have an individual and organisational responsibility to act to protect and promote the oranga, including safety, of all tamariki and rangatahi.** Oranga Tamariki kaimahi should always respond at the first possible opportunity if they have concerns about the oranga, including safety, of a tamaiti or rangatahi.
 - **The oranga, including safety, of tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and families is at the centre of our decision-making.** We listen, act and advocate for the oranga, including safety, of tamariki and rangatahi within their whānau and families when we are concerned for them.

4. Values

4.1 We enact this policy in alignment with our values:

- **We put tamariki first** – in relation to oranga, including safety, this means we don't wait until we are certain, we are prepared to act in the best interests of tamariki and rangatahi regardless of who may be involved and even when it is not easy.
- **We believe aroha is vital** – we all have responsibility for the quality of our interactions with tamariki and rangatahi and for taking the right action with integrity and compassion when we have concerns.
- **We respect the mana of people** – we know that mana is affected by harm, and we have a responsibility to respond when we think harm is occurring. We respect the mana of tamariki and rangatahi by being open and compassionate. We treat kaimahi who are expressing concerns with respect and ensure their voices are heard and support is available to them.
- **We are tika and pono** – we are honest and open with tamariki and rangatahi about what we are going to do with the information they have shared with us. We do what we say we are going to do.
- **We value whakapapa** – tamariki and rangatahi are part of a whānau or family and a community, they have a right to be safe and protected by all of us.
- **We recognise that oranga is a journey** – we know that oranga has natural ebbs and flows and we are alert for when ebbs in oranga may be a sign that tamariki or rangatahi are being harmed.

5. Accountabilities

5.1 The Deputy Chief Executive, People, Culture and Enabling Services has overall responsibility and accountability for implementing this policy and monitoring compliance with the responsibilities detailed below.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 This section sets out the various roles and responsibilities in terms of the policy. Roles and responsibilities in relation to this Child Protection Policy are further described in the Child Protection Policy Standard Operating Procedure.

Role	Responsibility
Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the policy.
Te Riu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree any material changes to this policy and seek Chief Executive approval. Ensure that procedures exist across the organisation to support kaimahi who witness or deal with harm of tamariki or rangatahi. Ensure that effective processes and monitoring are in place in each of their business groups to meet compliance obligations under this policy. Ensure annual monitoring of their business group's compliance with this policy is undertaken and results provided to the risk team. Ensure that Oranga Tamariki commits to using safe recruitment procedures, including compliance with the requirements of the Children's Act 2014.
DCE People, Culture and Enabling Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Own the policy. Ensure the Child Protection Policy and the Child Protection Policy Standard Operating Procedure comply with legislative requirements in the Children's Act 2014, the Oranga Tamariki Practice Standards and the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ensure implementation of this policy, including promoting the policy through appropriate channels to ensure kaimahi are aware of the policy, associated Standard Operating Procedure, and their obligations. Ensure staff receive induction and refresher training about how to recognise, and what to do when they have, concerns about the oranga, including safety, of tamariki or rangatahi. Ensure that safety checking of new children's workers employed or engaged by Oranga Tamariki, and periodic safety checking of existing children's workers, occurs, aligned with sections 25 – 27 of the Children's Act 2014. Consult with the Chief Social Worker on any changes to this policy and Standard Operating Procedure. Ensure the policy is working effectively through regular monitoring and reporting on compliance with the policy. Ensure that Oranga Tamariki is meeting its obligations under section 16 of the Children's Act 2014 by reporting in the annual report on the extent to which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy has been implemented Contracted services have adopted and implemented a child protection policy. Ensure any breaches of this policy have been addressed. Assist the business with breach management and mitigation activities as required. Review and update this policy in line with the Corporate Policy requirements

