


16 March 2023

C164863



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 8 February 2023 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting information about Corrections’ recruitment campaign. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). We apologise that we have not met the extended due date for your request.

Corrections’ frontline staff deal with some of New Zealand’s most difficult and challenging people on a daily basis. People in prison often come into our management with significant learning, disability, mental health, and addiction needs. Corrections takes our duty of care seriously to do everything we can to help people rehabilitate, improve their wellbeing, and safely reintegrate back into their communities.

As has been widely reported, Corrections has been facing staffing challenges across many of our prisons, and this has impacted our ability to fully resume access to programmes and in-person visits, and provide longer unlock hours, at some sites. As a result, we are making a concerted effort to recruit, retain and train staff. This includes our advertising campaign, which is focused on actively recruiting new Corrections Officers across the country. Our staff have also been carrying out recruitment activities in their local communities (for example, information evenings for people interested in working with us).

You requested:

- *How many applications to be corrections officers have there been from October 28 2022, to 8 February 2023?*

We have seen a strong increase in the number of job applications for new Corrections Officers, with over 3,100 applications received since October 2022, including 1,934 received between 28 October 2022 and 8 February 2023.

- *How many of those applicants are now working in corrections?*
- *What are the roles those applicants are filling?*

While we have received a significant number of applications, it does take time to assess each applicant. Applicants for Corrections Officer roles undergo a rigorous selection process, including multiple assessments to ensure their suitability for the role. Due to the high level of integrity expected of staff working in prisons, thorough pre-employment checks must also be carried out. These include Police vetting, drug testing, a physical fitness test and medical check, and a reference check prior to employment. The average time from an application being submitted to someone being appointed to a role is currently 77 days.

Due to the nature of their work, new Corrections Officers undertake comprehensive training, which takes between 12-14 months. The Corrections Officer Development Pathway (CODP) is the initial training for new Corrections Officers. The pathway starts with an induction week at their prison site, five weeks at our National Learning Centre in Upper Hutt and continues for a period of 12 months back at the prison site. The CODP includes classroom-based learning, self-led learning, practice in simulated environments and on-the-job learning.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, low unemployment, and border restrictions, we recruited 998 people to frontline roles in prisons and the community in 2021/22. Since the beginning of 2023, we have had 166 people begin their employment in frontline custodial roles. A total of 61 people who submitted an application between 28 October 2022 and 8 February 2023 have been appointed to a role as a Corrections Officer. Corrections is currently processing more than 800 applications for Corrections Officer roles, with 250 people in the final stages of the application process prior to accepting an offer.

- *What is the annual salary of those officers?*

The starting salary of a Corrections Officer is \$59,519. This and other information about the Corrections Officer role is available at: <https://careers.corrections.govt.nz/roles/corrections-officer/>

- *How much money has the marketing campaign cost? TV ads, billboards, social media advertisements etc...*

The following table provides the cost of the development and placement of the current advertising campaign. Please note that we do not have a final figure for media placement costs, but the planned costs are provided below.

| Category | Costs |
|---|--------------------|
| Development and research | \$111,010 |
| Video Production | \$718,650 |
| Out of Home, Digital, Radio Production Costs | \$69,966 |
| Content production | \$450,000 |
| Planned Media Placement costs | |
| - Broadcast TV (TVOne, TV2, Discovery/Bravo, Duke, Sky, Maori TV, and Specialist Ethnic Channels) | \$1,774,466 |
| - Digital TV & Online Video (including Youtube) | \$357,503 |
| - Out of Home (Billboards, Bus Stops, Street Posters) | \$300,735 |
| - Search engine advertising | \$67,296 |
| Total | \$3,849,626 |

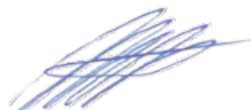
- *What is the convict-to-corrections officer ratio after 28 October 2022 compared to 8 February 2023? Is it an appropriate number for New Zealand's prison population?*

Corrections does not have a specific target for staff ratios. The ratio of corrections officers (including Corrections Officers, Senior Corrections Officers and Principal Corrections Officers) to people in prison was 1:2.0 on 28 October 2022 and 1:2.2 on 8 February 2023.

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 trust the information provided is of assistance. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi



Richard Waggott
Deputy Chief Executive
People and Capability