

13 April 2026

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Ref: OIA 130971

Tēnā koe Mikael

### **Official Information Act request: Recruitment information**

Thank you for your email of 13 March 2026, requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), regarding the Ministry of Justice's (the Ministry) recruitment processes. Specifically, you requested:

*Under the Official Information Act 1982, I request the following information relating to your agency's recruitment processes, internal decision making structures, and applicant communication practices for permanent roles and fixed term roles longer than 3 months.*

#### *1. Internal vs external recruitment and fairness of opportunity*

*For the past 24 months, for permanent roles and fixed term roles longer than 3 months, please provide:*

- *The number of roles that were:*
  - *advertised internally only*
  - *advertised internally before being advertised externally*
  - *advertised externally while an internal candidate was already acting in the role*
- *Any policies or guidance on:*
  - *when roles should be advertised internally vs externally*
  - *ensuring external applicants have a genuine opportunity when an internal candidate is already preferred or acting*
  - *managing conflicts of interest when internal candidates are known to the hiring manager*
- *Any documentation outlining how fairness, merit, and equal opportunity are assessed when internal candidates are present.*

#### *2. Advertising timeframes and short window postings*

*For the past 24 months, for permanent roles and fixed term roles longer than 3 months, please provide:*

- *The number of roles that were advertised externally for:*
  - *fewer than 5 calendar days*
  - *5–7 calendar days*
  - *8–14 calendar days*
- *Any policies, guidelines, or internal expectations regarding:*
  - *minimum advertising periods*
  - *when short advertising windows may be used*
  - *how fairness and equal access are ensured when roles are advertised for short periods*

- *Any internal reviews or discussions regarding the impact of short advertising windows on applicant diversity, fairness, or merit.*

### *3. HR gatekeeping, filtering, and alignment with role expertise*

*Please provide:*

- *The position titles and pay bands of staff responsible for the initial screening or shortlisting of applicants.*
- *Any training, competency frameworks, or guidelines provided to HR staff for assessing specialist, technical, or senior roles.*
- *Whether hiring managers receive:*
  - *all applications, or*
  - *only those filtered by HR*
- *Any documented criteria, tools, or checklists used by HR staff during the initial sift.*
- *Any policies regarding the involvement of subject matter experts in early screening stages.*

### *4. Applicant communication, feedback, and closure*

*Please provide:*

- *Any policies, guidelines, or service standards regarding communication with applicants, including:*
  - *acknowledgement of applications*
  - *updates during delays*
  - *notification of outcomes*
  - *provision of feedback to unsuccessful applicants*
- *Any internal expectations or KPIs relating to timely communication with applicants.*
- *Data from the past 24 months showing:*
  - *the proportion of applicants who received feedback*
  - *the average time between application and outcome notification*
  - *the average time between interview and outcome notification*
- *Any internal reviews or discussions regarding improving applicant communication or feedback processes.*

### *5. Recruitment workflow, timeframes, and accountability*

*Please provide:*

- *The documented end to end recruitment process for permanent roles and fixed term roles longer than 3 months.*
- *Any internal timeframes, service standards, or escalation points built into that process.*
- *Any KPIs, performance measures, or quality standards used to assess recruitment team performance.*
- *Any internal reviews, audits, or evaluations of the recruitment function conducted in the past 24 months.*

### *6. Use of external or automated systems*

*Please provide:*

- *Details of any third party recruitment platforms, automated screening tools, or AI systems used in the hiring process.*
- *Any internal guidance on how these tools are used, monitored, or audited.*
- *Any policies regarding transparency to applicants about the use of automated screening.*

- *For the specific role Wellbeing Lead - MOJ/1911615, please confirm whether any automated or algorithmic screening tools were used at any stage of the recruitment process.*

## *7. Discrimination*

*Please provide:*

- *Details of any filters that have been used either by humans or automated systems that have discriminated on the basis of age, gender or ethnicity*
- *Any internal guidance on the appropriateness of discrimination*
- *Any policies regarding transparency to applicants about the use of gender, age or ethnic discrimination.*

Each section of your request has been responded to in order, below.

