



Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Summary

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Family Violence and Sexual Violence: Establishing a Ministerial Advisory Group

Portfolio	Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence
Purpose	This paper seeks agreement to establish a family violence and sexual violence Ministerial advisory group (the Advisory Group) to provide high quality, independent advice and recommendations to the Minister.
Previous Decisions	In November 2021, the previous government agreed to establish the Tāngata Whenua Ministerial Advisory Group to support work on the elimination of family and sexual violence [SWC-22-MIN-0260]. This group was disbanded earlier in 2025, after member's terms ended.
Proposal	<p>Family violence and sexual violence are deeply entrenched issues in New Zealand, which disproportionately affect women, Māori, Pacific peoples, disabled people, children, and other marginalised communities. Violence causes intergenerational harm, poor health and wellbeing, and substantial social and economic costs.</p> <p>Agreement is sought to establish an advisory group of up to eight members to report to the Minister, who are experts that represent a broad range of perspectives, communities, and sectors.</p> <p>The Advisory Group will provide high quality, independent, and up-to-date advice and recommendations. The objectives, scope, and other related details about the group are detailed in the attached draft terms of reference. Authorisation is sought for the Minister to finalise these.</p>
Impact Analysis	Not applicable.
Financial Implications	<p>No new funding is sought. The Advisory Group will have a maximum operating budget of \$0.100 million per year, which will come from within baseline funding that will be moved from lower priority activities and back-office functions.</p> <p>Existing staff in the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention are proposed to undertake secretariat duties from within baseline. Most meetings are expected to be held online to reduce travel costs, once the group has been established.</p>

Legislative Implications	None from this paper.
Fees/Conditions	Fees are proposed to be set under the Cabinet Fees Framework. The Chair or co-Chairs are proposed to be paid \$825 per day, with members to receive \$680 per day.
Timing Matters	The Minister will report back 9(2)(f)(iv) to APH regarding appointments to the Advisory Group. She expects to make appointments by 9(2)(f)(iv) and for the group to first meet 9(2)(f)(iv) .
Communications	The Minister intends to announce the Advisory Group as soon as practicable, following Cabinet confirmation.
Consultation	Paper prepared by Justice (Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence). ACC, Corrections, Education, the Treasury, Health, Justice, TPK, Police, DPMC, Women, Pacific Peoples, Oranga Tamariki, PSC, MSC, Disabled People, Ethnic Communities and SIA were consulted.
	The Minister indicates that SOU members, including the Minister of Finance, were consulted.

The Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence recommends that the Committee:

- 1 agree to establish a family violence and sexual violence Ministerial advisory group (the Advisory Group) to provide high quality, independent advice and recommendations to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence (the Minister);
- 2 note the draft terms of reference for the Advisory Group, attached as Appendix A to the submission under SOU-25-SUB-0147;
- 3 authorise the Minister to finalise the Advisory Group's terms of reference;
- 4 note the capped operating budget of \$0.100 million per year for the Advisory Group, which will be funded from baseline within the "Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence" appropriation in Vote Justice;
- 5 note that the Advisory Group will have up to eight members, including the Chair or co-Chairs;
- 6 note the intention to seek targeted expressions of interest to find suitable candidates to appoint to the Advisory Group;
- 7 note that the Minister will report back **9(2)(f)(iv)** to the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee on appointments to the Advisory Group;
- 8 note that the Minister will draw Cabinet's attention to any future advice or recommendations made by the Advisory Group.

Jenny Vickers
Committee Secretary

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Office of the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence
Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Ministerial Advisory Group: Family Violence and Sexual Violence

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks Cabinet’s agreement to establish a Ministerial advisory group on family violence and sexual violence (‘the advisory group’). This advisory group will provide independent advice and recommendations to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence.
- 2 I intend to appoint up to eight members (including Chair or co-Chairs) whose appointments will be subject to approval from Cabinet’s Appointments and Honours Committee (‘APH’).
- 3 The paper asks Cabinet to delegate authority to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence for finalising the advisory group’s terms of reference and for making decisions about funding arrangements and membership.

