



30th May 2017

Steve Hall
'fyi-request-5913-df2b86be@requests.fyi.org.nz'

Dear Steve Hall

Official Information request - Compassionate Release

You requested information from the Department of Corrections relating to compassionate releases, on 21 May 2017. Specifically you asked for the following:

- 1. In the last year how many prisoners were released early from their sentence on compassionate grounds?*
- 2. What guidelines and considerations are used to determine suitability for release on compassionate grounds?*

The Department of Corrections has transferred the second of your questions to the Board to respond to. Decisions relating to Compassionate release are made by the New Zealand Parole Board.

Section 41 (1) of the Parole Act 2002 says this:

The Board may, on referral by the chairperson, direct that an offender be released on compassionate release on either of the following grounds:

- (a) The offender has given birth to a child:
- (b) The offender is seriously ill and unlikely to recover.

There are no guidelines on how the chairperson uses their discretion on whether or not to refer an application to a panel of the Board.

The paramount consideration for every case where release is being considered, is the safety of the community. Other considerations for compassionate release cases, will include a report from the Department of Corrections on its ability to meet the ongoing health needs of the offender.

Yours faithfully

Alistair Spierling, Manager