### **1. Internal vs external recruitment and fairness of opportunity**

#### *a. Data regarding permanent roles and fixed term roles longer than 3 months*

The Ministry does not hold centrally collated data that categorises all permanent and fixed term roles that were longer than three months, over the past 24 months (or any period), according to whether they were advertised internally only, internally before being advertised externally, or externally while an internal candidate was acting in the role.

While information about individual recruitment activities exists at a vacancy level, it is not held in a form that enables aggregated reporting across the specific categories requested. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the Ministry does not hold the information requested and there are no grounds believing it is held by any other department or agency subject to the Act.

#### *b. Policies or guidance on when roles should be advertised internally vs externally*

The Ministry's Recruitment Policy provides guidance on advertising approaches, including when roles may be advertised internally, externally, or both. Decisions are made on a case by case basis, considering the type of role, business needs, workforce planning considerations, prevailing labour market conditions, and the requirement to appoint on merit. Our Recruitment Advisors can discuss the above with the hiring manager and provide advice to help them reach a decision.

#### *c. Policies of guidance ensuring external applicants have a genuine opportunity when an internal candidate is already preferred or acting*

The Recruitment Policy requires that all appointments are made on merit following a fair and transparent process, regardless of whether an internal candidate is acting in, or known to, the role. Where roles are advertised externally, all applicants, whether internal or external, are assessed against the same selection criteria and using consistent assessment methods.

#### *d. Policies or guidance regarding managing conflicts of interest when internal candidates are known to the hiring manager*

The Recruitment Policy, supported by the Ministry's Conflict of Interest Policy, Code of Conduct, and recruitment guidance, requires hiring managers and panel members to identify and appropriately manage any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. This may include declaring conflicts, adjusting panel composition, limiting participation, or stepping aside from the process, to ensure recruitment decisions remain fair, impartial, and defensible.

- e. *Any documentation outlining how fairness, merit, and equal opportunity are assessed when internal candidates are present*

The Ministry's Recruitment Policy and recruitment guidance set out expectations for fair, merit based selection, including the use of clear selection criteria, consistent assessment methods, and documented decision making. These requirements apply equally to internal and external candidates and are intended to support equal opportunity and transparent outcomes.

## **2. Advertising timeframes and short window postings**

- a. *Data regarding permanent roles and fixed term roles longer than 3 months*

The Ministry does not hold a single report that groups roles advertised over the past 24 months by the specific timeframes requested. While this information exists for individual vacancies, it is not stored in a way that allows it to be easily grouped or counted. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the Ministry does not hold the information requested and there are no grounds believing it is held by any other department or agency subject to the Act.

However, I can advise that all roles advertised by the Ministry, whether internally or externally, are subject to a minimum advertising period of five working days to ensure there is sufficient opportunity for suitably qualified candidates to apply.

- b. *Policies or guidelines regarding minimum advertising periods*

The Recruitment Policy states that all roles advertised by the Ministry, whether internally or externally, are subject to a minimum advertising period of five working days.

- c. *Policies or guidelines regarding when short advertising windows may be used*

The Ministry does not use advertising periods shorter than the minimum required advertising period. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist.

- d. *Policies or guidelines regarding how fairness and equal access are ensured when roles are advertised for short periods*

Fairness and equal access are ensured by applying the minimum advertising period to all roles, together with clear role requirements and consistent assessment of all applicants against the published selection criteria.

- e. *Any internal reviews or discussions regarding the impact of short advertising windows on applicant diversity, fairness, or merit*

The Ministry has not conducted a formal, standalone review focused specifically on the impact of short advertising windows, as roles are not advertised for periods shorter than the minimum requirement. Consideration of fairness and merit occurs as part of business as usual recruitment practice and continuous improvement. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist.

