

14 May 2019

C107156

Iris Krzyzosiak
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Tēnā koe Ms Krzyzosiak

Thank you for your email of 5 April 2019, which was transferred to Corrections on 15 April 2019, requesting information about people under the age of 18 held on remand. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Corrections' aim is to ensure that young prisoners have the right support and services to ensure their safety and the safety of others, as well as to live offence-free, productive adult lives. As you may be aware, youth in prison require a different level of management and accommodation than adults, and we are committed to improving services, supports and outcomes for youth.

All prisons are operated in accordance with New Zealand legislation and having regard for other agreements, such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. In accordance with section 179 of the Corrections Regulations 2005, all prisoners under the age of 18 years must be kept apart from mainstream adult prisoners, unless approved by the Chief Executive and only if it is in the prisoner's best interests. As a result, Corrections has two youth units that provide safe, secure environments for these young people.

Corrections' youth units were established with the aim of creating a safe developmental environment for all imprisoned male youth under the age of 18, and young adult males aged 18 and 19 years deemed vulnerable, in a manner appropriate to their age, level of maturity, and statutory requirements. Young people in prison who make an application for voluntary segregation can also be segregated from the mainstream youth population. Placement will be dependent on the number of segregated youth held in the prison at any one time.

Given that the majority of young people under the age of 18 years remanded in custody are male, the youth units are located within the main grounds at Christchurch Men's and Hawkes Bay Regional Prisons, but are entirely separate from the adult population.

In some instances, young males remanded in custody may need to be held in the facility closest to their sentencing court while going through the court process. If this is the case, efforts are made to keep these young people separate from the adult population.

There are no specific youth units for female prisoners, due to the small number of young women in custody. Young female prisoners are also managed in accordance with section 179 of the Corrections Regulations 2005, and are kept separate from adult prisoners unless the conditions outlined above are met.

We recognise that young people, particularly young women, have unique circumstances. We are committed to ensuring that youth in our system have access to services, supports and interventions that respond to their age and stage of development. For this reason, we have both a youth strategy and a women's strategy which focuses on equipping staff with the skills and knowledge to work effectively with youth and women, and to provide access to age appropriate rehabilitation and reintegration programmes and activities.

You requested:

Please provide me with the total throughput of people under the age of 18 held in remand per annum, as far back as records permit. Please break this down by whether this was a youth justice facility or an adult corrections facility.

Particularly vulnerable sentenced 14, 15 or 16 year old offenders may be placed in a Oranga Tamariki, Ministry for Children (previously known as Child Youth and Family, or CYF) Youth Justice Residence to serve all or part of their sentence of imprisonment. In these cases, Corrections maintains involvement in the youth offender's case management, alongside Oranga Tamariki. However, information about the management and population of Youth Justice Residences relates to the functions of Oranga Tamariki, rather than Corrections. As such, as you were advised in our letter of 18 April 2019, the part of your request pertaining to youth justice facilities was transferred to Oranga Tamariki for response.

Regarding the part of your request pertaining to adult corrections facilities, please find the requested information attached as Appendix One. Corrections has been able to extract this information for each calendar year from 1998 to 2018. Please note when reviewing this information that the data does not necessarily represent separate offenders; some offenders may have started more than one period of remand in a calendar year, or across more than one year.

Please also note that Corrections does not decide who is in prison and who is in the community. Decisions around sentencing and whether to grant or decline bail are made by the presiding Judge.

You may also be aware that from 1 July 2019, youth jurisdiction will be extended to include young people up to the age of 18 years. From this date, the priority placement for any up to 18 years on custodial remand will be a youth justice residence.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with Corrections. Alternatively you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form a stylized, somewhat abstract shape.

Rachel Leota
National Commissioner

Appendix One – Number of periods of remand started by persons aged under 18 years

Year	Number of remand periods started
1998	326
1999	427
2000	324
2001	338
2002	429
2003	440
2004	458
2005	515
2006	502
2007	518
2008	501
2009	496
2010	488
2011	405
2012	389
2013	337
2014	340
2015	299
2016	340
2017	313
2018	302