

The Treasury

Budget 2026 Information Release

September 2026

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Information Withheld

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified.

Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to sections of the Act under which information has been withheld:

- [1] 6(a) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the government
- [2] 6(b)(i) - to avoid prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government
- [4] 6(c) - to avoid prejudice to the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation, and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial
- [7] 6(e)(ii) - to prevent serious damage to the economy of New Zealand by disclosing prematurely decisions to change or continue government economic or financial policies relating to the regulation of banking or credit
- [12] 7(a)(i) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the self-governing State of the Cook Islands
- [13] 7(a)(ii) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the self-governing State of Niue
- [14] 7(a)(iii) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of Tokelau
- [15] 7(a)(iv) - to avoid prejudice to the security or defence of the Ross Dependency
- [23] 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people
- [25] 9(2)(b)(ii) - to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information or who is the subject of the information
- [26] 9(2)(ba)(i) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied
- [27] 9(2)(ba)(ii) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest

- [31] 9(2)(f)(ii) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting collective and individual ministerial responsibility
- [33] 9(2)(f)(iv) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by ministers and officials
- [34] 9(2)(g)(i) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions
- [35] 9(2)(g)(ii) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through protecting ministers, members of government organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment;
- [36] 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege
- [37] 9(2)(i) - to enable the Crown to carry out commercial activities without disadvantage or prejudice
- [38] 9(2)(j) - to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice
- [39] 9(2)(k) - to prevent the disclosure of official information for improper gain or improper advantage
- [40] 18(c)(i) - that the making available of the information requested would be contrary to the provisions of a specified enactment
- [41] 18(d) - information requested is or will soon be publicly available

Where information has been withheld, a numbered reference to the applicable section of the Act has been made, as listed above. For example, a [23] appearing where information has been withheld in a release document refers to section 9(2)(a).

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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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.

Budget 2026 Package: Vote Justice (Technical Initiatives)

On 7 May 2026, Cabinet:

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

- 1 **approved** the Budget initiatives for the above Vote for inclusion in the 2026 Budget package, as listed in the summary table below and detailed in the attached initiative documents:

Summary of technical initiatives:

Operating Initiatives (Impact on Operating Balance)

Initiative ID	Initiative Name	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
17438	Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Support Online Safety and Digital Wellbeing	0.500	-	-	-	-
17436	Technical Adjustment to Support Establishment of Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand	(0.500)	0.500	-	-	-
17377	Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Manage Legal Aid Cost Pressure	10.000	-	-	-	-
Total Operating		10.000	0.500	-	-	-

Diana Hawker
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

Vote: Justice

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

Title: Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Support Online Safety and Digital Wellbeing

Description: This initiative provides \$0.500 million in 2025/26 to manage a one-off cost pressure in Vote Justice associated with online safety and digital wellbeing, offset by a corresponding decrease in the *District Court Services* category of a Vote Courts appropriation.

Appropriation Changes

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Operating Balance Impact*	0.500	-	-	-	-
Net Core Crown Debt Impact Only	-	-	-	-	-
No Impact	-	-	-	-	-
Total	0.500	-	-	-	-

* Unless non-cash, will also impact net core Crown debt.

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Community Justice Support and Assistance (MCA)					
<i>Non-Departmental Output Expenses:</i>					
Community Harm Reduction	0.500	-	-	-	-
Total Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Community Justice Support and Assistance (MCA)	0.500	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	0.500	-	-	-	-

Additional recommendation

2 **noted** that this initiative relates to Initiative 17538 in Vote Courts;

Vote: Justice

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

Title: Technical Adjustment to Support Establishment of Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand

Description: This initiative transfers \$0.500 million from 2025/26 to 2026/27 to enable the Ministry of Justice to support the transition of the Firearms Safety Authority from a branded business unit hosted by Police to an independent statutory entity, Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand. It also seeks an in-principle expense transfer of up to \$0.500 million for the same purpose.

Appropriation Changes

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Operating Balance Impact*	(0.500)	0.500	-	-	-
Net Core Crown Debt Impact Only	-	-	-	-	-
No Impact	-	-	-	-	-
Total	(0.500)	0.500	-	-	-

* Unless non-cash, will also impact net core Crown debt.

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Departmental Output Expenses:					
Establishing the Independent Statutory Agency for Firearms Safety (funded by revenue Crown)	-	0.500	-	-	-
Justice Policy Advice (funded by revenue Crown)	(0.500)	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	(0.500)	0.500	-	-	-

Additional recommendation

- authorised** the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Justice jointly to transfer up to \$0.500 million from the 'Justice Policy Advice' appropriation in 2025/26 to the 'Establishing the Independent Statutory Agency for Firearms Safety' appropriation in 2026/27, following completion of the Ministry of Justice's 2025/26 audited financial statements, with no impact on the operating balance and/or net core Crown debt across the forecast period;

Vote: Justice

Appropriation Administrator: Ministry of Justice

Title: Fiscally Neutral Adjustment to Manage Legal Aid Cost Pressure

Description: This initiative provides \$10 million in 2025/26 to manage Legal Aid cost pressures in Vote Justice, offset by corresponding decreases in appropriations in Vote Courts.

Appropriation Changes

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Operating Balance Impact*	10.000	-	-	-	-
Net Core Crown Debt Impact Only	-	-	-	-	-
No Impact	-	-	-	-	-
Total	10.000	-	-	-	-

* Unless non-cash, will also impact net core Crown debt.

	\$m - increase/(decrease)				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & Outyears
Non-Departmental Output Expenses:					
Legal Aid (funded by revenue Crown)	10.000	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	10.000	-	-	-	-

Additional recommendation

4 **noted** that this initiative relates to Initiative 17537 in Vote Courts.