Role	Responsibility
Chief Social Worker (designated person for child protection within Oranga Tamariki)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor the policy. • Set the expectation about the child protection knowledge all kaimahi should have. • Provide strategic leadership and subject matter expertise about training material for kaimahi. • Provide advice and support to business groups in relation to this policy. • Provide strategic leadership and subject matter expertise for scheduled review of the policy. • Escalate to Te Riu any issues requiring strategic leadership attention and provide support and advice to managers in relation to application and interpretation of the policy.
DCE Commissioning and Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure providers of contracted or approved services understand the requirement for, and have in place, a Child Protection Policy that complies with the requirements of section 16 the Children's Act 2014 and monitor their compliance with their Child Protection Policies.
Deputy Chief Social Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support other people leaders as required with their role in supporting kaimahi in their teams to understand the policy and respond to concerns about harm and oranga, including safety, of tamariki and rangatahi. • Ensure the policy owner is informed of any practice changes that may affect this policy including the Standard Operating Procedure, and any changes to abuse definitions referenced in the policy. • Ensure that kaimahi who have concerns about tamariki or rangatahi are connected to appropriate advice and support as needed.
People Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all people in their team are aware of this policy, including the Standard Operating Procedure. • Ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All kaimahi understand and adhere to this policy and the Standard Operating Procedure to respond and manage reports of suspected or confirmed serious harm of tamariki or rangatahi. ○ All kaimahi who report to them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have read and understand this policy and the Standard Operating Procedure. ▪ Have completed child protection certification during induction and two-yearly refresher training. ▪ Know how to access and sign into the Practice Centre as required by this policy. ○ Support kaimahi to access training and resources required to adhere to this policy and ensure that extra support for kaimahi is accessed if required. ○ Support kaimahi through conversations about concerns for tamariki or rangatahi and assist in the decision-making about the appropriate response. If in doubt, contact the National Contact Centre – 0508 326 459. ○ Ensure that support is provided for kaimahi who witness or deal with harm of tamariki or rangatahi, e.g. the Employee Assistance Programme.

Role	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Put in writing how they will respond to concerns raised about harm to tamariki or rangatahi and where they determine that a report of concern is not appropriate, provide a written rationale for their decision. (NOTE: where this relates to tamariki or rangatahi with whom Oranga Tamariki is involved, this must be recorded as a case note in CYRAS.) ○ Act when they become aware of a Section 15 allegation that a kaimahi has harmed a tamaiti or rangatahi. ○ Document any/all breaches brought to their attention and notify the owner of the policy of the breach as soon as is reasonable. ○ Escalate concerns to the Chief Social Worker/DCE Professional Practice about the application or interpretation of the policy. ○ Seek advice from the Deputy Chief Social Worker about concerns about oranga, including safety, when they are not sure of the action to take.
All kaimahi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comply with this policy and the associated Standard Operating Procedure, that is they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are well-informed about the policy, Standard Operating Procedure and related principles, processes and procedures ○ have foundation level understanding of the definitions of abuse and indicators of serious harm and know how to seek advice when harm is suspected or identified (as detailed in the Child Protection Policy Standard Operating Procedure - Definitions of abuse, neglect and harm) ○ know how they must respond when concerns about the oranga, including safety, of tamariki or rangatahi are suspected or identified ○ undertake training and access resources required for their responsibilities under this policy appropriate to their areas of work and role in the organisation, including completion of the child protection certification as part of their three-month induction package and ongoing refresher training, as required ○ advocate for tamariki and rangatahi by raising concerns when they are worried about their oranga, including safety ○ seek advice and support from their manager if they have concerns about the safety of a child and are unsure of the action to take before making a report of concern ○ make a report of concern if they believe that a tamaiti or rangatahi has been, or is likely to be, harmed, ill-treated, abused, (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), neglected, or deprived, or who has concerns about the well-being of a child or young person as per section 15 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 ○ ensure that Police are contacted immediately on 111 in any situation where they believe a tamaiti or rangatahi is in current or imminent danger ○ tell their manager as soon as practicable if they are alleged to have harmed, ill-treated, abused (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually) a tamaiti or rangatahi, in their professional or personal capacity including family harm,

