



Oranga Tamariki Update for Providers and Partners: COVID-19 edition #5

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Information for all providers

To try and make things easier for you, we are combining information for our partners from all parts of Oranga Tamariki and for the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) contracts we manage on their behalf, into this single update. This is to reduce the number of emails your organisation receives during this time. It is also because the people we usually communicate with directly on a particular service might not be working at this time.

The information in these updates might relate to our shared legislative responsibilities and might require your organisation to take certain steps in response. To ensure this happens, can you please make sure this information is passed on to all the relevant people within your organisation, so the necessary action can be taken. As always, if anything is unclear or you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact your PfO Advisor, contract or relationship manager.

Action: Please ensure all relevant people in your organisation see this update.

How can we help keep children safe?

We realise that the requirements of COVID-19 Alert Level 4 can put a lot of pressure on families. We want to make sure all tamariki and whānau are safe. We are hosting discussions and responding to questions related to these pressures on our Facebook page. Please check these out and share them with your communities.

[Oranga Tamariki Facebook page](#)

Also, have a look at the information and resources provided later in this update under the heading Your questions answered – Family Start.

How can we keep our people safe?

We continue to receive questions related to the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We are sourcing supplies for essential service providers now as they are the only organisations that will be undertaking face to face contact during COVID-19 Alert Level 4. We will be in touch with these providers directly with information on accessing and making use of the equipment they need.

We recognise that social sector organisations will continue to have questions around access to and the use of PPE as the COVID-19 alert levels reduce over time. In anticipation of this we are developing guidance specifically for organisations and people working in the social sector and we'll share that with you as soon as we can.

You can read the current advice on the Government's COVID-19 and the Ministry of Health websites.

[World Health Organization: Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) (PDF, 886 KB)

[Information for people undertaking physical or close contact jobs on the COVID-19 website](#)

[PPE guidance for community care providers A4 poster](#) (PDF, 201 KB)

[Putting on and taking off PPE A4 poster](#) (PDF, 439 KB)

Oranga Tamariki has also developed guidance for its own staff, sites and teams about how people can practice safely and appropriately during this time.

[COVID-19 information on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre](#)

What do I need to know about being a provider of social services at Alert Level 4?

We have updated information about being an 'essential or non-essential business' as part of the social sector on the MSD website.

[COVID-19 information for providers on the MSD website](#)

Please note that organisations do not need to be on the register if they deliver the essential services below, providing that they commit to operate within the COVID-19 guidelines:

- Providing or delivering food and other essential goods (e.g. food banks, food rescue, food parcels)
- Providing childcare services for essential workers (e.g. ECE, OSCAR)
- Providing regional services as part of a national organisation that is already on the list of essential service providers
- Whānau Ora providers who are already covered by the inclusion on the list of the Whānau Ora commissioning agencies

All providers of essential services need to follow the Government's guidance on the COVID-19 website.

[Information for essential workers on the COVID-19 website](#)

Who is providing essential services at this time?

You have been asking about who is delivering essential services at this time. In some cases, this is so that you can let the people you work with know where they can go for help. For others, you would like to see how you can work together with them during this time. You can find the list of registered essential social service providers on the MSD website.

[Register of social sector organisations providing essential services](#)

Do I need to provide reporting information on my contract at this time?

Oranga Tamariki, and the other government funders of social services, will not require reporting information to be submitted for the final quarter of the 2019/20 financial year (i.e. for April to June 2020) unless this information is required by legislation (e.g. court mandated services). We will be reviewing the requirement for end of year reporting (typically due in July).

However, Oranga Tamariki will still require Care Partners to report basic bednight information on a monthly basis (Child's name and number of nights provided). Regular incident reporting across our services including any issues and / or urgent or unplanned discharges will also still be required.

Social service providers are still expected to collect core business information (e.g. numbers of people supported etc.) during this period so that, as the situation returns to normal, data on service delivery can be brought together. This includes Transition Service providers collecting information on financial assistance provided to eligible young people.

This will enable us to understand the impact of COVID-19 on social service organisations and the people and communities they support. Some NGOs providing essential services will be approached about providing more frequent high-level reporting. This will ensure that trends in demand for essential services can be understood and responded to in a timely way. Please contact your relationship or contract manager if you are unsure about what this means for you.

[Information on how Government funding agencies are working with social sector organisations](#)

How is Tikanga Māori changing at this time?

Tikanga is changing across Aotearoa in response to COVID-19. The changes are being guided by iwi and hapū in each rohe. The Government has also provided guidance around Tikanga Māori and gatherings on the COVID-19 website.

