



OMBUDSMAN
QUARTERLY
REVIEW
SPRING 2025

Issue Number 49

From the Chief Ombudsman

The power of the people

It takes courage to come forward.

I want to pay tribute to those people who take action when they see serious wrong-doing in the workplace.

In September, we published a 'final opinion' after a whistle-blower came to us for help under the [Protected Disclosures Act](#).

They were concerned about the failure of a hospital to carry out child safety checks before hiring contractors to work with children.

The checks are important because they are designed to protect children from harm and they are also required by law.

The whistle-blower's brave decision to make a protected disclosure about one hospital has led Health New Zealand to make changes across its whole system.

This case to me is an example of the power of people in our country being willing to speak up when they are concerned there may be serious wrong-doing occurring. I view it as a sign of a healthy democracy that the whistle-blower felt able to do so in this case. It is part of an increasing trend I am seeing in this area of work.

One of my goals is to get out into the community.

In August, I joined my engagement team in a visit to Hawkes Bay. We met with iwi, community groups and councils.

Many of their issues related to the recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle, which had such a devastating impact on the region in 2023.

I was able to get a perspective that I could not have obtained from my office in Wellington.

You can expect to see more of me around the country.

You may notice our OQR style has shifted to be more engaging with quick updates. We also now have a print version – these will now go out with our engagement team so more people can hear about the work going on in this office. If you have any feedback, please contact info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

John Allen



We met with Weave Hawkes Bay kaimahi, contractors, and volunteers, in Napier to help inform their work supporting over 2,500 individuals and whānau in the region.



Learning about some of the issues and concerns facing the Hawkes Bay's Pasifika community.



Our Disability Rights Team were at the Disability Connect transition expo last month to promote our services and resources to Deaf and disabled school leavers.



Our team with some of Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga's managers in Hastings.



Delegations of Ministers and MPs from Papua New Guinea and Bougainville visited in August to learn more about our role, particularly during elections.



Nineteen investigators from eight offices took part in a regional workshop in the Cook Islands, that we co-hosted in June.

Upcoming events

We are steadily working our way around the motu. Find out where we will be next by following us on [Facebook](#)

Whistle-blower prompts stronger safety checks for adults working with children



A decision by a whistle-blower to go to the Ombudsman has led Health New Zealand to strengthen nationwide safety checks on employees and contractors working with children.

They raised concerns with the Ombudsman that child safety checks for contractors, including police vetting, had not been carried out for some years at the hospital where they worked.

Following our investigation, Health NZ agreed to update its processes across the country to make sure children are protected.

[Read](#)[Watch](#)

New Ombudsman resources for Deaf or disabled New Zealanders



Finding out what we do, and how to make a complaint, is now more accessible to more people with our latest NZ Sign Language video, audio recording, and brochures in different formats.

Watch

Listen

Read



Official information guide for care or custody providers

A new guide sets out the out what care or custody providers 'need to know' about their legal obligations under the [OIA](#).

Read



Official information practices in local government organisations

Read about [LGOIMA](#) practices in four councils and council-controlled organisations in Auckland, Wellington, Marlborough and Queenstown.

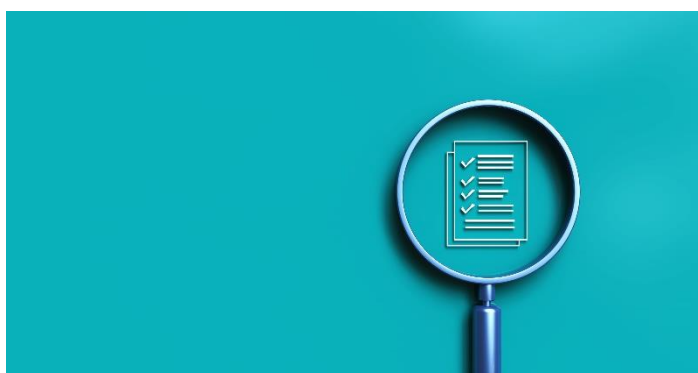
[Read](#)



New official information assessment tool for councils

Assess your organisation's LGOIMA compliance and practice with our new, free online tool.

[Read](#)



Access to government information more important

We marked International Right to Know Day by releasing our latest annual survey results.

[Read](#)



HRC's interpretation of sex discrimination not unreasonable

The Human Rights Commission did not act unreasonably when it refused to delete text from a public statement explaining that it interpreted sex discrimination in the [Human Rights Act](#) to include gender identity.

[Read](#)



Latest guidance on ex gratia payments

All organisations should have processes for making ex gratia payments and apologies, in case things go wrong. Our latest guide can help you prepare.

[Read](#)

More news

Keep up to date with all our news.

[Read](#)

More resources

See all our guides, training modules, case notes, and other resources.

[Read](#)

Please also check out our social media channels for the latest news updates



04 473 9533



info@ombudsman.parliament.nz



www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

 **Ombudsman**
Kaitiaki Mana Tangata

Tuia kia ōrite · Fairness for all