

# Report



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

**Date:** 20 November 2025      **Security Level:** Budget-Sensitive  
**To:** Hon Louise Upston, Minister for Child Poverty Reduction  
**File Reference:** REP/25/10/863

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## Draft Cabinet paper for consultation – Government response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review

### Purpose of the report

- 1 To provide a draft Cabinet paper for your feedback prior to circulating for Ministerial consultation.

### Recommended actions

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **provide** your feedback on the draft Cabinet paper *Government Response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review* (attached as Appendix A)
- 2 **agree**, subject to your feedback, to circulate the Cabinet paper attached at Appendix A for Ministerial consultation from 25 November to 1 December

**Agree / Disagree**

20 November

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Hannah Kerr  
Director, Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group

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Date

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Hon Louise Upston  
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

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Date

## Background

- 2 On 22 September 2025, Cabinet noted your intention to seek decisions before the end of the year for polices to give effect to the remaining recommendations of the Poutasi Review that either have no fiscal implications or can be managed from within baselines, and identifying resourcing implications of key areas of work [CAB-25-MIN-0330].
- 3 As advised last month [REP/25/10/828], the Minister of Finance has been clear that the Cabinet paper cannot seek decisions that require funding to be sought through the Budget process.

## Draft Cabinet paper

- 4 We have consulted with agencies and chief executives involved in the Government response to the Poutasi Review in developing the Cabinet paper.
- 5 This paper seeks agreement to the parameters for implementing two key areas of work to progress implementation of the remaining recommendations from the Poutasi Review.

### *Response to recommendations 1, 2 and 6*

- 6 Agencies previously agreed that recommendations 1, 2 and 6, relating to system enhancements where the dependent child of a sole parent is remanded in custody or sentenced to a term of imprisonment, can be established within baselines, with implementation beginning from January 2026.
- 7 While the interagency hub to facilitate information sharing and an integrated initial assessment of need can be established within baselines, over time Oranga Tamariki expect to receive an increase in ROCs and referrals to funded providers as a result of these changes, s 9(2)(f)(iv)  
 This is reflected in paragraphs 12-16 of the draft Cabinet paper that is attached at Appendix A.

### *Mandatory training*

- 8 The paper proposes that mandatory child protection training begin from January 2026 by testing a short, electronic module covering foundational child protection information with a small subset of core children's workers.

9 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

## Related papers

- 10 s 9(2)(f)(iv)
- 11 The paper also notes that the response to the Poutasi Review presents opportunities to consider more broadly how the system responds to vulnerable children who may not meet the threshold for statutory intervention, but who are nonetheless at risk. s 9(2)(f)(iv)

## Next steps

- 12 We are seeking your feedback on the draft Cabinet paper by Monday 24 November. Subject to any changes you may have, we will work to the following timeframes on the Cabinet paper:

Step	Timeframes
Ministerial and agency consultation (parallel)	25 November – 1 December
Send final paper to Minister Upston's Office	Wednesday 3 December
Lodge paper	Thursday 4 December
SOU Committee consideration	Wednesday 10 December
Cabinet confirmation	Week of Monday 15 December

- 13 These timeframes enable a Ministerial discussion and feedback in the Child and Youth Ministers meeting on 1 December.

## Appendices

- 14 **Appendix A.** Draft Cabinet paper - Government response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review

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