[Information on Tikanga Māori and gatherings on the COVID-19 website](#)

What were the recent changes to rules around funerals and tangi?

The Government has changed the rules to allow people from the same self-isolation bubble as the deceased go to the funeral home and cemetery with the deceased, provided they are in the same region.

[Information about funerals and tangi on the COVID-19 website](#)

Your questions answered - Youth Justice partners

The big picture – why are we asking Youth Justice partners to keep on operating?

First and foremost, we need to keep our rangatahi and their whānau safe. We need to keep as much normality as possible for these whānau. Familiar faces and voices are essential. As well as this, we are trying hard to keep the numbers down in our Youth Justice Residences because our staff numbers there may reduce, our capacity may reduce and the fewer rangatahi we have together in custody, the better in terms of reducing COVID-19 risk. We are also having to maintain good isolation practices when we receive a new admission, so we need to create space to do that.

Which Youth Justice services are considered essential?

Youth Justice (YJ) services fall into the following Category 4 of the essential social services:

- Category 4: Crisis support for people who are unsafe (e.g. helplines, refuges and family violence crisis services including those funded by the Ministry of Justice, elder abuse services, foster carer support services, sexual violence crisis services, services for youth and their families who have statutory involvement with Youth Justice, other social services for people and families in crisis, including youth).

All YJ service providers that are contracted to deliver the above services are considered to be 'essential businesses'. This means that people working for these organisations can, in exceptional circumstances (e.g. immediate risk of harm), have face to face contact with rangatahi. However, it is expected that even essential services will minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers; ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place; and, restrict activity to only what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Why is it important that my organisation keeps in contact with rangatahi and whānau?

We need to keep "eyes on" contact with rangatahi as much as is possible. We anticipate there will be lots of facetimeing, phone calls, Skype etc. so that we keep the contact up as much as is practical. Keep face to face contacts to an absolute minimum and within safe distance guidelines. These should only be conducted where it is deemed absolutely necessary.

Whānau are going to feel the pressure at this time, and so we ask you to widen your scope and keep in contact with the whānau members supporting the rangatahi. Whānau contact calls are

probably going to be vital to keeping their rangatahi where they should be. They will need reassurance and they will need to discuss strategies. Most of all they will need a friendly ear on the phone or to see a friendly face via video call.

We still have statutory requirements and Court directions we need to adhere to. Contact and prescribed activity will look different, but we still need to try and stick to plans, directions and orders as best we can.

What kind of things can we do in the context of a level 4 lockdown?

Contact will need to be via phone, FaceTime, Skype etc. Face to face contact is not expected and should only be done when the provider deems it absolutely necessary.

Assisting virtually with activities that are home based. Writing apology letters, music 'jam' virtually with youth workers and other rangatahi, rangatahi helping with other siblings at home, virtually guiding them to cook a family meal, art projects, exercise logs that they can share with a group – making the most of 'at home' or innovative gym equipment.

Activities that focus on connection, helping at home, being kind. Talking through the lockdown protocols and staying at home. Rangatahi and whanau still need to know someone is on the other end of a phone if they need help.

Plans may need to change to reflect the new 'activities' that can be achieved. Connect in with the YJ allocated social workers (if they have one) or a duty YJ social worker. We are ensuring all YJ staff are reaching out to you also as part of their responsibilities to keep their rangatahi and the public safe.

Will we get new referrals during the lockdown?

Courts are still open for arrests and bail applications. If you haven't done so, please let your local YJ Managers know what capacity you are operating at and how many cases you can take on (bearing in mind the lack of contact). Family Group Conference timeframes will be flexible during this time. For many, you may not see any new referrals. However, there may be some for Supported Bail.

We need to keep as many rangatahi in their community as possible to avoid filling our YJ Residences. As essential services, we really need your help to continue doing what you can to help keep everyone safe and where possible, at home.

What information can we expect to come with a new referral?

This will be of particular interest to Supported Bail providers.

All oppositions to bail must have an Abridged Remand Options Investigation Tool completed to ensure only those who absolutely need to, will be remanded into custody. Judges will not conduct hearings without this tool being applied by Police and Oranga Tamariki at a minimum.

Due to this directive, you may see a few requests come to you. It doesn't mean you have to take them of course, just be prepared with your organisational response and help out where capacity allows. Some of you may be involved in completing the ROIT, and all providers can have access to this information (in addition to the usual referral information). If anyone wants to see the abridged ROIT and the practice guidance for it, let Catherine (email below) know.

OT is screening all rangatahi and new referrals for COVID 19 risk.

Who can I discuss ideas and stay in contact with during this time?

Please continue to stay in touch with your PfO Advisor and your local YJ Manager.