Relation to Government priorities

- 4 This proposal will contribute to the Government’s target to reduce violent crime by 2029 – with 20,000 fewer unique victims of assault, robbery, or sexual assault being reported per year (i.e. from 185,000 down to 165,000). Approximately 30% of these are unique victims reporting violent offences by a family member.
- 5 The proposal will contribute to this target by providing robust and independent advice about family violence and sexual violence, including perspectives of victim/survivors and communities most affected by these types of violence. This will complement advice from the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention (‘the Centre’), sector representatives, social service providers, and members of the public.

Background

- 6 Family violence and sexual violence are significant and deeply entrenched issues in New Zealand, and they disproportionately affect women, Māori, Pacific peoples, disabled people, children, and other marginalised communities. Family violence and sexual violence cause intergenerational harm, poor health and wellbeing, and substantial social and economic costs.
- 7 About 24% of adults will experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetime. Lifetime sexual assault is significantly higher for women (36%), Māori (30%), LGBTQIA+ adults (54%), and disabled adults (31%) compared with the general population.¹ About one in three women (31%) will experience physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime; a rate that is much higher for wāhine

¹ New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey, Cycle 7, 2024.

Māori (49% or one in two). When psychological, controlling, and economic violence are also included, these rates increase to more than one in two women overall (56%) and almost two in three (65%) wāhine Māori.²

- 8 A tangata whenua Ministerial advisory group was established in 2022 to provide independent advice to improve outcomes for Māori and support delivery of Te Aorerekura – National Strategy for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence ('Te Aorerekura'). The group provided its final report to me in June 2025.
- 9 Earlier in 2025, I decided not to make new appointments to the tangata whenua Ministerial advisory group after its members' terms ended. I also indicated my intention to establish an advisory group that was reflective of the diversity of our nation. Funding that was previously used to support the tangata whenua Ministerial advisory group will continue to be used to give effect to the Māori-Crown relationship in line with the original Budget bid and initiative scope. This includes strengthening iwi-led family violence multi-agency responses under the Action Plan (2025-2030).

A new Ministerial advisory group

- 10 I am seeking Cabinet's agreement to establish an advisory group that will report to me as the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence. My advisory needs are best met by a small group of experts who can represent a broad range of perspectives. I can operate this group within baseline funding for minimal cost.
- 11 This advisory group is essential for my portfolio decisions to be informed, inclusive, and victim/survivor-centred. The new advisory group will:
 - provide independent expertise, oversight and advice about family violence and sexual violence legislation, policy and strategic direction, including opportunities to improve the approach to and the implementation of Te Aorerekura and the Action Plan
 - draw from the lived experiences of victim/survivors and people who have used violence
 - strive to represent a range of communities that are disproportionately affected by family violence and sexual violence, and/or whose needs are overlooked by traditional responses to family violence and sexual violence³
 - provide relevant and up-to-date advice about what is happening in communities, and what communities need the most
 - bring specialist expertise from a range of sectors (health, justice, education, housing, and social services)

² New Zealand Family Violence Study, 2019.

³ This includes but is not limited to Māori, women, male survivors, Pacific peoples, disabled people and tangata whaihaka Māori, children and young people, older people, migrant and ethnic communities, and members of the LGBTQIA+ rainbow community.

- provide a long-term view on preventing, eliminating and safely responding to family violence and sexual violence
- constructively challenge the Government and highlight risks or unintended consequences
- identify emerging responses to family violence and sexual violence from other jurisdictions
- identify system issues or barriers that require interagency collaboration to address in pursuit of eliminating family violence and sexual violence.

Appointments to be approved by Cabinet's Appointment and Honours Committee

12 The advisory group will be made up of up to eight members including the Chair or co-Chairs.

13 I propose that appointments be subject to APH approval and its relevant processes. I plan to recommend initial appointments for a two-year term. Any decisions about future appointments, including decisions about the ongoing need for the advisory group, will be subject to Ministerial discretion.

