



7 March 2024

Nikki

fyi-request-25298-c6bff839@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Nikki

Thank you for your email to Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), received on 26 December 2023, requesting information regarding disciplinary actions taken against social workers. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

You have requested:

- *Can you please inform myself and the public how many social workers have undergone disciplinary action from the years 2016-2023.*
- *I would also like the information on how many disciplinary actions have been taken against social workers, and how many were substantiated.*
- *I would like the results for the Napier and Gisborne office please.*

In your email of 26 December 2023, you also raised concerns about the wellbeing of a child and the actions of staff employed by Oranga Tamariki.

On 12 January 2024, our Ministerial Support team asked whether you would be willing to provide any identifying details to assist us in responding to the concerns described in your email.

I acknowledge that you advised Ministerial Support there is nothing further Oranga Tamariki can do, however, I would like to reiterate that we are committed to the wellbeing of all children and to resolving any concerns people have with Oranga Tamariki or Oranga Tamariki staff.

Oranga Tamariki has in place a disciplinary policy which outlines the process to be undertaken where concerns of misconduct or serious misconduct of staff are identified. When concerns arise the appropriate disciplinary processes have been undertaken.

IN-CONFIDENCE

Guidance is available to all Oranga Tamariki Managers to support them and their staff through the disciplinary process, and to ensure that the process is impartial, fair, prompt, and consistent. Managers must consult with an Oranga Tamariki Human Resources (HR) Advisor prior to commencing a disciplinary process, to ensure that contractual and legal obligations are met and that all the relevant delegations are understood and followed. There are a range of outcomes that may apply dependant on the circumstances and seriousness of the issue this ranges from first written warning to dismissal (either with notice or without notice).

For the period 2016 to 2023, the number of social workers at the Oranga Tamariki offices in both Napier and Gisborne offices were small, meaning individuals may be able to be identified if this information is provided.

In order to protect the privacy of natural persons, we are withholding the information you have requested on how many social workers at the Napier and Gisborne have undergone disciplinary action, how many disciplinary actions have been taken against social workers and how many were substantiated for the Napier and Gisborne offices, under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

As required under section 9(1) of the Act, we have considered the public interest in releasing the information withheld. We do not consider the public interest considerations favouring the release of this information are sufficient to outweigh the need to withhold it at this time.

Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise them with Oranga Tamariki. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Cassandra Anderson
Deputy Chief Executive
People Culture and Enabling Services