



19 September 2023

Erika Whittome  
fyi-request-23990-51f9644a@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: OIA-2023/24-0160

Dear Erika

**Official Information Act request relating to the handling of OIA requests related to COVID-19 vaccinations**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 29 August 2023. You requested:

*“Dear Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Please would you share all the correspondence on policies, procedures, memos etc relating to the process and handling of official responses to Official Information Act requests relating to any Covid-19 vaccination matters.*

*This request is for the timeframe of Jan 2021 until Sept 2022.  
I am requesting all correspondence on policy, procedures, memos etc relating to the subject of Covid-19 vaccination for handling of any OIA for the above date range.”*

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) handles all Official Information Act (OIA) requests in the same manner regardless of the subject. I am therefore refusing your request for *correspondence on policies, procedures, memos etc relating to the process and handling of official responses to Official Information Act requests relating to any Covid-19 vaccination matters for the timeframe of Jan 2021 until Sept 2022* under section 18(e) as the information requested does not exist.

I can however provide you with the following information regarding DPMC’s handling of OIA requests.

DPMC has a centralised Ministerial Services Team that oversees the administration of, and provides advice to DPMC business units on, responding to OIA requests. The Ministerial Services team also supports the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), which is a Departmental Agency hosted by DPMC. The policies and procedures for responding to Official Information Act requests apply to both DPMC and NEMA.

Please find attached the following documentation setting out DPMC’s policy and procedures for processing of requests:

Document	Description	Decision
Document 1	DPMC and NEMA Official Information Act Quick Guide	Release in full
Document 2	DPMC and NEMA Intranet (Kainga) page on Official Information Act Guide for DPMC and NEMA staff.	Email address withheld under section 9(2)(g)(ii).
Document 3	DPMC and NEMA Guide on working with the Ministerial Services team on Official Information Act requests.	Release in full
Document 4	Ministerial Services Triage Considerations.	Release in full

Document	Description	Decision
Document 5	Ministerial Services Quality Assurance Checklist	Release parts relating to OIA responses in full
Document 6	Release of staff personal information under the Official Information Act.	Release in full

The documents provided here are the most relevant, setting out DPMC's policies and procedures for responding to requests under the Act for all of DPMC and NEMA. Please note that individual business units may have internal processes that they follow when engaging with the Ministerial Services Team on responding to requests.

DPMC uses the guidance for agencies responding to OIA requests available from both the Office of the Ombudsman and Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (PSC). The documents provided do not have specific review dates but are reviewed and revised regularly and if necessary amended to reflect the latest guidance from the Ombudsman and PSC. This ensures that our processes are in line with best practice. Amendments are also needed when DPMC business units close or new business units are established.

In November 2022 DPMC began a review of its processes for responding to Official Information Act requests which has just been completed. The process map for OIA requests developed through this review is yet to be finalised and rolled out across DPMC. Accordingly, this is not in use by DPMC at this time and for that reason is considered out of scope of your request and has not been included in our response.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act. No public interest has been identified that would be sufficient to override the reasons for withholding that information.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Clare Ward  
**Executive Director**  
**Strategy, Governance and Engagement**