

Friday 16 September 2022

Tēnā koe,

Update on work to ease staffing level pressures in prisons – Movements from Arohata Prison

Corrections is currently experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, combined with labour shortages across the country have made it more challenging for us to recruit and retain frontline staff.

Staffing pressures continue to impact the provision of services within our environment, such as access to rehabilitation and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure continues to be most acutely felt at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

Public safety remains our top priority, and we're committed to taking action to ensure our facilities continue to operate in a way that's safe and secure. As you know, we have plans to undertake a series of prisoner movements to rebalance our population in a way that alleviates pressure on our most impacted prisons. At the same time, we are undertaking a national recruitment drive and progressing a number of staff retention initiatives.

Movements from Arohata Prison will commence next week

From next week, Arohata Prison will begin a transition to focus mainly on a remand population. Sentenced prisoners at Arohata will be moved to Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP) and Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility (ARWCF) over the next four to five weeks. This will allow some Arohata staff to move to Rimutaka Prison to open additional High Security accommodation, which will in turn take pressure off Mt Eden Corrections Facility.

We also intend to move a number of remand prisoners from Spring Hill Corrections Facility to Waikeria Prison over the coming weeks to alleviate pressure at SHCF. We will provide further information on these movements as they are confirmed.

Unfortunately, due to the pace at which decisions have had to be made, the amount of time we have had to communicate with affected women and our stakeholders has been limited. We have, however, communicated across the past week with the women at Arohata and other stakeholders such as the Ombudsman, Human Rights Commission, Judiciary, legal profession, New Zealand Parole Board, and iwi about these moves.

Welfare and wellbeing of the women / wāhine at Arohata Prison

The welfare and wellbeing of women / wāhine at Arohata is a key priority for us as we prepare to undertake these moves. We know that these sorts of movements between prisons can have an

impact on access to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. A plan has been developed to individually assess the women serving sentences who may be moved and to support the continued delivery of programmes at other sites.

Women who are participating in rehabilitative programmes (Kowhiritanga and the Short Rehabilitation Programme for Women) will be selected to move to CWP at a time over the coming weeks that suits the delivery of their programme best. We anticipate that these movements will improve access to rehabilitation programmes for women in prison.

We are also exploring options around sending programme facilitators currently working at Arohata to CWP to support the women to complete their programme. Virtual delivery to complete the externally provided Drug Treatment programme is also being explored.

We are working to ensure prisoners are aware of planned moves and the reasons for them, so that they can inform family and whānau. As per our usual practice, prisoners will be offered the opportunity to call whānau on their approved contact list to inform them of their move to another facility.

If there are families who will now have to travel further to visit a family member in prison, they may be eligible to apply for assistance from the Child Travel Fund if they have a child visiting a parent in prison or if they are a parent traveling to visit a child under 18 years of age in prison. This fund is administered through local Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society (PARS) and Salvation Army offices.

There are also plans to increase the AVL capacity across the women's prison network to assist in ensuring anyone moved would have greater access to AVL capabilities to keep in contact with family and loved ones.

Impact on court and Parole Board appearances

We will work to minimise any disruption to court appearances through the use of AVL technology as well as the transfer back of prisoners for any in-person court appearances. As part of our usual practice, we closely monitor all prisoners who move out of their home region and have a system in place to track those needing to return to ensure no court appearances are missed. We also take upcoming court appearances into account when making decisions on individual movements to other prisons.

Any upcoming Parole Board hearings will not be affected either.

Our response plan will alleviate pressure across the prison network

Changing where and how we manage the population across our prisons will reduce staff fatigue at our most affected sites, support the delivery of minimum entitlements to prisoners including visits, improve access to health services, and increase access to out-of-cell activities across the network. Movements across the network will also help to better align prisoners' security classifications with the unit they are placed in.

We will constantly review our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to routines and access to programmes. Please note our plans are subject to change as fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will influence decisions on movements and their timing.

We will provide further updates to our stakeholders and partners as decisions on prisoner movements are made. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me should you have any queries.

Re-opening visits

At the same time, Corrections is working hard to re-open prisons for visits from family and whānau across the network. We understand the impact that the pause on visits has had on people in prison and their family / whānau throughout COVID-19.

At present, eight prisons are open for visits including Northland Region Corrections Facility (NRCF – limited availability), Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF), Waikeria Prison, Manawatū Prison (limited availability), Christchurch Women’s Prison (CWP – limited availability), Rolleston Prison (limited availability), Otago Corrections Facility (OCF), and Invercargill Prison. Tongariro Prison will reopen for visits with limited availability from Saturday 17 September.

With the exception of Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF), all other prisons are facilitating virtual visits with family and whānau via AVL link. All our sites are developing plans to safely resume in-person visits as soon as they are able, and we are committed to doing so. We regularly update the availability of visits on our website at

https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our_work/prison_sentences/staying_connected_with_people_in_prison/visits/prison_visit_updates.

Following the Government’s announcement on Monday 12 September that the COVID-19 Protection Framework would be repealed, we are working at pace with our unions to review our COVID-19 settings in prisons and across our organisation. However, it is important to understand that the key constraint on prisons facilitating visits and programme delivery is not COVID-19, but rather the staffing level pressures currently being experienced.

We will continue to provide updates to our stakeholders and partners as we work towards normalising our prison operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I will be covering for Jeremy for the next week while he is on leave, so if you have any further questions please feel free to contact me directly.

