

28 April 2026

C212527

H Barakat

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Tēnā koe H Barakat

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 29 March 2026 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting the following information:

- 1. How many deaf/hard of hearing prisoners have there been in your prisons in the last 5 years?*
- 2. How many mute prisoners have there been in your prisons in the last 5 years?*
- 3. How many deaf/hard of hearing and mute prisoners have there been in your prisons in the last 5 years?*
- 4. What is the protocol regarding communication with deaf and mute prisoners? How are they alerted re lockdowns/fires/emergencies? How are they notified about meal times?*
- 5. How many prison guards are fluent in NZSL in prisons and which prisoners do they work at?*
- 6. Is there someone on site at all times able to communicate with hard of hearing, deaf and/or mute prisoners? What prisoners is this available at?*
- 7. What is the protocol for a prisoner who is hard of hearing, deaf or mute suffering a medical episode? Can you please also specify how they would signal to Corrections of such an event?*
- 8. How would prisons communicate with/interact with prisoners that have low literacy, and are mute and deaf?*
- 9. How many deaf, mute and/or hard of hearing prisoners have died in custody in New Zealand in the last 5 years?*

Corrections needs to extend the timeframe of our response to your request by 20 working days, pursuant to section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA, as consultations necessary to make a decision on the request are such that a proper response to the request cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit. Therefore, you can expect to receive a response to your request by 27 May 2026. If you no longer require this information, please let us know as soon as possible.

Please be advised that you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman about our decision to extend the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602 or by post to the Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Lythgoe', written in a cursive style.

Jeremy Lythgoe
Manager Official Correspondence
People and Capability