



Scan for
NZSL name




Visual description: A purple Whaikaha logo with a QR scan for the NZSL name.

OIA0967



23 February 2025

Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 13 February 2026, to the Ministry of Disabled People - Whaikaha (Whaikaha), requesting information about paid discretionary leave for cultural obligations.

Please note, Whaikaha was established as a standalone ministry on 1 December 2024. Prior to this date, Whaikaha was a departmental agency within the Ministry of Social Development. Accordingly, this response covers the period 1 December 2024 – 13 February 2026.

You wrote:

I am requesting information relating to the clause negotiated between the Public Service Association and government agencies that provides Māori members with access to paid discretionary leave for cultural obligations.

1. A copy of the relevant collective agreement clause(s), including any explanatory notes or guidance issued to managers.

The Whaikaha Collective Employment Agreement 2025-2027 (CEA) does not contain a clause that specifically provides Māori employees with access to paid discretionary leave for cultural obligations.

The Whaikaha CEA does contain a broader clause about leave in order to contribute to society, and this leave may or not be paid. Please refer to Appendix 1 for a copy of **clause 11.2: Community service, cultural obligations, and personal development leave** from the Whaikaha CEA.

2. Since the clause came into effect, broken down by year:

- **the total number of staff who have accessed this paid discretionary leave**
- **the total number of days of leave taken under this provision**



- **the total salary cost associated with this leave.**

No staff have utilised the community service leave type since Whaikaha was established.

3. The date this clause came into affect, the next date of contract renegotiations with the PSA and whether any minister was involved or informed when this clause was negotiated.

Whaikaha inherited employment terms and conditions from the Ministry of Social of Development. This includes the clause referenced in Appendix 1.

Contract negotiations will begin with the Public Service Association in 2027.

Please note, as part of its commitment towards increasing transparency, Whaikaha intends to make the information contained in this letter, and any attached documents, available to the wider public. Whaikaha will do this by publishing this letter on our website. Your personal details will be deleted, and no information that would identify you as the requestor will be released.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, or if you are seeking any further information, please contact OIA_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



Emma Williams
Manager, Ministerial and Executive Services

Appendix 1 – excerpt from the Whaikaha Collective Employment Agreement 2025-2027

11.2 Community service, cultural obligations, and personal development leave

Whaikaha recognises that employees have a contribution to make to society and that they also have a variety of development needs.

While requests for leave or time off will not be automatically granted, periods of leave or time off, either with or without pay, may be granted for examples such as:

- Outward Bound courses
- Transfer Leave
- Meetings of Boards, Councils and Committees
- Conferences and Conventions
- Civil Defence, Search and Rescue and Fire Fighting
- Iwi/Tribal Organisations
- Church/Religious Organisations
- Rainbow, LGBTQIA+, takatāpui, and MVPFAFF+ organisations. Note: LGBTQIA+ is an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual. The plus sign represents other diverse gender or sexual identities.
- MVPFAFF+ is an acronym to describe gender-diverse Pasifika identities: māhū (Hawai'i and Tahiti), vaka sa lewa lewa (Fiji), palopa (Papua New Guinea), fa'afafine (Samoa), akava'ine (Rarotonga), fakaleiti (Tonga), and fakafifine (Niue).
- Environmental Organisations
- Māori Women's Welfare League
- Marae or Māori Authority activities
- Waitangi Tribunal or land court hearings. (See clause 11.1 also for more specifics in relation to witness leave for these hearings)

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. There may be other types of leave required to meet social/community/cultural interests and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.