Ngā mihi nui,

Topia Rameka

Deputy Chief Executive Māori

Department of Corrections

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Tuesday 27 September 2022

Tēnā koe S 9(2)(a),

Re: Movement of women from Arohata Prison

Thank you for your letter dated 16 September 2022, to the Minister of Corrections, Hon Kelvin Davis, and Ben Clark, National Commissioner, Department of Corrections. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

In your correspondence, you raise concerns about the transfer of women from Arohata Prison. As the Minister cannot intervene in operational matters, your letter to him has been referred to Corrections for response. I acknowledge the questions in your letter and hope that the following information goes some way to address your concerns.

As part of our current plan, the majority of sentenced women at Arohata will move to either Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP) or Auckland Regional Women's Corrections Facility (ARWCF) to enable us to redeploy staff based at Arohata to Rimutaka Prison to help ease pressure across the prison network. At present, we have identified 39 women who will be moved under the plan.

Given the current prison population, this would leave 10 sentenced women remaining at Arohata – 5 due to pending releases to locations within the North Island, and 5 who are currently being assessed.

Of all 39 women set to move so far, only three were sentenced by courts within the Wellington region. Of the six women due to be moved to ARWCF, two were sentenced in the Auckland region. The majority of the women at Arohata were sentenced from courts across the lower North Island (but beyond the Wellington region) or in the upper North Island.

We are working to ensure the women are aware of planned moves and the reasons for them, so that they can inform family and whānau. As per our usual practice, the women will be offered the opportunity to call whānau on their approved contact list to inform them of their move to another facility.

Movements from Arohata are the result of extensive planning to relieve pressure across the whole prison network

The movements plan we have developed is the result of extensive planning to determine the most effective and efficient way of providing relief to our most impacted prisons. Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF) are facing acute pressures which continue to pose significant and pressing challenges to the site safety and security. The welfare and wellbeing of the women at Arohata Prison is a priority for us but at the same time we absolutely must meet our obligations to keep our staff and people in prison safe.

It is important to note that Rimutaka is our only prison where we are able to draw upon additional staff resource due to its proximity to another site which also has sufficient high-security bed capacity to enable meaningful relief to MECF to be realised. This makes making additional staffing available to Rimutaka Prison a priority.

While other sites around the country have additional unused high security capacity (including at Manawatū Prison and double bunks at Hawkes Bay Regional Prison), there are no other sites in close proximity where additional staff could be drawn from. Christchurch Men's Prison (CMP) does not have sufficient high-security capacity available at present to enable meaningful relief.

Releasing 14 staff from Arohata Prison represents the only feasible way where sufficient high security capacity can be safely opened to provide meaningful relief. These Arohata staff will enable further staffing reconfiguration to take place at Rimutaka Prison to safely support the opening of 75 additional high-security beds.

We have explored options other than movements and have been operating a model of 'surge support' for sites by seconding staff to work in sites away from their home. Unfortunately, this approach has been unable to yield the volume of staff required to provide meaningful relief and is not sustainable in the long-term as staff are under no obligation within their employment agreements to work away from their 'home' site.

We continue to place a high importance on the wellbeing of the women at Arohata. All the sentenced women have been individually assessed so we can continue to meet their specific needs once movements have been completed. This includes the continued delivery of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes the women may be participating in, as well as any upcoming events (ie. release dates, or parole appearances).

We are in the process of confirming plans to fly programme facilitators from Arohata down to Christchurch Women's Prison, as well as exploring the virtual delivery of the Drug Treatment Programme. A key outcome for women moving to CWP and ARWCF will be an increased level of opportunity during unlock hours due to greater staffing levels across the two sites, as well as additional opportunities to access the Te Mana Wahine programme at CWP.

Welfare and wellbeing

We are very mindful of the impact for a small number of the women from the Wellington region in being further away from their family and whānau. As mentioned, we have identified that only a small portion of the women set to be moved are from the Wellington region. If there are families who will now have to travel further to visit a family member in prison, they may be eligible to apply for assistance from the Child Travel Fund if they have a child visiting a parent in prison or if they are a parent traveling to visit a child under 18 years of age in prison. This fund is administered through local Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society (PARS) and Salvation Army offices.

There are also plans to increase the AVL capacity across the women's prison network to assist in ensuring anyone moved would have greater access to AVL capabilities to keep in contact with family and loved ones.

In the lead up to the movements, we made special arrangements to support the wellbeing of the women being transferred. Christchurch Women's Prison Director Viv Whelan spent two days at Arohata with Arohata Prison Director Pippa Carey to introduce herself to the women and discuss what they can expect once they arrive at Christchurch Women's Prison. We are also sending custodial and cultural support staff from Arohata Prison to assist with the induction process at CWP to ensure the women see familiar faces as they settle into CWP.

I can confirm that none of the women set to move from Arohata Prison have any disabilities.

Our response plan will alleviate pressure across the prison network

Changing where and how we manage the population across our prisons will reduce staff fatigue at our most affected sites, support the delivery of minimum entitlements including visits, improve access to health services, and increase access to out-of-cell activities across the network. Movements across the network will also help to better align the security classification of people in prison with the unit they are placed in.

We will constantly review our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to routines and access to programmes. Please note our plans are subject to change as fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will influence decisions on movements and their timing.

We know that recruitment of frontline prison staff is the long-term solution to our staffing pressures. Since we launched our national recruitment campaign, we have been averaging 17 applications per day for frontline prison roles and expect this to increase as we continue to ramp up our recruitment efforts.

