

06 May 2026

C212881

Scott Radvan (cybercourtnz)

fyi-request-34437-57774c43@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Scott

Thank you for your information request of 8 April 2026 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting information about a media blackout regarding incidents at Rimutaka Prison. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Corrections ensures that all processes related to a person's death in custody are carried out professionally, with integrity and respect to all involved. Every death in custody is investigated by the Office of the Inspectorate and the Coroner. Deaths in custody may also be referred to New Zealand Police. Where a death in custody is an apparent suicide or is otherwise suspicious, New Zealand Police make the decision on whether to investigate.

When a person dies in custody, the following processes are followed:

- Custodial and health staff manage the emergency response until emergency services arrive.
- Prison nurses or paramedics verify that death has occurred.
- Prison General Managers inform the Police, the Coroner, and the Department of Corrections' National Office.
- Police notify the next of kin.
- The duty Coroner's Office organises the removal of the body from the prison for a post-mortem to be carried out if necessary.
- When the body is removed, prison staff secure the area where the person died.
- Police can refer families, whānau or friends to support services as required.
- Prison staff organise for a deceased person's property to be passed to a nominated contact.
- The cell where the person died is blessed by a Chaplain or Kaumatua.
- The Office of the Inspectorate investigates the death in custody.
- The Coroner conducts an inquiry and issues a final written finding.

You requested:

Please provide a full and detailed report covering the media blackout regarding a series of incidents at Rimutaka Prison – multiple killings at Rimutaka

We can confirm that no media blackouts have occurred regarding any incidents at Rimutaka Prison. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by Corrections, and we have no grounds for believing that it is held by another agency or more closely connected with the functions of another agency.

Corrections responds to all requests from the media in accordance with our obligations under the OIA and the Privacy Act 2020. In addition, information relating to assaults and deaths in prison are publicly reported on our website. You can find this information at the following link:

<https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics>

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections' website. Typically, responses are published quarterly or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

I hope this information is helpful. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: 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 Government Services Official Correspondence
People and Capability