

ALLEGATION SUPPORT

PERMANENCY CAREGIVERS INFORMATION SHEET



Caring Families
AOTEAROA

We know going through an investigation can be very stressful. Our aim is to ensure that you never feel alone throughout this process and you have as much information as possible so you are able to make informed decisions.

When you contact Caring Families Aotearoa for support through the investigation process you can expect us to:

- Explain the investigation process including answering any questions you have.
- Assign a critical support worker to support you until the investigation is completed.
- Provide information and support to enable you to make decisions and guide you through each step of the investigation process.
- Maintain the highest level of confidentiality.
- Help you prepare for any meetings or interviews and we can attend these with you as a support person.
- Make referral to a Lawyer if legal advice is required.
- Communicate with Oranga Tamariki and other key people to ensure policy, during the investigation, is followed.
- Offer independent and unbiased information in a professional manner.
- Be non-judgemental.

PLEASE REMEMBER: You have the right to have a Support Person of your choice with you in ALL dealings with Oranga Tamariki. You also have a right to have an Interpreter if you require.



THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS

1. Oranga Tamariki will provide you with information about the support you can receive from Caring Families Aotearoa and ensure you have time to contact them before they interview you.
Call: 0800 693 278 or
email: criticalsupport@caringfamilies.org.nz
2. Oranga Tamariki must ensure you have the opportunity to have a support person with you when they tell you about the allegations (this can be

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your critical support worker from Caring Families Aotearoa).

3. Oranga Tamariki must provide you with detailed and specific information about the allegation (unless the police have asked them not to share these details with you).
4. A social worker will carry out the investigation into the report of concern received by Oranga Tamariki.
5. Oranga Tamariki will consider the immediate safety and well-being of the tamariki in your home and will decide whether the tamariki will remain in your care during the investigation.
A plan must be developed and implemented to ensure the immediate safety of the tamariki in your care.

Wherever it is safe to do so, Oranga Tamariki must support, strengthen and assist the whānau to care for their tamariki and prevent the need for them to be moved to an alternative living arrangement. Oranga Tamariki must always consider the potential impact the decision to move tamariki could have on their stability, sense of belonging and significant connections, including sibling relationships.

6. If tamariki are moved from your care then a plan must be considered for contact to occur during the investigation. Any contact must be in the best interests of the tamariki. If Oranga Tamariki determine that contact should not occur, they must record their reason for this.
7. The investigating social workers will interview you about the allegations, you are entitled to have a support person with you of your choice – this could be your Caring Families Aotearoa critical support worker.
8. Oranga Tamariki could talk to other relevant parties for example the school or other members of your whānau regarding the allegation as part of their investigation.
9. Oranga Tamariki will cover the following in their interview:
 - The nature of the allegations

- Details of the investigation
 - Details relevant to te tamaiti (the child)
 - Voice of the caregiver
 - Details relevant to the caregiver
 - The assessment and analysis of the information obtained
 - The findings of the investigation/assessment e.g. substantiated or not
10. A whānau hui or family group conference could be held to determine where tamariki are placed.
 11. Oranga Tamariki **MUST** inform you if the allegation has been referred to the police. You can contact Caring Families Aotearoa and we will help you access free legal advice. You are entitled to have a support person present if interviewed by the police.
 12. Oranga Tamariki must preserve the mana, integrity and oranga (wellbeing) of you and your whānau throughout the investigation.

Please note there are times when instead of a core assessment (investigation), a full assessment (investigation) will need to be completed. This could be for different reasons, such as a Family Group Conference needing to be held.

ONCE THE INVESTIGATION IS COMPLETED, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

13. Request Oranga Tamariki to review the investigation.
14. Make a complaint/give feedback to Oranga Tamariki: <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/contact-us/feedback/>
15. Make a complaint to Caring Families Aotearoa national office.
16. View any written information about you through the Official Information Act 1982 or the Privacy Act 1993.

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