Mental health and trauma-informed care

We know that many people in our care are affected by trauma and mental health issues. As you will be aware, all of our prisons feature Health Centres which deliver primary healthcare including mental healthcare.

Corrections employs a range of mental health professionals, including clinical nurse specialists (mental health), psychologists, clinical social workers, kairuruku hinengaro Māori mental health practitioners, mental health nurses and occupational therapists, who work as part of Intervention and Support Practice Teams (ISPTs) at seven prison facilities across New Zealand, including at ARWCF.

Clinical nurse specialists (mental health) and trauma therapists are also employed to provide mental health support at sites where there are no ISPTs in place, such as Arohata Prison and Christchurch Women's Prison. These professionals work directly with individuals with moderate to high mental health needs to support them to improve their wellbeing. They also provide mental health education to Corrections staff with the intention of supporting staff to upskill and feel more confident with supporting people with mental health needs.

Teams of externally contracted mental health clinicians are also employed to work with offenders in prison and the community across 17 prisons and four Community Corrections sites (Manukau, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Dunedin). These professionals work with people on custodial or community sentences and who have mild to moderate mental health needs. They also provide

structured and ad hoc mental health education to Corrections staff. Clinicians may also refer offenders to appropriate community service agencies that can help facilitate a successful reintegration with their families and communities and increase the engagement of prisoners in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes in prisons.

Corrections also provides more formal mental health training to custodial staff. MH101 is a one-day workshop to equip people to respond to people experiencing mental health challenges, both at work and in everyday life. Staff learn how to support themselves and their colleagues, how to develop as a team to have the skills to respond safely, thoughtfully and effectively in every situation. Further to this, staff develop an understanding of how one's reactions can impact on the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of others.

11 half-day workshops focusing on suicide prevention and 5 full-day workshops focusing on the management of complex and challenging behaviour were delivered to custodial staff during the 2021/2022 financial year. Further workshops were scheduled, however were cancelled due to COVID-19 related issues.

Further work is currently being undertaken to develop a more sustainable and integrated mental health training pathway for custodial staff. Some initial ideas regarding content and delivery pathways have been developed and these are currently being tested across several prison sites.

Further progress to embed this training are somewhat dependent on progress being made within other parts of Corrections, including the custodial capability uplift work occurring as part of the Violence and Aggression Work Programme.

Corrections has also implemented monthly reflective supervision for our frontline custodial staff working in our Intervention and Support Units. Reflective supervision provides an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice and to build resilience given the complex and challenging nature of their roles.

Trauma-informed care

As part of our overall Mental Health and Reintegration Services, we deliver the Support for Women in Prison service.

This service provides women access to professional counsellors and social workers to help address female-specific needs in relation to trauma, victimhood, and family that many women entering prison have struggled to deal with. By addressing these particular needs, women will be better able to participate in reintegration and treatment programmes and therefore have improved skills to support reintegration back into their families and communities post release. This service began in November 2016 and is delivered in Auckland, Arohata and Christchurch Women's prisons.

An '*Understanding and Responding to Trauma*' learning programme was developed for staff that work with people in our care that are affected by trauma. The training consists of a self-guided learning workbook and a reflection exercise that provides the learner with the experience of working effectively with people affected by trauma.

Corrections also holds a one-day training workshop that introduces Trauma Informed Practice to all staff who work in women's prisons. The training looks at the prevalence of traumatic experiences

among people on sentence, and the impact of the prison environment on people with these backgrounds of trauma. Staff will look at how to recognise trauma and why this is important to our work. Importantly, we will look how to respond to people in prison who have had traumatic experiences.

Working with women with traumatic experiences can influence staff wellbeing. This training also addresses how staff can exercise self-care in this respect.

We will provide further updates to our stakeholders and partners as further decisions on movements are made. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me should you have any further queries.

Ngā mihi,

Leigh Marsh

Acting National Commissioner

Department of Corrections

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Tuesday 27 September 2022

Tēnā koe **NAME**,

Easing staffing levels in prison – upcoming changes at Rimutaka Prison

I am writing to provide you with an update on recent changes at Rimutaka Prison to support work to ease staffing pressures across the prison network.

As you are aware, Corrections is currently experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, combined with labour shortages across the country have made it more challenging for us to recruit and retain frontline staff.

Staffing pressures continue to impact the provision of services within our environment, such as access to rehabilitation and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure continues to be most acutely felt at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

While these two sites are the most affected, the pressure we face is a network-wide issue and it requires a network-wide solution. Every prison in the country has an important role to play in supporting our staff at other sites so they can succeed. We know this is a challenging time and that pressures will continue to be experienced until later this year or early 2023 as the results of our significant recruitment efforts are realised.

The safety of people in prison, our staff, and the community remains our top priority, and we're committed to taking action to ensure our facilities continue to operate in a way that's safe and secure.

As you may know, we have plans to undertake a series of prisoner movements to rebalance our population in a way that alleviates pressure on our most impacted prisons. At the same time, we are undertaking a national recruitment drive and progressing a number of staff retention initiatives.

On Monday 26 September, Rimutaka Prison moved to an alternate roster system

Over the coming weeks, Rimutaka Prison will be receiving prisoners from Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) in Auckland to ease the acute pressures being felt by the prison. As a result, Rimutaka Prison has made changes to its staff rosters to ensure a focus on critical activities as the prison population increases at the prison.

This means that there will be some temporary pauses to certain activities at Rimutaka Prison while the site settles into its new roster patterns. It is important that we take this step to ensure that the prison remains safe and secure for everyone at the site as we continue our work to ease pressure across the prison system.

