



24 June 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 23 May 2025, requesting information about policies and procedures followed when an individual with a historic claim of abuse passes away, and any staff who locate next of kin.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

1. Staff or Roles Involved in Identifying Next of Kin

2.1 Does your agency employ, contract, or engage specific staff (or roles) whose duties include locating or identifying next of kin for unrepresented individuals?

2.11 If so, please provide the job titles, descriptions, and reporting lines of those roles.

2.12 Please indicate how many individuals are currently employed or contracted in such roles, and whether they are full-time, part-time, or casual.

The answer to Question 1 is that the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry's) Historic Claims Group does not employ, contract, or engage any specific staff (or roles) whose duties include locating or identifying next of kin for unrepresented individuals.

Your request for this information is therefore refused under section 18(g) of the Act as no information is held.

2. Procedures and Policies

2.2 What are the standard procedures, policies, or guidelines followed by your agency upon learning that an individual with a claim is deceased?

To address Question 2, please see the link to the Ministry's Historic Claims Deceased Claimants Policy: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/historic-claims/policy-and-practice-guidance-on-deceased-claimants.pdf.

You will find that context for the answer to Q2.1 is provided by the second paragraph on page two of the Deceased Claimants Policy:

"Where we do not know whether the deceased's whānau are aware that they have made a claim it is not appropriate for us to contact the whānau and let

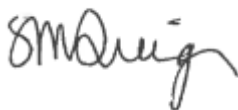
them know about the claim as doing this may cause significant trauma if they do not know their whānau member has been abused in state care.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham
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