

08 August 2023

s9(2)(a)



Thank you for your request of 10 July 2023 to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*How the placement of child sex offenders is treated by Kāinga Ora*

Eligibility for public housing is decided by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) based on need. As a public housing landlord, our role is to provide housing to those determined by MSD to have the greatest housing need. This may include people who have a criminal background. All individuals with a criminal background are assessed by MSD for housing need, using the same criteria as other customers.

Kāinga Ora understands the important role housing plays to all aspects of a person's life, extending beyond simply providing shelter. Kāinga Ora sometimes houses people who have been released from prison. Having a suitable, stable home can have a positive effect on an offender's life, including undertaking programmes or accessing other supports, living an appropriate lifestyle and successfully reintegrating into the community.

A very small number of the people Kāinga Ora houses are child sex offenders who need somewhere to live upon release from prison, and may be under a Community Supervision Order. In these situations, Kāinga Ora does not make any placement decisions alone. When Kāinga Ora identifies a potential property, Corrections is responsible for completing risk assessments which consider the potential for reoffending and the safety of the community, and whether a potential property is suitable for the individual.

To enable this, we have an agreement with Corrections on the housing of child sex offenders, which ensures information is shared in a way that both assists offenders into appropriate housing and ensures public safety.

Before any placement decisions are made, Corrections complete a thorough risk assessment of a potential property and decide whether it is suitable for the individual being housed. Where a property is thought to be potentially suitable, we work with Corrections, including meeting at the property to determine the appropriateness of the property. When considering whether a property is suitable for a child sex offender, Corrections assess a range of factors. These include, but are not limited to – the location of victims, the property's proximity to schools, parks and places used by children, as well as physical factors such as shared access, proximity of neighbours and neighbourhood children.

In order for a placement decision to be made in these situations, a Probation Officer must confirm and sign off that they deem that the property is suitable. It is the responsibility of Corrections to decide whether to advise a community that a child sex offender is being housed and how to manage any response to this.

If you have any further concerns, I invite you to contact s9(2)(a) or contact the local office through the Customer Support Centre on 0800 801 601, or visiting our website page <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/contact-us/>.

Please note that Kāinga Ora proactively releases its responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request may be published at <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/publications/official-information-requests/>, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely



Nick Maling  
**General Manager - National Services**