14 Following Cabinet's consideration, I intend to formally announce the advisory group and make a targeted request for expressions of interest (EOI). This targeted request will focus on the specialist family violence and sexual violence sectors. I will also ask coalition caucuses to suggest any individuals who should be asked for an EOI. The EOI process will be open for three weeks.

15 Subject to APH consideration, I expect to make appointments 9(2)(f)(iv) , and for the group to have its inaugural meeting 9(2)(f)(iv) .

Terms of reference and membership

16 Draft terms of reference are attached as Appendix A. These cover membership, conflicts of interest, and reporting. I seek delegated authority to confirm, refine and update the terms of reference as necessary.

17 Member fees have been assessed in line with the Cabinet Fees Framework. The Centre has determined this advisory group falls within Level 3, Group 4 being 'all other committees and bodies'.

18 I am proposing the Chair or co-Chairs be paid \$825 per day and members receive \$680 per day. I expect the group to meet at least once per quarter and no more than once every two months. Members will be paid for 1.5 days for each meeting. This will cover meeting attendance and necessary preparation and equates to a maximum of nine days per year.

19 To keep costs low, staff in the Centre will perform all secretariat duties. I expect this to be manageable for existing FTE.

20 Initially, meetings will be held in person to ensure members can build connections with each other and operate cohesively. Once the advisory group has been established, I

expect most meetings will be held online to reduce travel costs. The Centre will pay for reasonable and necessary travel, meal, and accommodation expenses.

21 The breakdown of estimated costs is provided below. Costs are pro-rated for the current financial year.

Elimination of Family Violence & Sexual Violence (M104) (A600)	\$ million			
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29 & out-years⁴
Fees – Chair or co-Chairs	0.008	0.015	0.015	0.015
Fees – members	0.015	0.030	0.030	0.030
Secretariat costs	0.015	0.030	0.030	0.030
Travel and expenses	0.013	0.025	0.025	0.025
Total operating	0.051	0.100	0.100	0.100

22 I consider this advisory group to be the most cost-effective option for improving the quality of my decisions regarding the Government's response to family violence and sexual violence in New Zealand.

Cost-of-living implications

23 This proposal does not have any direct or attributable cost-of-living implications.

Financial implications

24 No new funding is needed to establish the advisory group.

25 The advisory group will have a maximum operating budget of \$0.100 million per year. This will come from baseline funding within the Centre's *Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence (M104) (A600)* appropriation in Vote Justice. Funding will be moved from lower priority activities and back-office functions. This will not affect any core services or business activities currently funded by this appropriation.

Legislative implications

26 There are no legislative implications associated with this proposal.

Regulatory impact statement

27 This paper does not propose any regulatory change and does not require a regulatory impact statement.

Climate implications of policy assessment

28 This proposal does not meet the threshold for an assessment of climate implications.

⁴ Any decisions about funding for out-years will be subject to Ministerial discretion.

Population implications

29 Family violence and sexual violence affects all communities in New Zealand. Some groups are disproportionately affected by family violence and/or sexual violence. This includes but is not limited to Māori, women, male survivors, Pacific peoples, disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori, children and young people, older people, migrant and ethnic communities, and members of the LGBTQIA+ rainbow community. The effects of violence are compounded for anyone facing other forms of disadvantage and discrimination.

30 The advisory group will provide a forum for members to share a broad range of perspectives informed by their expertise and/or lived experience with the Minister in relation to policy, legislation and strategy, with a view to improving outcomes and responsiveness of the family violence and sexual violence system to population groups disproportionately affected.

Human rights

31 This proposal does not have any human rights implications.

Use of external resources

32 No external resources were used during development of this paper.

Consultation

33 A draft version of this paper was shared with Executive Board member agencies (including associate members) and central Government agencies. This included ACC; Department of Corrections; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; Ministry for Ethnic Communities; Ministry for Pacific Peoples; Ministry for Women; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Social Development; NZ Police; Oranga Tamariki; Public Service Commission; Social Investment Agency; Te Puni Kōkiri; the Treasury; and Whaikaha Ministry of Disabled People.