The following changes have been made:

- With the exception of the Special Treatment Unit (Te Whare Manaakitanga), all other group and individual rehabilitation programmes and psychological treatments and will be paused. This will include the Drug Treatment Programme, the Tikanga programme and the Medium Intensity Rehabilitation Programme (MIRP). However, physical and mental health services will continue to be provided.
- Most reintegrative programmes and activities will be paused, including those delivered in-person and virtually. However, in-person chaplaincy and Kaiwhakamana (cultural support) services will continue, as will ACC counselling. Section 27 cultural reports will continue to be undertaken but via phone or AVL. All Court and Parole Board ordered assessments will be conducted via phone or AVL.
- Completion of psychological services reports for the Parole Board will continue in-person. Where the rare situation arises that our staffing levels cannot support in-person visits, virtual meetings will occur.
- Client visits by lawyers to people in prison will be conducted via phone or AVL only. These will continue to be arranged via the Prisoner Contact team at National Office. Whānau visits will continue to be delivered virtually and we are working to increase the availability of AVL-capable devices for the prison for use during this period of transition and change.

We know that these are significant changes for Rimutaka Prison. Our overarching concern is the safety of everyone across our sites. We have explored every option available to us to ensure that we continue to deliver as many activities and services to greatest possible extent that we can safely manage. This work has meant that a number of activities will continue to be delivered as we work to safely resume those that we are temporarily pausing:

- The Special Treatment Unit (Te Whare Manaakitanga) will remain open
- Mental health services will continue to be delivered
- ACC counselling sessions will continue to take place in-person
- We will continue to facilitate visits from chaplains, Kaiwhakamana, and where necessary the Police. However, these will be facilitated in the wing rather than one-to-one or in groups.

We are closely monitoring the situation as Rimutaka Prison transitions into its new roster pattern. We have a strong expectation that we will be in a position to begin to safely re-open activities in the coming weeks as this transition is made.

Our response plan will alleviate pressure across the prison network

It's a challenging time for the prison network and Corrections is feeling the impacts of staffing shortages in the same way that many organisations and businesses across New Zealand are.

We are absolutely committed to ensuring that the acute pressure being experienced by some of our sites is reduced and that the prison system remains safe and secure. By making these changes and increasing the number of people accommodated at Rimutaka Prison, we will be providing significant relief to sites in much more difficult circumstances.

In the longer term, changing where and how we manage the population across our prisons will reduce staff fatigue at our most affected sites, support the delivery of minimum entitlements to prisoners including visits, improve access to health services, and increase access to out-of-cell activities across the network. Movements across the network will also help to better align prisoners' security classifications with the unit they are placed in.

We are constantly reviewing our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to routines and access to programmes. Please note our plans are subject to change as fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will influence decisions on movements and their timing.

Re-opening visits

At the same time, Corrections is working hard to re-open prisons for visits from family and whānau across the network. We understand the impact that the pause on visits has had on people in prison and their family / whānau throughout COVID-19.

At present, nine prisons are open for visits including Northland Region Corrections Facility (NRCF – limited availability), Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF), Waikeria Prison, Manawatū Prison (limited availability), Tongariro Prison (limited availability), Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP – limited availability), Rolleston Prison (limited availability), Otago Corrections Facility (OCF), and Invercargill Prison.

With the exception of Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF), all other prisons are facilitating virtual visits with family and whānau via AVL link. All our sites are developing plans to safely resume in-person visits as soon as they are able, and we are committed to doing so. We regularly update the availability of visits on our website at

https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our_work/prison_sentences/staying_connected_with_people_in_prison/visits/prison_visit_updates.

Following the Government's announcement on Monday 12 September that the COVID-19 Protection Framework would be repealed, we have already made changes to some of our COVID-19 controls in prison. We are continuing working at pace with our unions to review our other COVID-19 settings in prisons and across our organisation. However, it is important to understand that the key constraint on prisons facilitating visits and programme delivery is not COVID-19, but rather the staffing level pressures currently being experienced.

We will continue to provide updates to our stakeholders and partners as we work towards normalising our prison operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ngā mihi nui,

Leigh Marsh

Acting National Commissioner

Department of Corrections

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Tuesday 4 October 2022

Tēnā koe **S 9(2)(a)**,

Temporary changes to legal visits at Rimutaka Prison

Thank you for your letter of 29 September 2022 to Chief Executive Jeremy Lightfoot regarding temporary changes to legal visits at Rimutaka Prison. As response manager for our work to ease staffing pressures, I am writing in response on Jeremy's behalf. I understand the concerns you raise and can assure you we are working hard to resume in-person legal visits at Rimutaka Prison as soon as it is safe to do so.

Background

As you are aware, we are currently experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, combined with labour shortages across the country have made it more challenging for us to recruit and retain frontline staff.

Staffing pressures continue to impact the provision of services within our environment, such as access to rehabilitation and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure continues to be most acutely felt at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

The safety of people in prison, our staff, and the community remains our top priority, and we're committed to taking action to ensure our facilities continue to operate in a way that's safe and secure.

On Monday 26 September, Rimutaka Prison moved to an alternate roster system

Over the coming weeks, Rimutaka Prison will be receiving prisoners from Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) in Auckland to ease the acute pressures being felt by that prison. As a result, Rimutaka Prison has made changes to its staff rosters to ensure a focus on critical activities as its population increases.

