

31 October 2022

Section (9) (2) (a)

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Our ref: OIA 99804

Tēnā koe Section (9) (2) (a)

Official Information Act request: The development of Māori trilingual interpreters

Thank you for your email of 30 September 2022 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) information relating to interpreters. The Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) is responding to Priority #6 of your request. As you made your request to several government agencies, the Ministry did not transfer those parts of your request that might be answered by them.

Specifically, you requested:

*What actions have been undertaken to train and develop Māori trilingual interpreters?
To this point.*

- 1. Have the Government funded Māori to train as interpreters? If yes, how many, for what amounts, and for what years?*
- 2. What actions have the Government taken to ensure Māori trilingual interpreters are highly proficient in NZSL, English, and te reo Māori?*
- 3. What actions have Government undertaken to ensure the cultural development and supervision for Māori trilingual interpreters?*
- 4. What actions have the Government taken to ensure that non-Māori NZSL/English interpreters are culturally competent and safe to operate in Māori social domains?*
- 5. What actions have the Government taken to ensure Tāngata Turi are involved in professional roles to train the Māori trilingual workforce?*

We have numbered your request for clarity of response. For the purposes of this response, we have interpreted "the Government" as the Ministry, as we are unable to speak to the whole of government, and "interpreters" as "court interpreters".

Questions 1,3,4, and 5 of your request are refused under section 18(g) of the Act, on the grounds that the information is not held by the Ministry.

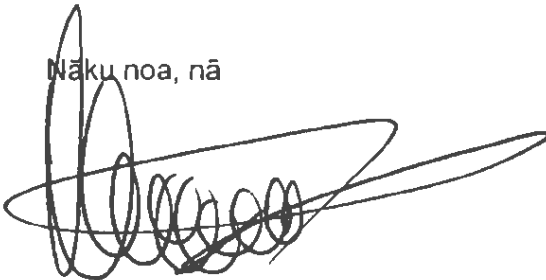
In response to question 2, the Ministry has not taken any specific actions to ensure Māori trilingual interpreters are highly proficient in NZSL, English, and te reo Māori, although our guidelines for interpreters are available at: [justice.govt.nz/about/lawyers-and-service-providers/service-providers/interpreting-in-courts-and-tribunals/guidelines-for-interpreters](https://www.justice.govt.nz/about/lawyers-and-service-providers/service-providers/interpreting-in-courts-and-tribunals/guidelines-for-interpreters).

The Ministry has obligations under Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori 2016 (Māori Language Act 2016), the New Zealand Sign Language Act 2006, and relevant court rules to ensure both languages can be used in legal proceedings. To enhance access to justice for court participants, and to better meet its statutory obligations, the Ministry is developing a Quality Framework (the Framework) to ensure the interpreter service meets the needs of users by being delivered in a nationally consistent manner. The Framework will be used by interpreters, language service providers, court and tribunal staff, the judiciary, legal and justice sector professionals.

The Framework will set out the qualifications interpreters must hold or be working towards. This includes how to become a court-appointed interpreter, the code of conduct, court protocols, and how court and tribunal staff assess the need for an interpreter. Interpreters will be provided with the Framework and it will be the expectation that they will adhere to it. Once complete, the Ministry intends to publish the Framework on its website.

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 Ombudsman may be contacted by phone on 0800 802 602 or by email to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark Thomas

Acting Group Manager, Commissioning & Service Improvement