## **3. HR gatekeeping, filtering, and alignment with role expertise**

- a. *Position titles and pay bands of staff responsible for the initial screening or shortlisting of applicants*

Initial screening and shortlisting activities are supported by Recruitment Advisors (including Senior Recruitment Advisors) within the People Experience (PX) function, working with the hiring manager. Depending on the role, Senior PX Advisors, Business Partners, or support roles such as Executive Support or Group Coordinators may assist with aspects of screening or coordination. These roles operate across a range of remuneration bands and support process integrity and consistency, but do not make final appointment decisions.

*b. Any training, competency frameworks, or guidelines provided to HR staff for assessing specialist, technical, or senior roles*

Recruitment Advisors are supported by internal recruitment policies, guidance materials, and training resources covering merit-based assessment, unconscious bias, privacy, and good practice in shortlisting and selection.

For specialist, technical, or senior roles, Recruitment Advisors work closely with hiring managers and, where appropriate, the Senior Recruitment Advisor or subject matter experts to ensure assessment approaches are aligned with the expertise required for the role.

There is no separate, standalone competency framework specific to HR assessment of specialist roles; assessment approaches are tailored to the role and selection criteria. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist.

*c. Whether hiring managers receive all applications or only those filtered by HR*

Hiring managers have access to all applications submitted through the recruitment system. In some cases, Recruitment Advisors or other PX staff may undertake an initial review against the published selection criteria to support consistency or manage large applicant volumes; however, this does not restrict the hiring manager's ability to view all applications.

The approach to screening support is agreed in advance and may vary by role type, seniority, and business needs, but final shortlisting and appointment decisions remain the responsibility of the hiring manager(s).

*d. Any documented criteria, tools, or checklists used by HR staff during the initial sift*

Recruitment Advisors and hiring managers use documented selection criteria, role specific requirements, and structured tools (such as shortlisting matrices or checklists) to support consistent and transparent assessment.

These tools are used to record decisions and rationale, rather than to automate or predetermine outcomes.

*e. Policies regarding the involvement of subject matter experts in early screening stages*

Subject matter experts may be involved early in the process for specialist or technical roles where their expertise is needed to inform assessment, at the discretion of the hiring manager and Recruitment Advisor.

The Ministry does not have a formal policy mandating subject matter expert involvement at the initial screening stage. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist.

#### **4. Applicant communication, feedback, and closure**

##### *a. Policies, guidelines, or service standards regarding communication with applicants*

The Ministry's Recruitment Policy and internal knowledge pages set expectations for communication with applicants across the recruitment lifecycle, including acknowledgement of applications, notification of outcomes, and the provision of feedback to unsuccessful candidates where practicable.

A copy of the Recruitment Policy is attached to this response as **Appendix 1**.

Acknowledgement of applications and outcome notifications are generally supported through the Ministry's recruitment systems and standard correspondence templates. While feedback may be offered to interviewed candidates, it is not guaranteed in all circumstances and may depend on factors such as the size of the applicant pool and available resources.

The Ministry does not operate formal service standards prescribing specific communication timeframes for all roles.

##### *b. Internal expectations or KPIs relating to timely communication with applicants.*

Timely and respectful communication with applicants is an operational expectation supported through recruitment guidance, professional standards, and business as usual oversight.

The Ministry does not have formal KPIs or service level agreements specifically governing the timeliness of applicant communications. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist.

##### *c. Data regarding feedback and outcome notifications*

The Ministry does not centrally collate or report data showing the proportion of applicants who received feedback.

The Ministry also does not hold centrally aggregated data calculating average timeframes between application and outcome notification, or between interview and outcome notification, across all recruitment activities.

While some recruitment activity data is used for internal monitoring and planning purposes, it is not held in a form that enables the specific breakdowns requested. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the Ministry does not hold the information requested and there are no grounds believing it is held by any other department or agency subject to the Act.

##### *d. Internal reviews or discussions regarding improving applicant communication or feedback processes*

The Ministry has ongoing internal discussions and process improvements aimed at improving candidate experience, including the clarity and consistency of applicant communications. These discussions occur as part of business as usual operational management and continuous improvement rather than through formal, standalone reviews or audits.