To support this increase, a decision has been made to temporarily pause certain activities at Rimutaka Prison, including in-person legal visits, while the site settles into its new temporary roster. I can assure you that we have explored every option and combination of options possible to ease our staffing pressures at Rimutaka Prison and across the network.

It is important to recognise that significant additional resourcing is required across a prison to safely facilitate in-person visitors of all types. Managing this increased level of risk safely requires staff to be specifically allocated to escorting and ensuring the safety of visitors. This impacts on available resource in other parts of the prison. Staff must also be allocated to manage visitors onto the prison

via the Receiving Office whilst having sufficient numbers to respond to incidents on-site where necessary.

Conducting AVL visits is an efficient and effective means of reducing demands on staff so they can focus on critical activities. Resourcing to facilitate AVL visits has considerably less site-wide impacts on staffing requirements than having in-person visits.

We recognise the importance of in-person legal visits and are working hard to resume them as soon as possible. We are closely monitoring the situation as Rimutaka Prison transitions into its new roster pattern and are regularly reviewing site settings. The leadership team at Rimutaka Prison has identified the resumption of legal visits as a high priority once the site has settled into its new roster patterns.

We will continue to provide updates to our stakeholders and partners as we work towards normalising our prison operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ngā mihi nui,

Brigid Kean

Response Manager

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Update on work to ease staffing level pressures in prisons

Update for the Judiciary, Legal Profession, Justice Sector partners and agencies – 14 September 2022

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide an update on work Ara Poutama Aotearoa – The Department of Corrections is undertaking to alleviate staffing pressures in prisons.

As you are aware, Corrections is currently experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, combined with labour shortages across the country have made it more challenging for us to recruit and retain frontline staff.

Staffing pressures continue to impact the provision of services within the prison environment, such as access to rehabilitation and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure continues to be most acutely felt at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

Public safety remains our top priority, and we're committed to taking action to ensure our prisons continue to operate in a way that's safe and secure. We have plans to undertake a series of prisoner movements to rebalance the prisoner population in a way that alleviates pressure on our most impacted prisons. At the same time, we are undertaking a national recruitment drive and progressing a number of staff retention initiatives.

Movements from Arohata Prison will commence next week

From next week, Arohata Prison will begin a transition to focus mainly on a remand prison population. Sentenced prisoners at Arohata will be moved to Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP) and Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility (ARWCF) over the next four to five weeks. This will allow some Arohata staff to move to Rimutaka Prison to open additional High Security accommodation, which will in turn take pressure off Mt Eden Corrections Facility.

We also intend to move a number of remand prisoners from Spring Hill Corrections Facility to Waikeria Prison over the coming weeks to alleviate pressure at SHCF. We will provide further information on these movements as they are confirmed.

Welfare and wellbeing of the women/wāhine at Arohata Prison

The welfare and wellbeing of women/wāhine at Arohata Prison is a key priority for us as we prepare to undertake these moves. We know that these sorts of movements between prisons can have an impact on prisoners' access to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. A plan has been developed to support the continued delivery of programmes.

Women who are participating in rehabilitative programmes (Kowhiritanga and the Short Rehabilitation Programme for Women) will be selected to move to CWP at a time over the coming weeks that suits the delivery of their programme best.

We are also exploring options around sending programme facilitators currently working at Arohata to CWP to support the women to complete their programme. Virtual delivery to complete the externally provided Drug Treatment programme is also being explored.

We are working to ensure prisoners are aware of planned moves and the reasons for them, so that they can inform family and whānau. As per our usual practice, prisoners will be offered the opportunity to call whānau on their approved contact list to inform them of their move to another prison.

Impact on court appearances

We will work to minimise any disruption to prisoners' court appearances through the use of AVL technology as well as the transfer back of prisoners for any in-person court appearances. As part of our usual practice, we closely monitor all prisoners who move out of their home region and have a system in place to track those needing to return to ensure no court appearances are missed. We also take upcoming court appearances into account when making decisions on individual movements to other prisons.

Our response plan will alleviate pressure across the prison network

Changing where and how we manage prisoners across our prisons will reduce staff fatigue at our most affected sites, support the delivery of minimum entitlements to prisoners including visits, improve prisoners' access to health services, and increase prisoners' access to out-of-cell activities across the network. Movements across the prison network will also help to better align prisoners' security classifications with the unit they are placed in.

We will constantly review our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to prisoner routines and access to programmes. Please note our plans are subject to change as fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will influence decisions on movements and their timing.

We will provide further updates to our stakeholders and partners as decisions on prisoner movements are made.

Re-opening prison visits

At the same time, Corrections is working hard to re-open prisons for visits from family and whānau across the network. We understand the impact that the pause on visits has had on prisoners and their family/whānau throughout COVID-19.

At present, eight prisons are open for visits including Northland Region Corrections Facility (NRCF – limited availability), Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF), Waikeria Prison, Manawatū Prison (limited availability), Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP – limited availability), Rolleston Prison (limited availability), Otago Corrections Facility (OCF), and Invercargill Prison. Tongariro Prison will reopen for visits with limited availability from Saturday 17 September.

Following the Government's announcement on Monday 12 September that the COVID-19 Protection Framework would be repealed, we are working at pace with our unions to review our COVID-19 settings in prisons and across our organisation. However, it is important to understand that the key constraint on prisons facilitating visits and programme delivery is not COVID-19, but rather the staffing level pressures currently being experienced.

The Prisoner Contact Team

During our response to COVID-19, we introduced the Prisoner Contact team as the primary mechanism for legal representatives to arrange meetings with clients in prison. **We continue to request that legal counsel continue to contact the Prisoner Contact team to arrange visits at all prison sites.** The team will be able to provide up-to-date information on the availability of face-to-face and virtual visits at each site.