The National Office Youth Justice Services team are also still here to help and are available for any practice or operational guidance. Feel free to email Catherine Howard, Senior Advisor Youth Justice Services on catherine.howard@ot.govt.nz

Your questions answered – Family Start partners

This information is for partners to consider as they support whānau during COVID 19. Parenting and child development information is important to whānau as they look after their tamariki during this stressful time.

What are some key considerations when providing support?

- Whānau are unlikely to be used to all being together all day, every day, for several weeks.
- Tamariki have possibly been used to going to an early learning service, going out and about and mixing and playing with other tamariki and rangatahi.
- The change to everyone's lives and routines is significant and this is likely to increase stress, frustration, worry and lower levels of patience, tolerance and understanding
- This is a very different way for whānau workers to interact with whānau and requires some forward planning to help make each phone call useful.

How can we use the Parenting Resource website?

The Parenting Resource website has a wealth of information about stress – just key 'stress' into the search function and there are lots of resources listed for easy selection focusing on pregnancy and every age of tamariki.

[The Parenting Resource website](#)

Of relevance will be information about:

- Tamariki behaviour
- Stress – both adults and tamariki
- Setting and maintaining routines
- 'rupture and repair' for example Kiss and Make Up – session note 25-36 months
- And many more

When tamariki pick up on adult stress, they start to feel stressed too and may 'act out' or 'go inward', they may have lots of tantrums or revert to 'babyish' behaviours, their sleep can be disrupted and this just adds to the overall frustration and exhaustion being experienced by adults, the list is endless.

Having routines, balancing busy times with rest times, inside and outside time all help to manage the very different world that we are in – use the parent child activities listed in the Session Notes in each age and stage for ideas to cater for all of these different needs; the activities need minimal equipment or resource (quite often just an adult and a child); information, ideas and encouragement from the whānau worker can help make a difference in each and every home.

What ‘principles’ can help whānau now?

SKIP resources provide the foundation for all the content on the Parenting Resource website and if referred to will be the basis for many discussions over the next few weeks.

[The S.K.I.P. website](#)

The ‘six principles of effective discipline’ identifies clearly what children need and if whanau can keep these very simple needs in mind then life will be better for everyone:

- Te aroha me te mahana – love and warmth
- Te kōrero me te whakarongo – talking and listening
- Te ārahi me te māramatanga – guidance and understanding
- Te tūāpapa mō te tika me te hē – limits and boundaries
- Te mahi pono – ngā hua me ngā hapa – consistency and consequences
- Te hanga ao tōtika, ao haumaruru – structured and secure world

What other resources might be useful?

Take a look at the SKIP website where you can download the SKIP Tips app and Tiny Adventures app as your Family Start whānau may find these useful too.

Your questions answered – Care partners

I’ve heard that Oranga Tamariki is only visiting homes during the Alert Level 4 lockdown to do ‘critical assessments’. What does ‘critical’ mean in this context?

Oranga Tamariki has current information available about urgency and timeframes to complete safety and risk screening, and this is being overlaid with COVID-19 specific considerations. We are working to have additional guidance about COVID-19 specific considerations made available as soon possible through the Practice Centre.

[COVID-19 information on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre](#)

Please continue to check the Practice Centre for updates, and in the meantime if you have any specific questions please contact your PFO Advisor, contract or relationship manager, or use your other usual channels.

Is there more guidance we can provide to our caregivers?

Oranga Tamariki is regularly updating the information and guidance we are providing to our caregivers. You can access and draw on this information for your own purposes.

[COVID-19 information for caregivers on the Oranga Tamariki website](#)

Where can I get the most up to date information?

The COVID-19 information and guidance for the public, workers and different entities is being updated on a regular basis. This will continue to happen, including as the COVID-19 Alert Levels change over time and for different parts of the country.

We want you to have the most up to date and relevant information during this time and so we will be pointing you to the following sources of information in these updates and on our website.

For information relevant to all individuals, workers and entities in Aotearoa New Zealand, you should visit:

[The Government's COVID-19 website](#)

[Ministry of Health's information on COVID-19](#)

For information relevant to all welfare and social sector organisations, you should visit:

[COVID-19 information for providers on the MSD website](#)

For information that is specific to Oranga Tamariki funded services and for the MSD contracts we manage, you should visit:

[COVID-19 information for partners on the Oranga Tamariki website](#)

[COVID-19 information on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre](#)

[COVID-19 information for caregivers on the Oranga Tamariki website](#)

[Oranga Tamariki Facebook page](#)

We are working to make sure that information is consistent between these sources and that we are not duplicating information unnecessarily.