

The Treasury

Budget 2026 Information Release

September 2026

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Information Withheld

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified.

Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to sections of the Act under which information has been withheld:

- [1] 6(a) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the government
- [2] 6(b)(i) - to avoid prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government
- [4] 6(c) - to avoid prejudice to the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation, and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial
- [7] 6(e)(ii) - to prevent serious damage to the economy of New Zealand by disclosing prematurely decisions to change or continue government economic or financial policies relating to the regulation of banking or credit
- [12] 7(a)(i) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the self-governing State of the Cook Islands
- [13] 7(a)(ii) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the self-governing State of Niue
- [14] 7(a)(iii) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of Tokelau
- [15] 7(a)(iv) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the Ross Dependency
- [23] 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people
- [25] 9(2)(b)(ii) - to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information or who is the subject of the information
- [26] 9(2)(ba)(i) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied
- [27] 9(2)(ba)(ii) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest

- [31] 9(2)(f)(ii) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting collective and individual ministerial responsibility
- [33] 9(2)(f)(iv) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by ministers and officials
- [34] 9(2)(g)(i) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions
- [35] 9(2)(g)(ii) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through protecting ministers, members of government organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment;
- [36] 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege
- [37] 9(2)(i) - to enable the Crown to carry out commercial activities without disadvantage or prejudice
- [38] 9(2)(j) - to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice
- [39] 9(2)(k) - to prevent the disclosure of official information for improper gain or improper advantage
- [40] 18(c)(i) - that the making available of the information requested would be contrary to the provisions of a specified enactment
- [41] 18(d) - information requested is or will soon be publicly available

Where information has been withheld, a numbered reference to the applicable section of the Act has been made, as listed above. For example, a [23] appearing where information has been withheld in a release document refers to section 9(2)(a).

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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Budget 2026 Package: Vote Courts (Technical Initiatives)

On 7 May 2026, Cabinet:

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

- 1 **approved** the Budget initiatives for the above Vote for inclusion in the 2026 Budget package, as listed in the summary table below and detailed in the attached initiative documents:

Summary of technical initiatives:

Operating Initiatives (Impact on Operating Balance)

Initiative ID	Initiative Name	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
17538	Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Support Online Safety and Digital Wellbeing	(0.500)	-	-	-	-
17537	Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Manage Legal Aid Cost Pressures	(10.000)	-	-	-	-
17379	International Development Cooperation Funding for Phase Two of the Pacific Justice Sector Programme	-	-	-	-	-^
17420	Expense Transfer to Support Seismic Strengthening of Hamilton District Court and Wellington High Court	(0.400)	-	-	0.400	-
Total Operating		(10.900)	2.950	2.950	3.350	2.950

^ has irregular outyears

Diana Hawker
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

Vote: Courts

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

Title: Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Support Online Safety and Digital Wellbeing

Description: This initiative decreases the District Court Services category of a Vote Courts appropriation by \$0.500 million in 2025/26 to manage a one-off cost pressure in Vote Justice associated with online safety and digital wellbeing.

Appropriation Changes

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Operating Balance Impact*	(0.500)	-	-	-	-
Net Core Crown Debt Impact Only	-	-	-	-	-
No Impact	-	-	-	-	-
Total	(0.500)	-	-	-	-

* Unless non-cash, will also impact net core Crown debt.

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)					
<i>Departmental Output Expenses:</i>					
District Court Services (funded by revenue Crown)	(0.500)	-	-	-	-
Total Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)	(0.500)	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	(0.500)	-	-	-	-

Additional Recommendation

2 **noted** that this initiative relates to Initiative 17348 in Vote Justice;

Vote: Courts

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

Title: Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Manage Legal Aid Cost Pressures

Description: This initiative decreases appropriations in Vote Courts by \$10.000 million in 2025/26 to manage Legal Aid cost pressures in Vote Justice.

Appropriation Changes

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Operating Balance Impact*	(10.000)	-	-	-	-
Net Core Crown Debt Impact Only	-	-	-	-	-
No Impact	-	-	-	-	-
Total	(10.000)	-	-	-	-

* Unless non-cash, will also impact net core Crown debt.

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Non-Departmental Other Expenses:					
Court and Coroner Related Costs	(8.500)	-	-	-	-
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)					
<i>Departmental Output Expenses:</i>					
District Court Services (funded by revenue Crown)	(1.500)	-	-	-	-
Total Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)	(1.500)	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	(10.000)	-	-	-	-

Additional Recommendation

3 **noted** that this initiative relates to Initiative 17377 in Vote Justice;

Vote: Courts

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

Title: International Development Cooperation Funding for Phase Two of the Pacific Justice Sector Programme

Description: This initiative provides funding from the Vote Foreign Affairs International Development Cooperation appropriation for the delivery of Phase Two of the Pacific Justice Sector Programme through Te Kura Kaiwhakawā, the Institute of Judicial Studies.

Appropriation Changes

	Sm - increase/(decrease)					
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Operating Balance Impact*	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Core Crown Debt Impact Only	-	-	-	-	-	-
No Impact	-	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Unless non-cash, will also impact net core Crown debt.

	Sm - increase/(decrease)					
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:						
Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)						
<i>Departmental Output Expenses:</i>						
New Zealand Support of International Jurisdictions (funded by revenue department)	-	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950
Total Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)	-	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950
Total Operating	-	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950	2.950

Vote: Courts

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

Title: Expense Transfer to Support Seismic Strengthening of Hamilton District Court and Wellington High Court

Description: This initiative transfers funding for the Hamilton District Court Seismic Strengthening Project from 2025/26 to 2028/29. It also seeks an in-principle expense transfer of up to \$5.700 million for Seismic Strengthening of Hamilton District Court and Wellington High Court. The transfers are required due to project delays of one year.

Appropriation Changes

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Operating Balance Impact*	(0.400)	-	-	0.400	-
Net Core Crown Debt Impact Only	-	-	-	-	-
No Impact	-	-	-	-	-
Total	(0.400)	-	-	0.400	-

* Unless non-cash, will also impact net core Crown debt.

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)					
<i>Departmental Output Expenses:</i>					
District Court Services (funded by revenue Crown)	(0.400)	-	-	0.400	-
Total Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Courts, Tribunals and Other Authorities Services, including the Collection and Enforcement of Fines and Civil Debts Services (MCA)	(0.400)	-	-	0.400	-
Total Operating	(0.400)	-	-	0.400	-

Additional Recommendation

- authorised** the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Courts jointly to transfer up to \$5.700 million from 2025/26 to 2028/29 in the appropriation above, following completion of the Ministry of Justice's 2025/26 audited financial statements, with no impact on the operating balance and/or net core Crown debt across the forecast period.