Process for arranging all legal visits

- Please contact the Prisoner Contact team (prisonercontact@corrections.govt.nz) to arrange face-to-face and/or virtual legal visits with people in prison.
- Please include the prisoner's name, PRN number, and a preferred and alternative date and time for your visit in your email to the Prisoner Contact team.
- Remember that not all prisons will be able to facilitate face-to-face visits, and sites that are able to facilitate face-to-face visits may need to prioritise in order to make effective use of their staff resourcing.
- Virtual visits may continue to be used at some sites for longer than others. The Prisoner Contact team will provide you with up-to-date information on the availability of legal visits for each prison.

For more information on legal visits, please see our website

<https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our-work/prison-sentences/staying-connected-with-people-in-prison/visits/legal-visits>.

Update on legal visits to people in prison

Information for the Judiciary and Legal Profession - August 2022

We recognise the importance of access to legal support for people in our care and we are working hard to facilitate face-to-face legal visits across the prison network.

Like many other agencies and businesses, we are experiencing a number of challenges when it comes to staffing, with COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, and record low unemployment rates making it more challenging to recruit and retain staff. COVID-19 and influenza has also impacted daily staffing levels due to sickness.

This has impacted our ability to consistently facilitate face-to-face legal visits at many of our sites. A number of prisons have been able to facilitate face-to-face legal visits for some time now, while virtual visits are being used at prisons where this is not possible.

It is important that all legal representatives follow the same process to arrange legal visits.

During our response to COVID-19, we introduced the Prisoner Contact team as the primary mechanism for legal representatives to arrange meetings with clients in prison. **We continue to request that legal counsel contact the Prisoner Contact team to arrange visits at all prison sites.** The team will be able to provide up-to-date information on the availability of face-to-face and virtual visits at each site.

We are continuing work with prisons to alleviate staffing pressures, strengthen our processes around arranging legal visits, and ensure greater consistency across sites.

Process for arranging all legal visits

- Please contact the Prisoner Contact team (prisonercontact@corrections.govt.nz) to arrange face-to-face and/or virtual legal visits with people in prison.
- Please include the prisoner's name, PRN number, and a preferred and alternative date and time for your visit in your email to the Prisoner Contact team.
- Remember that not all prisons will be able to facilitate face-to-face visits, and sites that are able to facilitate face-to-face visits may need to prioritise in order to make effective use of their staff resourcing.
- Virtual visits may continue to be used at some sites for longer than others. The Prisoner Contact team will provide you with up-to-date information on the availability of legal visits for each prison.

For more information on legal visits, please see our website

https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our_work/prison_sentences/staying_connected_with_people_in_prison/visits/legal_visits.

Work to ease staffing pressures in the prison system

Update for the Judiciary, Legal Profession, Justice Sector partners and agencies - August 2022

The purpose of this update is to provide information on work underway at Corrections to ease staffing pressures in the prison system. Like many other organisations and businesses across New Zealand, we are experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, combined with record high employment across the country have made it more challenging to recruit and retain staff.

Staffing pressures can impact the provision of services within the prison environment, such as access to rehabilitation, integration, and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure has been felt most acutely at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

Public safety is our top priority, and we remain committed to the safe and secure operation of the prison network. We have extensive business continuity plans in place across the country to meet the required staffing levels across a range of different situations, including health emergencies, natural disasters, and the ongoing response to COVID-19.

The first step we have taken towards easing staffing pressures was to stand up our National Coordination Centre (NCC), led by senior leaders across the organisation, to take immediate action to support sites faced with the most critical circumstances. At the same time, Corrections is continuing to focus on a range of initiatives relating to staff recruitment and retention, driven at both a national and site level.

Responding to pressure in the short to medium term

Over the past few weeks, Corrections has provided rolling surge staffing support to Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF). This has involved custodial and health staff from around the country volunteering to temporarily deploy to these sites for varying lengths of time to provide additional capacity. However, we know more must be done.

We are currently working through our plans to consolidate the prison population into fewer units, which will allow us to deploy staff more effectively. At a number of sites, we have implemented alternative rosters on a temporary basis to better enable the provision of critical services. We are also working on further steps around our network configuration in terms of the distribution of prisoners across our sites to make more effective and efficient use of our national network

Over the coming months, a series of prisoner movements will be undertaken to support those sites under the most pressure. The purpose of this network rebalancing will be to reduce the prison population and level of activity at our most affected sites by taking advantage of higher staffing levels at other sites.

Changing the flow of prisoners across prisons will achieve a more efficient and effective use of our network. It will reduce staff fatigue at our most affected sites, support the delivery of minimum entitlements, improve access to health services, and increase prisoner access to out-of-cell activities. Movements will also help to better align prisoners' security classifications with the unit they are placed in.

We will constantly review our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to prisoner routines and access to programmes. Fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will also influence decisions on movements and their timing.

We acknowledge the impact that prisoner movements can have for prisoners' access to rehabilitation, reintegration, education, training, legal representation, and whānau. Corrections has a clear framework for considering these factors in identifying prisoners who may potentially be moved. We will work to ensure continuity of programme delivery for transferred prisoners where possible. Corrections will provide further updates to our stakeholders as decisions are made.

Prisons will work to keep legal counsel updated on prisoner movements via the usual process. As per our usual practice, prisoners will also be offered the opportunity to call whānau on their approved contact list to inform them of their move to another prison.

