



Listening, learning, changing
Mā Whakarongo me Ako ka huri te tai
Crown Response to the Abuse in Care Inquiry

Implementation plan to deliver an enhanced redress system for survivors of abuse and neglect in State care

August 2025

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Introduction

On 9 May 2025 the Government announced improvements to the redress system for abuse and neglect in State care in response to the Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry.

This implementation plan describes the Crown response work programme to improve redress for survivors of abuse in State care.

Survivors accessing redress have a range of options. They can:

- Access their care records
- Ask questions about their time in care
- Talk to someone about their experiences, including the option of talking to a survivor-led service
- Request a monetary payment
- Receive wellbeing support
- Receive a personalised apology
- Request legal services support.

This plan sets out a range of changes to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve redress offerings and increase alignments and consistency across the system
- Timely resolution of redress claims
- Improve access to and navigation of redress services, including support services and access to care records
- Improve trust and confidence in the redress system.

The changes will be delivered by:

- Crown Response Office
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Social Development
- Oranga Tamariki
- Te Puni Kōkiri
- Department of Corrections.

How we will implement these redress system changes

This plan describes the work required to implement the redress improvements. This ranges from analysis to design through to implementation.

The focus is to introduce changes for survivors of abuse and neglect in care as quickly as possible. Implementation is not a one-off event, but an ongoing process of learning, adapting, and refining over time. This approach ensures the system remains dynamic and responsive, supporting better outcomes and increasing trust in the process. It also reflects our commitment to accountability and doing what works, especially when responding to complex needs and experiences.

As changes are implemented, data and feedback from those engaging with the redress system will be gathered to understand the impact of the changes, what is working well and where further improvements are required.

Consequently, this plan is a living document that will be updated regularly.

To stay informed about progress you can sign up to receive updates from the Crown Response Office: contact@abuseinquiryresponse.govt.nz with Pānui/Newsletter in the subject line or visit: www.abuseinquiryresponse.govt.nz

Overview

The Royal Commission found that State redress processes did not offer meaningful redress to survivors and were fragmented and slow. It recommended changes were needed to reduce delays, remove inconsistencies and make it easier and simpler for survivors to navigate. Survivors were concerned processes run in-house by the Crown or care agencies had no independent oversight and decision-making lacks transparency or consistent standards, making outcomes unpredictable and frustrating.

Survivors are seeking a redress system that offers compassionate support, help accessing records, legal support, wellbeing services, financial recognition, and someone to walk alongside them throughout the process.

Benefits for survivors

Government is taking a phased approach to improving redress with an initial focus on the state system. Implementation of the initiatives described in the plan will:

- Improve redress offerings, remove inconsistencies and address concerns about the adequacy of settlement payments and quality of apologies.
- Reduce complexity and delays in receiving redress by increasing system capacity and focusing assessment processes on its core purpose of redress for abuse and neglect in care.
- Bring State redress processes together, operating as one cohesive and consistent system with a single entry point and joined-up redress process. This approach will mean that survivors receive a coordinated response irrespective of which State agency they were placed in care.

- Clear, transparent and consistent policies will guide the delivery of redress to all survivors of abuse and neglect in State care.
- Introduce system level monitoring and reporting that incorporates survivor insights and alternative mechanisms to seek review of settlement offers by an independent third party to provide assurance to survivors that the settlement offer is aligned with the new common payment framework.

The success in delivering these improvements for survivors will be considered as part of the independent review undertaken in 2027. The review will inform further decisions about changes that may be required to address survivors concerns about the provision of redress by State agencies.

How we are organised to deliver

Overseen by the Crown Response Chief Executives Group, responsible agencies have put in place a range of mechanisms to ensure joined up delivery and implementation of improvements.

Survivor feedback will inform the impact of the improvements as they are rolled out and inform deliverables, such as the development of support offerings [see page 10].

The Lead Coordination Minister and other relevant Ministers will also be provided advice on the monitoring and oversight of the implementation plan by the Crown Response Ministerial Advisory Group of survivors, advocates, including those with an understanding of care settings. The members of this group are:

1. Alana Ruakere (Chair)
2. Gary Williams KSO MNZM
3. Dr Valerie Tan JP
4. Paul Gibson QSO
5. Helen Leahy
6. David Crichton
7. Frances Tagaloa KSO
8. Linda Surtees MNZM

How to read this document

Each objective is set out in separate sections with a consistent approach in reporting against:

The problem the objective is addressing

The benefits for survivors

What is being delivered to achieve the objective – initiatives, milestones, timeframes and status.

The timeframes are based on financial quarters. For example, January – March, April – June, July – September, October – December.