Communications

34 I intend to announce the new advisory group as soon as practicable after Cabinet's consideration.

Proactive release

35 I intend to proactively release this paper within 30 working days of decisions being confirmed by Cabinet, subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

The Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence recommends that the Committee:

- 1 **agree** to establish a family violence and sexual violence Ministerial advisory group to provide high quality, independent advice and recommendations to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence
- 2 **note** the draft terms of reference in **Appendix A**
- 3 **agree** to delegate authority to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence to finalise the advisory group's terms of reference
- 4 **note** the capped operating budget of \$0.100 million per year, which will be funded from baseline within the *Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence (M104) (A600)* appropriation in Vote Justice
- 5 **note** the advisory group will have up to eight members including the Chair or co-Chairs
- 6 **note** the intention to seek targeted expressions of interest to find suitable candidates to appoint to this advisory group
- 7 **note** the Minister will seek APH agreement to those appointments in December 2025
- 8 **note** the Minister will draw Cabinet's attention to any future advice or recommendations made by the advisory group.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Karen Chhour
Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence

Appendix A – Terms of reference for the family violence and sexual violence Ministerial advisory group

Context

The Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence ('the Minister') intends to convene a Ministerial advisory group ('the advisory group') to provide high quality, independent advice relating to family violence and sexual violence. This advice will be focused on prevention, elimination, response and healing. It will support the Government's law and order targets with respect to violent crime and youth crime.

The Minister is determined to break the cycles of family violence and sexual violence, and make sure all New Zealanders are thriving, safe and supported. This is the heart of Te Aorerekura – National Strategy for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence ('Te Aorerekura') and the Action Plan (2025-2030).

Status

The Official Information Act 1982 applies to information produced by the advisory group.

The advisory group reports to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence, and secretariat services will be provided by the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention ('the Centre').

Functions and objectives

The functions of the advisory group are to:

- provide independent expertise, oversight and advice about family violence and sexual violence legislation, policy and strategic direction, including opportunities to improve our approach to and the implementation of Te Aorerekura and the Action Plan
- draw from the lived experiences of victim/survivors and people who have used violence
- represent, where possible, a range of communities that are disproportionately affected by family violence and sexual violence, and/or whose needs are overlooked by traditional responses to family violence and sexual violence⁵
- provide relevant and up-to-date advice about what is happening in communities, and what communities need the most
- bring specialist expertise from a range of sectors (health, justice, education, housing, and social services)
- provide a long-term view on preventing, eliminating and safely responding to family violence and sexual violence

⁵ This includes but is not limited to Māori, women, male survivors, Pacific peoples, disabled people and tangata Whaikaha Māori, children and young people, older people, migrant and ethnic communities, and members of the LGBTQIA+ rainbow community.

- constructively challenge the Government and highlight risks or unintended consequences
- advise on emerging responses to family violence and sexual violence from other jurisdictions
- identify system issues or barriers that require interagency collaboration to address in pursuit of eliminating family violence and sexual violence.

The advisory group will meet and report to the Minister at least quarterly; meetings may be held every two months as required. Focus areas will be set by the Minister ahead of time but members may choose to provide additional advice on additional matters they consider relevant. It is expected that most meetings will be held online to reduce travel costs.

The key objective of the advisory group is to enhance Ministerial decision-making by providing free and frank advice about family violence and sexual violence.

Scope of work

The advisory group will:

- assess current national legislation, policies, strategies, and frameworks regarding family violence and sexual violence
- review the effectiveness of existing programmes, services, and interventions, and suggest areas for improvement
- provide recommendations that are based on data, evidence, and best practice
- offer advice on proposed or potential legislative or regulatory changes affecting family violence and sexual violence policy
- attend any events and/or present to other Ministers if requested by the Minister.

Membership

The advisory group will have up to eight members including the Chair or co-Chairs. They will be appointed by the Minister for terms of up to two years.