The Prisoner Contact Team

During our response to COVID-19, we introduced the Prisoner Contact team as the primary mechanism for legal representatives to arrange meetings with clients in prison. **We continue to request that legal counsel continue to contact the Prisoner Contact team to arrange visits at all prison sites.** The team will be able to provide up-to-date information on the availability of face-to-face and virtual visits at each site.

Process for arranging all legal visits

- Please contact the Prisoner Contact team (prisonercontact@corrections.govt.nz) to arrange face-to-face and/or virtual legal visits with people in prison.
- Please include the prisoner's name, PRN number, and a preferred and alternative date and time for your visit in your email to the Prisoner Contact team.
- Remember that not all prisons will be able to facilitate face-to-face visits, and sites that are able to facilitate face-to-face visits may need to prioritise in order to make effective use of their staff resourcing.
- Virtual visits may continue to be used at some sites for longer than others. The Prisoner Contact team will provide you with up-to-date information on the availability of legal visits for each prison.

For more information on legal visits, please see our website

<https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our-work/prison-sentences/staying-connected-with-people-in-prison/visits/legal-visits>.

Update on work to ease staffing level pressures in prisons

Update for the Judiciary, Legal Profession, Justice Sector partners and agencies – 27 September 2022

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide an update on work Ara Poutama Aotearoa – The Department of Corrections is undertaking to alleviate staffing pressures in prisons.

As you are aware, Corrections is currently experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, combined with labour shortages across the country have made it more challenging for us to recruit and retain frontline staff.

Staffing pressures continue to impact the provision of services within our environment, such as access to rehabilitation and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure continues to be most acutely felt at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

While these two sites are the most affected, the pressure we face is a network-wide issue and it requires a network-wide solution. Every prison in the country has an important role to play in supporting our staff at other sites so they can succeed. We know this is a challenging time and that pressures will continue to be experienced until later this year or early 2023 as the results of our significant recruitment efforts are realised.

The safety of people in prison, our staff, and the community remains our top priority, and we're committed to taking action to ensure our facilities continue to operate in a way that's safe and secure.

As you may know, we have plans to undertake a series of prisoner movements to rebalance our population in a way that alleviates pressure on our most impacted prisons. At the same time, we are undertaking a national recruitment drive and progressing a number of staff retention initiatives.

On Monday 26 September, Rimutaka Prison moved to an alternate roster system

Over the coming weeks, Rimutaka Prison will be receiving prisoners from Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) in Auckland to ease the acute pressures being felt by the prison. As a result, Rimutaka Prison has made changes to its staff rosters to ensure a focus on critical activities as the prison population increases at the prison.

This means that there will be some temporary pauses to certain activities at Rimutaka Prison while the site settles into its new roster patterns. It is important that we take this step to ensure that the prison remains safe and secure for everyone at the site as we continue our work to ease pressure across the prison system.

The following changes have been made:

- With the exception of the Special Treatment Unit (Te Whare Manaakitanga), all other group and individual rehabilitation programmes and psychological treatments and will be paused. This will include the Drug Treatment Programme, the Tikanga programme and the Medium Intensity Rehabilitation Programme (MIRP). However, physical and mental health services will continue to be provided.

- Most reintegrative programmes and activities will be paused, including those delivered in-person and virtually. However, in-person chaplaincy and Kaiwhakamana (cultural support) services will continue, as will ACC counselling. Section 27 cultural reports will continue to be undertaken but via phone or AVL. All Court and Parole Board ordered assessments will be conducted via phone or AVL.
- Completion of psychological services reports for the Parole Board will continue in-person. Where the rare situation arises that our staffing levels cannot support in-person visits, virtual meetings will occur.
- Client visits by lawyers to people in prison will be conducted via phone or AVL only. These will continue to be arranged via the Prisoner Contact team at National Office. Whānau visits will continue to be delivered virtually and we are working to increase the availability of AVL-capable devices for the prison for use during this period of transition and change.

We know that these are significant changes for Rimutaka Prison. Our overarching concern is the safety of everyone across our sites. We have explored every option available to us to ensure that we continue to deliver as many activities and services to greatest possible extent that we can safely manage. This work has meant that a number of activities will continue to be delivered as we work to safely resume those that we are temporarily pausing:

- The Special Treatment Unit (Te Whare Manaakitanga) will remain open
- Mental health services will continue to be delivered
- ACC counselling sessions will continue to take place in-person
- We will continue to facilitate visits from chaplains, Kaiwhakamana, and where necessary the Police. However, these will be facilitated in the wing rather than one-to-one or in groups.

We are closely monitoring the situation as Rimutaka Prison transitions into its new roster pattern. We have a strong expectation that we will be in a position to begin to safely re-open activities in the coming weeks as this transition is made.

Our response plan will alleviate pressure across the prison network

It's a challenging time for the prison network and Corrections is feeling the impacts of staffing shortages in the same way that many organisations and businesses across New Zealand are.

We are absolutely committed to ensuring that the acute pressure being experienced by some of our sites is reduced and that the prison system remains safe and secure. By making these changes and increasing the number of people accommodated at Rimutaka Prison, we will be providing significant relief to sites in much more difficult circumstances.

In the longer term, changing where and how we manage the population across our prisons will reduce staff fatigue at our most affected sites, support the delivery of minimum entitlements to

prisoners including visits, improve access to health services, and increase access to out-of-cell activities across the network. Movements across the network will also help to better align prisoners' security classifications with the unit they are placed in.