Definition of the “status”

☐ NOT STARTED

Work on the key milestone has not yet started

☒ UNDER WAY

Work has begun on the key milestone

☒ COMPLETE

A key milestone has been completed

How to read the Key deliverables

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
Improving personal apologies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">••• <div>Key deliverables</div>	<div>Key milestones</div>	JUL 25 – SEP 25	<div><div></div></div> UNDER WAY
		OCT 25 – DEC 25	<div><div></div></div> NOT STARTED
		JAN 26 – MAR 26	<div><div></div></div> COMPLETE

Timeframes for implementation

Status

OBJECTIVE ONE:

**Improve redress offerings
and increase alignment and
consistency across the system**

OBJECTIVE ONE:
Improve redress offerings
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consistency across the system

OBJECTIVE TWO:
Timely resolution of
Redress claims

OBJECTIVE THREE:
Improving access to and
navigation of redress services

OBJECTIVE FOUR:
Increase trust and confidence
in the redress system

The problem this objective addresses

The Royal Commission found the redress offerings of the current system do not meet the needs of survivors. In particular:

- Concerns by survivors that financial redress is insufficient
- Inconsistencies leading to survivors having different experiences of redress
 - in some cases similar experiences of abuse and/or neglect receiving different financial recognition
 - different levels of support depending on which redress agency they engaged with
- Apologies fail to meaningfully acknowledge and apologise for the abuse, harm and neglect suffered and are seen as hollow without simultaneous system reform.

Identified benefits for survivors

The initiatives under this objective focus on improving redress offerings to ensure survivors have a consistent experience irrespective of which State agency is responsible for their care. These initiatives recognise the importance of financial recognition, wellbeing support, records access and apologies to survivors and focus on enhancements to address the concerns raised by survivors.

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Key deliverables

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
Improve personal apologies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A common apologies policy for the State redress system which delivers on Cabinet’s agreed purpose and explains how the personal apologies process is responsive to survivor needs• Apology legislative change to support redress agencies to make more meaningful personal apologies	Enact legislation to enable more meaningful personal apologies	JUL 25 – JUN 26	<div><div></div></div> UNDER WAY
	Develop and implement a common apologies policy	JUL 26 – SEP 26	<div><div></div></div> NOT STARTED
Increase settlement payments			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase settlement payments to survivors to reflect the new system average of \$30,000	Interim approach to adjust settlement payments in place from 9 May 2025	APRIL 25 – JUN 25	<div><div></div></div> COMPLETE
	Final approach will be implemented as part of the common payment framework	JUL 25 – DEC 25	<div><div></div></div> UNDER WAY
Common payment framework			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A transparent framework to guide decision making on the amount of individual financial offers for all State redress agencies• Provide assurance around consistent application of the framework across redress agencies	Develop high level design and framework principles, then implement the framework	JUL 25 – DEC 25	<div><div></div></div> UNDER WAY

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Key deliverables *continued*

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
Top-up payments for survivors with closed claims			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A process for survivors with closed claims to receive top-up payments	Website, phonline and standalone team in place to receive and process requests for top-up payments from 9 May 2025.	APRIL 25 – JUN 25	● COMPLETE
	Survivors with closed claims register for top-up payments, are assessed and receive a top-up payment.	JUN 25 – JUN 27	◐ UNDER WAY
Consistent support offerings			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A consistent approach to support offerings for survivors engaging in the redress process offered by all redress agenciesIncorporate survivor feedback, including feedback from the Ministerial Advisory Group and the Survivor Experiences Service, in the development and delivery of support offerings	Phase 1 – Initial changes to support offerings to improve consistency	JUL 25 – DEC 25	◐ UNDER WAY
	Phase 2 – Stakeholder engagement, design and implementation of final approach to achieve improved and consistent support offerings	OCT 25 – JUN 26	○ NOT STARTED

OBJECTIVE TWO:

**Timely resolution
of Redress claims**

<p>OBJECTIVE ONE:</p> <p>Improve redress offerings and increase alignment and consistency across the system</p>	<p>OBJECTIVE TWO:</p> <p>Timely resolution of Redress claims</p>	<p>OBJECTIVE THREE:</p> <p>Improving access to and navigation of redress services</p>	<p>OBJECTIVE FOUR:</p> <p>Increase trust and confidence in the redress system</p>
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The problem this objective addresses

Over time the number of new redress claims received has exceeded the number of claims that could be resolved each year. A backlog of over 3,000 open unresolved claims has built up with the Ministries of Social Development and Education, resulting in wait times of up to five years to process claims. Although agencies prioritise claims for claimants who are terminally ill or elderly, delays in the provision of redress compounds the harm already experienced by survivors. Timely, transparent, and compassionate handling of redress claims is essential.

