



20 September 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 24 August 2024, requesting information on Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) staff training from a client's perspective.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

As the Ministry provides its staff training online and internally, I have not interpreted your request to be for copies of training, but for the type of content that the training covers.

Service Delivery frontline roles (which include the staff in contact centres, service centres, central processing) go through the Ministry's induction which includes a combination of Ministry employee knowledge, role-specific responsibilities, and technical knowledge. The induction process is complemented by a significant number of resources which support staff in building an understanding of the client and their whānau and then considering what they need and the different techniques to use when working with clients/whānau.

The Ministry's Capability team works from Development Maps. These are Ministry online resources, providing guidance with detail on key practice areas that align to knowledge, skills, and capabilities that Ministry staff are required to learn to work with clients and their whānau and to understand their needs.

As one example, the Development Map for Manaaki Whānau (Working with Whānau) stems from our Client Value Steps:

- Understand me and my whānau.
- Help me in the way that I need it.
- Do it.

To complement our Development Maps, the Ministry uses Learning Pathways (delivered online internally) that provide a range of learning for staff in each key practice area. Some examples of our learning include:

- Unconscious Bias: helps learners understand what it is and the multiple ways we can be affected by it. It also covers how it can show up in work and personal lives and what we can do to mitigate unconscious bias.

- Lives Like Mine: tells the story of our diverse clients and provides an insight into the people we work with and the power of empathy in our work. It is used in various contexts but most crucially during induction to share the Ministry's purpose and values with our new kaimahi.
- Brief Bites: are quick activities for teams that focus on how we can make our clients feel welcome and valued.
- Mental Health 101: gives the confidence to recognise, relate and respond to people experiencing mental illness.

The Ministry provides a range of compulsory introductory learning from within this suite.

The induction process is complemented by a suite of follow up training – delivered internally online - that forms part of ongoing learning for our kaimahi. The Learning Pathways are designed in a way that learners can access as they need to do so, along with recommendations from their Capability Developer and/or Managers.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, 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



Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services