



20 April 2026

Ministerial Services  
Partnerships and Commissions – Te Aukaha  
PO Box 805, Wellington 6140  
Email: [OIA@dia.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@dia.govt.nz)  
Website: [www.dia.govt.nz](http://www.dia.govt.nz)

Hanna Pataka  
[fyi-request-34168-cae8c965@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-34168-cae8c965@requests.fyi.org.nz) and [fyi-request-34166-054473ea@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-34166-054473ea@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Kia ora Hanna,

**Request for information (OIA 2526-1004)**

Thank you for your request for information made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) received on 19 March 2026. You requested the following information:

*Under the Official Information Act 1982, I request the following information relating to Jade Paul's employment or engagement within the office of Hon Casey Costello, including in the context of any overlap with Travis Ancelet's role as an advisor.*

*1. Employment and role*

*Please provide:*

- the dates of Jade Paul's employment or engagement*
- her job title, position description, and reporting line*
- any delegations, authorities, or access permissions associated with the role*
- any changes to her duties, responsibilities, or access during her time in the office*

*2. Concurrent roles and overlap*

*Please provide records showing:*

- the period during which Jade Paul and Travis Ancelet were both engaged in roles connected to the Minister's office*
- the nature of their respective roles and any functional overlap*
- any recorded interaction, collaboration, or reporting relationship between them*

*3. Conflict of interest declarations and management*

*Please provide all records relating to any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest involving Jade Paul, including where relevant to her professional or personal association with Travis Ancelet:*

- *any declarations made*
- *any advice received regarding identification or management of such conflicts*
- *any decisions, instructions, or measures put in place to manage or mitigate conflicts*
- *any review or reassessment of those arrangements over time*

4. *Communications relating to conflict or association*

*Please provide relevant communications (including emails, messages, briefings, and meeting notes) held by Ministerial Services that refer to:*

- *Travis Ancelet*
- *any personal or professional association between Jade Paul and Travis Ancelet*
- *any consideration of whether such an association gave rise to a conflict of interest*
- *any discussions regarding how such matters should be managed*

5. *Access and information handling*

*Please provide:*

- *any records relating to Jade Paul's access to briefing material, shared systems, or restricted information*
- *any restrictions or conditions applied to that access*
- *any records indicating whether access was modified in response to conflict of interest considerations*

6. *Policies and guidance*

*Please provide:*

- *the conflict of interest policies, protocols, or guidance applicable to ministerial staff at the time*
- *any guidance, advice, or training provided to Jade Paul regarding conflicts of interest*

7. *Escalation or internal review*

*Please provide:*

- *any records of concerns, queries, or internal discussions relating to potential conflicts of interest*
- *any internal reviews, investigations, or assurance processes undertaken*
- *any findings, conclusions, or recommendations arising*

*Administrative matters*

*I request that:*

- *information is provided in electronic form where possible*
- *if any information is withheld, the grounds under the Act are clearly specified*
- *a schedule of documents is provided for any information withheld in full or in part*
- *If any part of this request is likely to be refused due to substantial collation or research, please contact me so that I can refine the scope.*

I note that you have requested similar information from the office of Hon Casey Costello. For ease of administration, we have combined both requests. The relevant part of your request has been extracted from the transfer letter and is set out below:

#### 5. *Involvement in official matters*

*Please provide records showing Jade Paul's involvement in official work, including:*

- *preparation or drafting of briefings, correspondence, or media material*
- *attendance at meetings or participation in stakeholder engagement*
- *involvement in any matters in which Travis Ancelet had a known interest, involvement, or advisory role*
- *Where available, please include version histories or tracked changes identifying authorship or contribution.*

#### 6. *Meetings and access*

*Please provide:*

- *calendars, meeting invitations, attendance records, and meeting notes where both Jade Paul and Travis Ancelet were present*
- *records of any meetings where potential conflicts of interest were discussed*
- *records of access to briefing material or shared systems relevant to matters connected to Travis Ancelet, where such records are held*

### **Background Information**

The Department's Ministerial Services business group is responsible for recruiting and employing all Ministerial office staff. This includes employer obligations for their performance management, health, safety and wellbeing, and professional development.

### **Response to your request**

As the employer of staff in Ministerial offices, the Department, has an obligation to hold details relating to employment files as confidential to protect staff privacy. Conflict of interest forms and their completion are part of an employee's personal file.

Ministerial office staff work in a politically sensitive environment and do not hold public decision-making authority. Unlike Ministers, they are not public office holders and are not subject to the same level of public scrutiny. Protecting their privacy is important to ensure their safety, wellbeing, and ability to perform their duties without undue attention or pressure.

Accordingly, I am withholding information under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons;
- 9(2)(ba)(i) – 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; and
- 9(2)(g)(ii) – the information requested would be likely to lead to the improper pressure or harassment of an identifiable person.

Acknowledging that there may be public interest in the information requested, I have considered whether the grounds for withholding this information under section 9 of the Act is outweighed by other concerns. In this instance, I am satisfied that the need to protect staff privacy, and to safeguard individuals from potential harassment or undue pressure, outweighs any countervailing public interest considerations.

As parts of your request relates to the privacy of individuals, I am also refusing the information under section 53(b)(i) of the Privacy Act 2020, that the disclosure of the information would involve the unwarranted disclosure of the affairs of another individual.

In response to the part of your request relating to *“the conflict of interest policies, protocols, or guidance applicable to ministerial staff at the time”*.

The Department requires all applicants for roles in Ministerial offices to declare any conflicts of interest during the recruitment process. If applicable, a management plan may be discussed and agreed on before an offer of employment is made. In some cases, it may be appropriate for those plans to limit involvement in particular areas, or to limit access to particular information.

Once staff have commenced employment, they are required to declare any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest as soon as they arise, as per the Department’s Code of Conduct. In addition, the Department has a process where conflicts of interest are discussed and reviewed on a regular basis including as part of annual performance discussions.

The following documents (attached as **Attachment A**) set out the expectations of staff in relation to conflicts of interest.

- Code of conduct for ministerial staff; and
- The relevant excerpts of the Department of Internal Affairs Code of Conduct.

If you have any concerns with the information in this response, you have a right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. Information on how to do this is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz). You also have the right to contact the Privacy Commissioner regarding this response; this can be done by visiting [www.privacy.org.nz](http://www.privacy.org.nz).

Yours sincerely



**Briget Ridden**

General Manager – Ministerial Services  
Partnerships and Commissions - Te Aukaha  
Department of Internal Affairs - Te Tari Taiwhenua