

Report



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Date: 2 December 2025 **Security Level:** Budget-Sensitive
To: Hon Louise Upston, Minister for Child Poverty Reduction
File Reference: REP/25/12/954

Cabinet paper to lodge – Next Steps on Government response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review

Purpose of the report

- 1 To provide a Cabinet paper (attached as Appendix A) to lodge for Social Outcomes Committee (SOC) consideration on 10 December 2025.

Recommended actions

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **agree** for officials to lodge the Cabinet paper (attached as Appendix A) on Thursday 4 December, for SOC consideration

Agree / Disagree

2 December 2025

Hannah Kerr
Director, Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group

Date

Hon Louise Upston
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Date

Consultation on your Cabinet paper is complete

- 2 Your draft Cabinet paper 'Next Steps on Government Response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review' was circulated for concurrent agency and Ministerial consultation from 25 November to 1 December 2025.
- 3 This paper seeks agreement to the parameters for implementing two key areas of work that can be implemented within existing baseline funding:
 - 3.1 an in-person inter-agency hub to improve identification and assessment of the needs of dependent children whose sole parent or carer is remanded in custody and/or sentenced to a term of imprisonment by the courts; and
 - 3.2 the first phase of a mandatory child protection training regime.
- 4 The paper outlines the phased, s 9(2)(f)(iv)

No substantive feedback has been received

- 5 Feedback has been minimal, focussed on updating specific details and the status of certain actions. This reflects the integrated Government response and involvement of agencies throughout development of the paper.
- 6 Following a workshop held on the inter-agency hub, Oranga Tamariki provided more detail to clarify the enhanced process for identifying and responding to the needs of dependent children in the specified cohort (paragraphs 11-14).
- 7 The Ministry of Education advised that the revised Early Childhood Education licensing criteria were gazetted on 28 November 2025 (paragraph 30). Oranga Tamariki and MSD also advised that all children's agencies have up-to-date child protection policies and provided more specificity about further related work (paragraph 31).
- 8 The Office of the Privacy Commissioner requested we mention implications for the right to privacy in the human rights section (paragraph 39).

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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

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Next steps

- 11 We are seeking your agreement to lodge the Cabinet paper by Thursday 4 December, for consideration by SOU on Wednesday 10 December 2025.
- 12 We will draft letters for you to send to the Independent Children’s Monitor, Children’s Commissioner, and Ombudsman following Cabinet consideration, to inform them of the outcomes of the paper (paragraph 41). We can also provide a draft press release for you to issue in the new year.

Appendix

Appendix A Next Steps on Government response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review

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