Role	Responsibility
	<p>(regardless of whether or not the tamaiti or rangatahi is involved with Oranga Tamariki)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ remain alert to potential breaches of the policy and report potential and actual breaches to their manager ○ consider if the appropriate action is to make a protected disclosure in accordance with the Protected Disclosures Act 2000 if they believe that another kaimahi is involved in 'serious wrongdoing', (in this case, the harm of a tamaiti or rangatahi) regardless of whether the tamaiti or rangatahi is involved with Oranga Tamariki.
Service delivery kaimahi (kaimahi, including youth justice and caregiver recruitment and support working in site, residence, or group home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Service delivery kaimahi working directly with tamariki or rangatahi and their whānau or families also have the following responsibilities in addition to the responsibilities for all kaimahi detailed above: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ consider potential indicators of serious harm for tamariki or rangatahi they are not directly working with but come into contact with (for example, siblings) ○ recognise other forms of maltreatment that can result in cumulative harm, including emotional violence (for example, humiliation, degradation), limitations on parenting capability (for example, parental anxiety and depression undermining a parent's ability to care), and the impact of witnessing family violence ○ act on concerns for the oranga, including safety, of tamariki or rangatahi that do not require a report of concern but require referral for support or services from other Ministries and/or referral to community social service agencies. If the level of risk or concern is uncertain, supervision is required to form an appropriate response ○ access available child protection information and training, appropriate to their role ○ advise their site manager if they become aware when undertaking a care and protection investigation or assessment that an allegation relates to a kaimahi ○ engage in lawful and effective information-sharing and consistent communication with other agencies as the foundation for sound decision-making to keep tamariki and rangatahi safe and to improve their oranga, including safety. ○ protect, promote and build effective relationships with community organisations and other government agencies to ensure the needs of all tamariki and rangatahi are responded to.
People and High Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with the managers of employees who have had allegations of harm or abuse of a tamaiti or rangatahi made against them. If an employment investigation is required, Human Resources will advise the appropriate steps and continue to provide advice and assistance to the employee's manager until the matter is concluded.

7. Measures of success and compliance management

7.1 People, Culture and Enabling Services will assess the effectiveness of this policy based on the following:

- Six-monthly reporting on the number of kaimahi who have completed the child protection certification as part of their three-month induction or refresher requirement.
- Six-monthly reporting from people leaders about how they have ensured the kaimahi who report to them have familiarity with the requirements of the policy and Standard Operating Procedure and the training and resources they have provided for kaimahi to enable them to meet their obligations under this policy.

8. Non-compliance

8.1 Failure to comply with this policy, including the Standard Operating Procedure may be considered a breach of the Code of Conduct.

8.2 Any action taken because of a breach (actual or potential) of any of the obligations set out in this policy and the Standard Operating Procedure will be conducted in good faith, a fair process will be followed, and the person involved will have a full opportunity to respond to the concerns or allegations and have access to appropriate support, advice or representation.

9. Contacts

9.1 The Chief Advisor People Culture and Enabling Services is the main point of contact for questions regarding this policy.

9.2 The Deputy Chief Social worker is the lead contact person for people leaders who have concerns about specific child safety concerns in their areas.

10. Definitions

10.1 In this policy and the Standard Operating Procedure, the following definitions apply:

Term	Description
Tamaiti	Child (singular) under the age of 14 years
Tamariki	Children (plural) under the age of 14 years
Rangatahi	When referring a person of or over the age of 14 years but under 18 years
Kaimahi	Employees, secondees and contractors employed or engaged on any basis by Oranga Tamariki, whether they are casual, fixed term or permanent, full time or part time
Contractor	A person who meets the definition of a contractor in the Public Service Guidance (Contractors-and-Consultants-Guidance.pdf)
Harm	Harm includes the ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person

Serious harm

Serious harm is defined on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre - [Serious harm](#)

11. References

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Oranga Tamariki Child Protection Policy Standard Operating Procedure
- Oranga Tamariki Code of Conduct
- The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- The Children's Act 2014 – [Children's Act 2014](#)
- Protected Disclosures Act 2022 – [Protected Disclosures Act 2022](#)