The Minister will appoint a Chair or co-Chairs who will lead every meeting. One co-Chair may act as sole Chair if the other co-Chair is not present or is unable to act (e.g. if that co-Chair has a conflict of interest).

Members must have specialist expertise and/or lived experience of family violence and/or sexual violence. Members will be chosen for their expertise, experience and professional networks. This will include consideration of the overall group dynamic, and how members can be chosen to complement each other.

Members will be remunerated in line with the Cabinet Fees Framework for Level 3, Group 4 ('all other committees and other bodies').

Any members may, in writing, submit their resignation to the Minister.

The Minister may advise, in writing, the Chair or co-Chairs, or a member that their term is to expire on such earlier date as specified.

The Minister may, from time to time, alter or reconstitute the advisory group or discharge any member of the advisory group or appoint new members to the advisory group for the purpose of decreasing or increasing membership or filling any vacancies.

Roles and responsibilities

Members are expected to:

- attend all meetings or send apologies if unable to attend
- contribute free and frank advice and make recommendations based on their expertise experience and, knowledge
- respond to Ministerial requests for advice
- review relevant documentation and provide feedback within requested deadlines
- represent diverse perspectives, including lived experiences, especially of those groups most affected by family violence and/or sexual violence
- maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information discussed in meetings
- behave professionally and act with good faith if there are any disagreements.

The Chair or co-Chairs are expected to:

- lead meetings
- ensure the group remains focused on its purpose and objectives
- encourage a constructive and collaborative environment within the group and with respect to the group's engagement with the Minister
- provide a summary of key recommendations to the Minister after each meeting.

The advisory group is understood to be independent. Its advice *informs* Ministerial decision-making but does not *direct* what the Minister must decide. Members are encouraged to share their views with the group freely; there is no requirement to reach consensus nor any requirement to publicly agree with the Minister's comments or decisions. However, members must not make public comments in their capacity as a member of the advisory group. The Minister considers many sources of advice and retains sole responsibility for all decisions.

Members are required to maintain confidence regarding what is discussed in meetings. Any information shared with the public must be approved by the Minister or the Chief Executive of the Centre.

The advisory group may, where appropriate, consult with other family violence and sexual violence specialists, victim/survivors, peak bodies, and/or other interest groups or specialist perspectives.

Conflicts of interest

The advisory group must retain public confidence and operate transparently. Members must perform their functions in good faith, honestly and impartially, and avoid situations that might compromise their integrity or otherwise lead to conflicts of interest. They must also be – and be seen to be – independent of the Minister and the Centre.

Members are expected to attend meetings and undertake all activities as an independent person responsible to the advisory group as a whole. This means members are not appointed as representatives of any professional organisations or bodies. The Minister will not assume that any particular group's interests have been taken into account just because a member is associated with that particular group.

Members are required to disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest to the Centre and other members of the advisory group. The Centre's secretariat will maintain a register of declarations and will determine whether or not each declaration represents a conflict and, if so, what action will be taken to address or mitigate the concern.

At each meeting, the Chair or co-Chairs will ask members to update or confirm their previous declarations.

Resolution of issues

Any issues or concerns should be raised with the Chair or co-Chairs and Minister on a no-surprises basis. All parties are expected to act in good faith at all times and work towards constructive resolution of differences.

Secretariat support

The advisory group will have a direct line of communication with the Minister. Alongside this, the Centre will provide secretariat support. This includes:

- organising meetings
- preparing and circulating agendas, background papers and meeting packs
- recording minutes and tracking action points
- managing correspondence on behalf of the group and the Minister
- paying members' fees
- entering into any contracts on behalf of the advisory group if required
- responding to members' requests for information and/or coordinating requests to other Government agencies
- making sure the advisory group adheres to Government processes and legislation
- managing consultation with stakeholders if required
- updating the terms of reference if requested by the Minister or the Centre

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- making travel arrangements and/or processing requests for reimbursement of travel expenses
- provide meeting rooms if required.

Approved by Hon Karen Chhour

Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence

Date _____