

Cluster Overview

Justice Sector

The Justice Sector is made up of six core agencies: New Zealand Police, Ministry of Justice, Department of Corrections, Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children, Crown Law Office, and Serious Fraud Office. The Justice Sector is complex and interconnected. Seemingly isolated changes made in one part of the criminal justice system can have a big impact on other parts of the system. Justice Sector agencies must work together to ensure positive system impacts are achieved.

Justice Sector Ministers and Government Targets

Ministers whose core agencies are in the Justice Sector are part of the Justice Sector Ministers grouping. Collectively, Justice Sector Ministers contribute to setting the direction for the whole justice system, with access to the levers of the six Justice Sector agencies.

To deliver on its election promise to get New Zealand back on track, the Government has set nine targets to help improve the lives of New Zealanders. Two of these targets support the Government's aim to restore public confidence in law and order:

- **Reduced child and youth offending:** 15% reduction in the total number of children and young people with serious and persistent offending behaviour. Currently there are the 1,100 children and young people with serious and persistent offending behaviour.
- **Reduced violent crime:** 20,000 fewer people who are victims of an assault, robbery, assault, or sexual assault. Currently around 185,000 people, or 4.4 percent of the population, are victims of an assault, robbery of sexual assault.

People should be safe in their homes and communities, and public safety needs to be at the core of the criminal justice system. The Government is moving to put in place tougher sentences for young offenders and gangs, and get more Police on our streets. However, to achieve the Government targets to reduce criminal offending, the underlying drivers of crime must also be addressed, and the Justice Sector is working with the wider social sector on initiatives to do this.

In addition to the Government targets on law and order, Justice Sector Ministers are also focused on improving the performance of the justice system. Justice Sector agencies are working with the judiciary on coordinated actions to achieve improved court timeliness.

Justice Cluster

The previous Government established two clusters in the lead up to Budget 2022 as part of the work programme to modernise New Zealand's public finance system. The Justice Cluster is made up of Justice Sector agencies excluding Oranga Tamariki. The Justice Cluster pilot builds on existing sector collaboration, under the leadership of the Justice Sector Leadership Board.

The Board comprises the Chief Executives of all five Justice Cluster agencies, and Oranga Tamariki. Established in 2011, the Board aims to increase collaboration on system-wide issues and govern significant cross-agency work programmes. The Board is supported by two Justice Sector Executive Committees focused on Strategic Investment and Operations. Membership of the Committees includes Deputy Chief Executives from across the Sector agencies.

Cluster Delegations

Cluster Ministers have been delegated authority, agreed by Cabinet, to approve fiscally neutral changes for the retention and use of departmental underspends up to a prescribed limit; reprioritisation of departmental operating funding; and shifting the timing of operating baseline and general contingency funding.

Estimates Volumes

The Justice Sector volume of the Estimates groups the Cluster Votes together immediately after this Sector Overview, followed by a non-cluster Vote (Vote Parliamentary Counsel). Vote and appropriation structures have not changed, and accountabilities for appropriations and delivery still sit with the relevant appropriation Ministers and agencies.

How the Cluster will Monitor and Report on Performance

Cluster Ministers under the previous Government identified four key priority areas: Better outcomes for victims; Addressing issues with remand; Improved access to justice; and Better enabled organisations and workforce.

Cluster agencies will report on the initiatives they are delivering to support the Cluster priorities in their 2024/2025 Annual Reports.

Future performance reporting will need to align with the current Government's priorities for the Justice Sector. As the Justice Cluster approach is adapted to better fit the current environment, a key consideration will be ensuring the continuation of improved monitoring and reporting for the Justice Cluster.