Identified benefits for survivors

Given the backlog of current redress claims and considering analysis of current and projected demand, in November 2024 the Government increased the redress system’s capacity to resolve claims with further increases from July 2026, these are described on page 13. This will increase annual system capacity in the medium term. Enhancements will also be made to existing processes to create further system efficiencies. The Royal Commission highlighted the challenges in estimating the number of survivors abused in care who are yet to come forward and what the potential future demand will be with redress. This makes it challenging to forecast what future capacity may be required. The independent review in 2027 will enable the Government to review current capacity of the system, data about new claims made, and consider whether further increases are required to continue to address concerns about delays in redress.






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Streamline assessment processes – removal of practice failures			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Changes to Ministries of Social Development and Education assessment processes to focus on allegations of abuse and neglect, including practice failures by staff that led to abuse or neglect occurringDiscontinue assessment of allegations of failures by staff that did not lead to abuse or neglect	Develop and implement changes to assessment processes	JUL 25 – DEC 25 Implementation will be aligned to the introduction of the common payment framework	 UNDER WAY
Increase in system capacity			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete a minimum of 1550 settlement offers made in 2025/26	Settlement Offers made to at least 1550 survivors	JUL 25 – JUN 26	 UNDER WAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete a minimum of 2000 settlement offers made in 2026/27	Settlement Offers made to at least 2000 survivors	JUL 26 – JUN 27	 NOT STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete a minimum of 2150 settlement offers made in 2027/28	Settlement Offers made to at least 2150 survivors	JUL 27 – JUN 28	 NOT STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase the capacity of the system to provide survivors with timely access to their care records	Sufficient resource in place to respond to records requests within legislated timeframes	JUL 25 – JUN 27	 UNDER WAY

OBJECTIVE THREE:

**Improving access
to and navigation
of redress services**

OBJECTIVE ONE: Improve redress offerings and increase alignment and consistency across the system	OBJECTIVE TWO: Timely resolution of Redress claims	OBJECTIVE THREE: Improving access to and navigation of redress services	OBJECTIVE FOUR: Increase trust and confidence in the redress system
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The problem this objective addresses

The Royal Commission highlighted the challenges for survivors navigating the State redress system with multiple agencies operating different procedures. Navigation of the system was confusing for survivors and required repeated intake and retelling of trauma for survivors who experienced abuse and neglect in the care of multiple agencies. Concerns about consistent approaches across redress agencies compound these issues for survivors making the system feel unpredictable and frustrating.

Identified benefits for survivors

These initiatives bring the State redress systems together to ensure survivors receive a joined-up and consistent service irrespective of which State agency they were in the care of. A single entry point and joined-up response will remove the need for survivors to seek redress from multiple agencies. Instead their redress will be managed with one point of contact. A single set of policies for all agencies will be developed and published online for survivors to understand how decisions on their redress are made.

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Key deliverables

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
Joined-up redress system with one set of common policies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A joined-up and consistent approach to deliver redress, underpinned by a single set of policies• Clear explanations that identify where differences remain and the rationale for these	Analyse current approach and confirm prioritisation plan to deliver one set of common policies	<p>JUL 25 – JUN 26</p> <p>Polices will be developed and implemented as prioritised</p> <p>Implementation completed to align with the go-live of single-entry point and integrated operating model</p>	<div><div></div> UNDER WAY</div>
Integrated operating model and single-entry point to State redress system			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single redress system website for survivors accessing redress	New website procured and content developed	<p>OCT 25 – DEC 25</p> <p>Initial version published</p>	<div><div></div> UNDER WAY</div>
	Ongoing development and enhancement of website as and when initiatives are implemented	ONGOING	<div><div></div> NOT STARTED</div>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A single redress management system that supports a joined-up approach to responding to redress claims and monitoring the system whilst managing individuals’ privacy	Analyse the current redress management process. Identify and implement the most suitable redress claims management system (including system testing, data migration and staff training)	<p>JUL 25 – JUN 26</p> <p>Go-live of new redress claims management system will be aligned with the go-live of single-entry point and integrated operating model</p>	<div><div></div> UNDER WAY</div>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information sharing agreements to support delivering of a joined-up redress system whilst appropriately managing individuals’ privacy	Draft and implement a Privacy Impact Assessment and Information Sharing MoU to support an integrated operating model and a single entry point for survivors	<p>JUL 25 – JUN 26</p> <p>Completed in parallel with the development of the integrated operating model and redress claims management system</p>	<div><div></div> NOT STARTED</div>

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Key deliverables *continued*