#### **5. Recruitment workflow, timeframes, and accountability**

##### *a. The documented end to end recruitment process for permanent roles and fixed term roles longer than 3 months*

The Ministry holds documented recruitment guidance (refer **Appendix 1**), process descriptions, and templates that outline the end-to-end recruitment process for permanent roles and fixed-term roles longer than three months.

This guidance covers key stages including vacancy approval, advertising, application receipt, shortlisting, assessment, pre-employment checks, and appointment. The guidance is principles-based and allows for flexibility to reflect differences in role type, seniority, business requirements, and labour market conditions.

Attached as **Appendix 2** is the Ministry's internal Go-to-Guide on these steps.

*b. Internal timeframes, service standards, or escalation points built into that process*

The Ministry provides indicative guidance to support timely recruitment; however, it does not operate with fixed or mandatory timeframes for each stage of the recruitment process. Timeframes may vary depending on operational needs, role complexity, and candidate availability. Escalation of delays or risks is managed through operational leadership and business as usual oversight rather than through formalised escalation thresholds.

*c. KPIs, performance measures, or quality standards used to assess recruitment team performance*

The Ministry monitors recruitment activity through internal reporting and performance information, such as recruitment volumes, time to hire indicators, and candidate experience measures. This information is used to support workforce planning, operational oversight, and continuous improvement. These measures are not applied as rigid performance targets and do not determine individual appointment decisions.

*d. Internal reviews, audits, or evaluations of the recruitment function conducted in the past 24 months*

The Ministry has not conducted a formal, standalone audit or evaluation of the recruitment function within the past 24 months. Recruitment practices are, however, subject to ongoing review through business as usual governance, internal reporting, and periodic process improvements.

## **6. Use of external or automated systems**

*a. Third-party recruitment platforms, automated screening tools, or AI systems used in the hiring process*

The Ministry uses third party recruitment platforms solely to support the administrative management of recruitment processes, such as advertising roles and receiving applications; these systems do not undertake automated, algorithmic, or artificial intelligence-based screening, assessment, ranking, or decision making.

The Ministry does not use automated screening tools or AI systems at any stage of shortlisting or selection, and all recruitment decisions are made by Ministry employees and/or selection panels based on published selection criteria and evidence provided by applicants.

*b. Internal guidance on how these tools are used, monitored, or audited*

*c. Policies regarding transparency to applicants about the use of automated screening*

As automated or algorithmic screening tools are not used, the Ministry does not hold internal guidance on the monitoring or auditing of such tools, nor specific policies requiring disclosure to applicants about their use.

- d. For the specific role Wellbeing Lead - MOJ/1911615, please confirm whether any automated or algorithmic screening tools were used at any stage of the recruitment process*

The Ministry confirms that no automated or algorithmic screening tools were used at any stage of the recruitment process for this role, and all applications were reviewed and assessed by Ministry staff.

## **7. Discrimination**

- a. Details of any filters that have been used either by humans or automated systems that have discriminated on the basis of age, gender or ethnicity*

The Ministry does not use filters, criteria, or automated systems that discriminate on the basis of age, gender, or ethnicity in recruitment.

- b. Internal guidance on the appropriateness of discrimination*

Recruitment decisions are made by human decision-makers and are based on merit, in accordance with the Public Service Act 2020 and relevant employment and human rights legislation.

Demographic information such as age, gender, or ethnicity may be collected on a voluntary basis for monitoring and reporting purposes only; this information is not visible to hiring managers and is not used in recruitment decision-making.

- c. Policies regarding transparency to applicants about the use of gender, age or ethnic discrimination.*

Applicants are informed through recruitment materials and privacy statements about the collection and use of personal information, and recruitment decisions are communicated based on assessed suitability for the role.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry's website at: [Official Information Act responses | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#).

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28 of the Act. The Office of the Ombudsman may be contacted by phone on: 0800 802 602, by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz), or via the webform: [Make a complaint \(for members of the public\) | Ombudsman New Zealand](#).

Nāku noa, nā



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