

25 July 2023

Section 9(2)(a)

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Our ref: OIA 105233

Tēnā koe Section 9(2)(a)

Official Information Act request: Active warrants to arrest

Thank you for your email of 13 June 2023 requesting, under the Official Information Act (the Act), information about active warrants to arrest. Specifically, you requested:

Can you please provide me with the number of active court arrest warrants in Aotearoa, broken down by district as of June 13, 2023? (Note: if easier to use the first/last day of the month, feel free to amend)

Can I also get the comparable figure for the past 5 years - i.e., the number of active warrants on June 13 2022, June 13 2021 etc.

And lastly can I get an indication of how many active warrants (as of June 2023) are for failed first court appearances?

On 11 July 2023 the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) contacted you to inform you that, pursuant to section 15(1) of the Act, a decision to grant your request had been made, but more time was needed to prepare a response. You were informed that you could expect a response by 26 July 2023.

Before responding to your request, I would like to provide the following information about warrants to arrest. If a defendant fails to appear at a hearing, the court may issue a warrant to arrest for the Police to action. Police can also seek the court's permission to withdraw a warrant to arrest if they consider it appropriate. When a defendant makes a voluntary appearance at court, a registrar can, if they have jurisdiction, withdraw the warrant or schedule a date for the defendant to appear before a judge.

In response to the first and second parts of your request, please refer to Table 1 attached, which outlines the number of active warrants to arrest, as at 30 June each year, for years from 2019 to 2023.

Please note that Table 1 is broken down by Justice Service Areas as the Ministry does not record information by Police District. Justice Service Areas are geographical groupings of individual court locations for administrative purposes, and these are outlined in Appendix 1 attached.

I am refusing the last part of your request under 18(g) of the Act as the information is not held by the Ministry or any other agency subject to the Act. Agencies can only provide information they hold. There is no requirement under the Act, for agencies to create new information to respond to requests. In this instance we would need to create a new report which would require complex programming and testing of new codes.

If you require any further information, please contact Media & Social Media Manager Joe Locke at media@justice.govt.nz.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: justice.govt.nz/about/official-information-act-requests/oia-responses/.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Office of the Ombudsman may be contacted by email to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phone on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Richard Williams

Acting Group Manager, Courts and Tribunals, Regional Service and Delivery

Table 1: Number of active warrants to arrest, as at 30 June for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023

Court Location	Year				
	June 2019	June 2020	June 2021	June 2022	June 2023
Taitokerau	587	583	546	602	638
Waitematā	1,042	1,043	996	1,058	1,088
Auckland	2,240	2,138	2,158	2,380	2,425
South Auckland	1,762	1,735	1,613	1,897	2,041
Waikato	775	819	871	982	860
Bay of Plenty	412	413	372	418	408
Wairariki	366	402	358	414	393
East Coast	747	752	589	614	619
Taranaki/Whanganui	195	212	225	186	172
Manawātū/Wairarapa	288	319	210	231	236
Northern Wellington	417	452	387	412	399
Wellington	317	342	318	357	321
Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast	253	280	259	254	236
Canterbury	854	768	781	762	800
Otago	170	146	149	177	165
Southland	191	181	176	211	191
Total	10,616	10,585	10,008	10,955	10,992

Notes for table 1:

- The data shows the number of active warrants, issued in a criminal court, as at 30 June of each year.
- A warrant that has been issued is considered “active” if it has not been executed or withdrawn.
- Court location is based on the Justice Service Area of the court where the warrant was issued.
- Justice Service Areas are geographical groupings of individual court locations for administrative purposes. A list of courts within each Justice Service Area can be found in appendix 1. This also includes information on courts that have since been closed.
- The Case Management System does not record if a person has died or left the country.
- This data includes the Youth Court, District Court, and High Court.

Appendix 1: Courts included in each Justice Service Area

Justice service area	Court location	District Court	High Court	Note
Taitokerau	Dargaville	✓		
	Kaikohe	✓		
	Kaitāia	✓		
	Whangārei	✓	✓	
Waitematā	North Shore	✓		
	Waitākere	✓		
	Warkworth	✓		Closed March 2013
Auckland	Auckland	✓	✓	
South Auckland	Manukau	✓		
	Papakura	✓		
	Pukekohe	✓		
Waikato	Hamilton	✓	✓	
	Huntly	✓		
	Morrinsville	✓		
	Te Awamutu	✓		
	Te Kūiti	✓		
	Thames	✓		
Bay of Plenty	Ōpōtiki	✓		
	Tauranga	✓	✓	
	Waihi	✓		
	Whakatāne	✓		
Wairariki	Rotorua	✓	✓	
	Taumarunui	✓		
	Taupō	✓		
	Tokoroa	✓		
East Coast	Gisborne	✓		
	Hastings	✓		
	Napier	✓	✓	
	Ruatōria	✓		
	Waipukurau	✓		
	Wairoa	✓		
Taranaki/Whanganui	Hāwera	✓		
	Marton	✓		
	New Plymouth	✓	✓	
	Taihape	✓		
	Whanganui	✓	✓	
Manawatū/Wairarapa	Dannevirke	✓		
	Feilding	✓		Closed March 2013
	Levin	✓		
	Masterton	✓	✓	
	Palmerston North	✓	✓	

Northern Wellington	Hutt Valley	✓		Opened March 2013
	Lower Hutt	✓		Closed March 2013
	Porirua	✓		
	Upper Hutt	✓		Closed March 2013
Wellington	Chatham Islands	✓		
	Wellington	✓	✓	
Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast	Blenheim	✓	✓	
	Greymouth	✓	✓	
	Kaikōura	✓		
	Nelson	✓	✓	
	Westport	✓		
	Whataroa	✓		Closed March 2013
Canterbury	Ashburton	✓		
	Christchurch	✓	✓	
	Rangiora	✓		Closed March 2014
Otago	Balclutha	✓		Closed March 2014
	Dunedin	✓	✓	
	Oamaru	✓		
	Timaru	✓	✓	
Southland	Alexandra	✓		
	Gore	✓		
	Invercargill	✓	✓	
	Queenstown	✓		