

The Treasury

Budget 2026 Information Release

September 2026

This document has been proactively released and is available on:

- The Budget website from September 2026 to May 2027 only at: <https://budget.govt.nz/information-release/2026>, and on
- The Treasury website from later in 2026 at: <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/budgets/budget-2026-information-release>

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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Hon Nicola Willis

Minister of Finance
Minister for Economic Growth
Minister for Social Investment

15 DEC 2025

Hon Erica Stanford
Minister of Education
Parliament Buildings



Hon Brooke van Velden
Minister of Internal Affairs
Parliament Buildings

Dear Erica and Brooke

Thank you for your letter, Erica, of 8 December 2025 requesting an invitation into Budget 2026 for reducing the risk of online harm to children, and for your recent engagement, Brooke, on this matter.

I have agreed to invite this initiative for assessment in the Budget 2026 process. This initiative will be considered as part of the wider Budget 2026 process, and as with all new spending, this invitation is not a guarantee of funding.

As you are aware, Budget 2026 is taking place in a tight fiscal environment, and it is crucial that we continue to maintain fiscal discipline. As such, the threshold for new spending is particularly high, with a strong focus on value for money and consideration of funding initiatives that cannot be deferred to future Budgets. I expect you to work together to identify savings to offset the cost of this new spend in the first instance, noting that our Government is committed to delivering a leaner, efficient public service by focusing resources where they deliver the greatest value. For completeness, I do not expect this initiative to be funded from the Education envelope for Budget 2026.

Your submission must also comply with the general requirements set out in my letter of 4 November 2025. In the interests of time, I ask that the Department of Internal Affairs in the first instance submits a placeholder initiative, including indicative figures, into the Treasury's system by 1pm Friday, 19 December. I expect the Department of Internal Affairs will then submit further costings, analysis and details to the Treasury by 1pm Tuesday, 20 January 2026 to inform the Treasury's budget bid assessment process.

I look forward to receiving your submission and thank you in advance for your work progressing this initiative.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Willis'.

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister of Finance

Cc Ellen MacGregor-Reid, Secretary and Chief Executive, Ministry of Education
Paul James, Secretary and Chief Executive, Department of Internal Affairs