

# Hon Andrew Little

Minister of Justice

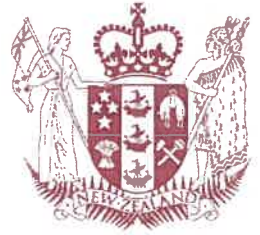
Minister for Courts

Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations

Minister Responsible for the NZSIS

Minister Responsible for the GCSB

Minister Responsible for Pike River Re-entry



13 FEB 2019

Karissa-Casey  
fyi-request-9375-a3cf67a9@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Casey

## Official Information Act Request

I refer to your email of 10 January 2019 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA), information relating to the use of the Gleasons Bible in the justice system.

Most of your questions would require me to either create information or formulate an opinion. Doing so falls outside the scope of the OIA.

The remainder of the requested information is not held by my office, and I have no reason to believe that the information is held by another department, Minister of the Crown, or organisation. Accordingly, I am refusing your request under section 18(g) of the OIA, which allows for the refusal of requests where information is not held by the requested department, or any other government organisation.

However, I can provide you with some general information about the use of Bibles in the justice system. The reason for using a Bible in a court is for the purpose of swearing an oath. The Oaths and Declarations Act 1957 outlines the form in which an oath may be administered and mandates the use of a Bible. However, people who do not wish to swear an oath have the right make an affirmation instead. An affirmation has the same effect as an oath but does not need to be sworn on a Bible. More information about court processes in New Zealand can be found at [justice.govt.nz/courts/going-to-court/without-a-lawyer/representing-yourself-civil-high-court/what-to-expect-in-the-courtroom/](http://justice.govt.nz/courts/going-to-court/without-a-lawyer/representing-yourself-civil-high-court/what-to-expect-in-the-courtroom/)

You have the right under s 28(3) of the OIA to complain to the Ombudsman about the decision to withhold some of the information requested. Contact details for the Office of the Ombudsman are:

Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10152  
Wellington  
[info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz)

Yours sincerely

Hon Andrew Little  
Minister of Justice