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
Integrated operating model and single-entry point to State Redress system <i>continued</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A single team, with a single phonenumber and email, to support survivors seeking to register a claim and answer questions about the redress process• New integrated operating model that supports joined-up service delivery	Design and implement an Integrated Operating Model and Single entry point	JUL 25 – JUN 26 Completed and implemented in parallel with development of the claims management system	 UNDER WAY
Simple application process			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent tools and guidance to support survivors to register for redress	Analyse current application process, design, develop and implement a new and improved application process	JUL 25 – JUN 26 Go-live will be aligned to implement the single-entry point and integrated operating model. Early establishment of some aspects if possible	 UNDER WAY
Integration of Te Puni Kōkiri and Corrections claims			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approach to assessing and responding to a small number of claims made to Te Puni Kōkiri and Corrections¹• Agency roles and responsibilities confirmed	Integration of Te Puni Kōkiri and Corrections into redress processes	OCT 25 – JUN 26 Go-live will be aligned to implementation of the single-entry point and integrated operating model. Early establishment of some aspects if possible	 NOT STARTED

¹ Te Puni Kōkiri has received claims relating to Whakapakari Youth Programme on Great Barrier and Matua Whāngai Programme. Department of Corrections has received claims relating to historic abuse at youth penal institutions.



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Key deliverables *continued*

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
One point of contact and one redress claim for each survivor			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Processes for the identification and management of redress for survivors who have had care experiences involving multiple agencies, including clear roles and responsibilitiesAgreed approach to develop settlement offers for claims involving multiple agencies	Design and implement processes and policies to support one point of contact and one redress claim for each survivor	JUL 25 – JUN 26 Go-live will be aligned to implementation of the single-entry point and integrated operating model. Early establishment of some aspects if possible	 UNDER WAY
Common Legal framework			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A framework with clear and consistent parameters around what legal costs will be covered by the Crown	Design and implement legal framework	JAN 26 – JUN 26	 NOT STARTED

OBJECTIVE FOUR:

**Increase trust and
confidence in the
redress system**

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The problem this objective addresses

State claims processes are managed by the same institutions that were responsible or have agreed care responsibility. The harm experienced by survivors within these institutions has resulted in low trust and concerns about the integrity of claims outcomes. At present, survivors seeking to challenge settlement decisions outside of redress agency review processes must go through lengthy, resource-intensive processes, creating barriers to timely and fair resolutions. Lack of system wide reporting limits the ability of survivors and the public to understand how the redress system is performing.

Identified benefits for survivors

Trust and confidence in the redress system by survivors will be enhanced through: the introduction of a new independent review process, outside of redress agencies, where survivors with concerns about their settlement offer can seek an independent view of their offer and how this aligns with the approved payment framework, implementing publicly available system wide monitoring and reporting; appointing an independent Redress Officer to ensure financial payments are not made to survivors with serious violent and sexual offences for whom making such a payment would bring the system into disrepute.

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Key deliverables

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
Independent review function for survivors who are unhappy with redress payment being offered			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A new independent review function outside of redress agencies where survivors who are unhappy with the outcome of their claim can seek a review before accepting a settlement offer	Design and implement, the independent review function and appoint reviewer	OCT 25 – JUN 26	<div></div> NOT STARTED
Common monitoring and reporting framework			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A common performance and reporting framework, incorporating survivor insights on their experience seeking redress	Design and implement a common performance and reporting framework	OCT 25 – JUN 26 Go-live will be aligned to implementation of the single-entry point and integrated operating model. Early establishment of some aspects if possible	<div></div> NOT STARTED
Independent Redress Officer to consider redress for survivors with convictions for serious violence and sexual offences			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A process to identify and prevent a financial payment for redress for abuse and neglect in State care to survivors with serious violent and sexual offences unless a decision is made by an independent decision maker that making such a payment would not bring the redress system into disrepute	Design and implement a process to identify survivors with new claims who have serious violent and sexual offences	JUL 25 – SEP 25	<div><div></div></div> UNDER WAY
	Develop and enact legislation supporting appointment of independent decision maker	JUL 25 – JUN 26	<div><div></div></div> UNDER WAY
	Appoint independent decision maker	JUL 26 – SEP 26	<div></div> NOT STARTED
	Consideration of applications from survivors with serious violent and sexual offences by independent decision maker begins	JUL 26 – SEP 26	<div></div> NOT STARTED

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Key deliverables *continued*

Initiative	Key milestone and timeframe for implementation		Status
Review of system changes in 2027			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Independent review of the impact of the system changes outlined in this plan	Develop and approve Terms of Reference and appointment of independent reviewers	BY MARCH 2027	<input type="radio"/> NOT STARTED
	Complete independent review	OCTOBER 2027	<input type="radio"/> NOT STARTED



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