We are constantly reviewing our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to routines and access to programmes. Please note our plans are subject to change as fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will influence decisions on movements and their timing.

Re-opening visits

At the same time, Corrections is working hard to re-open prisons for visits from family and whānau across the network. We understand the impact that the pause on visits has had on people in prison and their family / whānau throughout COVID-19.

At present, nine prisons are open for visits including Northland Region Corrections Facility (NRCF – limited availability), Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF), Waikeria Prison, Manawatū Prison (limited availability), Tongariro Prison (limited availability), Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP – limited availability), Rolleston Prison (limited availability), Otago Corrections Facility (OCF), and Invercargill Prison.

With the exception of Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF), all other prisons are facilitating virtual visits with family and whānau via AVL link. All our sites are developing plans to safely resume in-person visits as soon as they are able, and we are committed to doing so. We regularly update the availability of visits on our website at

https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our_work/prison_sentences/staying_connected_with_people_in_prison/visits/prison_visit_updates.

Following the Government's announcement on Monday 12 September that the COVID-19 Protection Framework would be repealed, we have already made changes to some of our COVID-19 controls in prison. We are continuing working at pace with our unions to review our other COVID-19 settings in prisons and across our organisation. However, it is important to understand that the key constraint on prisons facilitating visits and programme delivery is not COVID-19, but rather the staffing level pressures currently being experienced.

We will continue to provide updates to our stakeholders and partners as we work towards normalising our prison operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Prisoner Contact Team

During our response to COVID-19, we introduced the Prisoner Contact team as the primary mechanism for legal representatives to arrange meetings with clients in prison. **We continue to request that legal counsel continue to contact the Prisoner Contact team to arrange visits at all prison sites.** The team will be able to provide up-to-date information on the availability of face-to-face and virtual visits at each site.

Process for arranging all legal visits

- Please contact the Prisoner Contact team (prisonercontact@corrections.govt.nz) to arrange face-to-face and/or virtual legal visits with people in prison.
- Please include the prisoner's name, PRN number, and a preferred and alternative date and time for your visit in your email to the Prisoner Contact team.
- Remember that not all prisons will be able to facilitate face-to-face visits, and sites that are able to facilitate face-to-face visits may need to prioritise in order to make effective use of their staff resourcing.
- Virtual visits may continue to be used at some sites for longer than others. The Prisoner Contact team will provide you with up-to-date information on the availability of legal visits for each prison.

For more information on legal visits, please see our website

<https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our-work/prison-sentences/staying-connected-with-people-in-prison/visits/legal-visits>.

13 October 2022

Tēnā koe,

Changes at Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF) to support easing of staffing pressures across the prison network

I am writing to inform you of changes being made at Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF) and Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF) to support our work to ease staffing level pressures in the prison network.

Like many other organisations and business across the country, Corrections is currently experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. These pressures continue to impact the provision of services within our environment, such as access to rehabilitation and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure continues to be most acutely felt at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

The safety of people in prison, our staff, and the community remains our top priority, and we're committed to ensuring our facilities continue to operate in a way that's safe and secure.

Movements from Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF) and Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF)

On Monday 3 October, high security sentenced prisoners from Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF) started to move to Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF), with these movements continuing over the coming weeks. At the same time, ASCF is moving low security sentenced prisoners who are accommodated in high security cells to SHCF. SHCF will also move around 70 remand-accused prisoners to Rimutaka Prison and Hawkes Bay Regional Prison (HBRP) to further reduce the site's population.

These movements will provide much needed relief to SHCF. This is because there will be fewer prisoners at SHCF and in addition fewer staff are needed to safely manage the same number of people with a low security classification compared with those with a high security classification. This work will also support prisoners across the network return to being accommodated in cells that more closely align with their security classification.

Wellbeing and welfare

The welfare and wellbeing of the men being moved is a key priority for us as we undertake these changes. We know that these sorts of movements between prisons can have an impact on access to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

Due to the pressures at SHCF, we have been unable to safely facilitate a significant number of activities, including in-person visits, at the site for some time. The changes we are making will move

us closer to a position where we can safely offer greater unlock time to prisoners and resume key activities such as in-person visits and rehabilitation and reintegration programmes at SHCF. In-person visits have been in place at ASCF for some time now.

We are exploring options for the men with low security classifications arriving at SHCF from ASCF to participate in industries training and work opportunities at the prison where possible.

We are working to ensure the men who will be moving are aware of our plans and the reasons for them, so that they can inform family and whānau. As per our usual practice, prisoners will be offered the opportunity to call whānau on their approved contact list to inform them of their move to another facility.

If there are families who will now have to travel further to visit a family member in prison, they may be eligible to apply for assistance from the Child Travel Fund if they have a child visiting a parent in prison or if they are a parent traveling to visit a child under 18 years of age in prison. This fund is administered through local Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society (PARS) and Salvation Army offices. We are working to introduce additional AVL units at SHCF to support connections with family and whānau as we work towards safely resuming in-person visits.

Impact on court and Parole Board appearances

We will work to minimise any disruption to court appearances through the use of AVL technology as well as the transfer back of prisoners for any in-person court appearances. We are very mindful of ensuring on-going access to legal representation and will work to facilitate this to ensure adequate time for preparation ahead of any hearings. We will also work to ensure any upcoming Parole Board hearings are not impacted by these movements.

Our response plan will alleviate pressure across the prison network

We have already undertaken a series of steps to date towards easing staffing level pressures across the prison network:

- Arohata Prison has transitioned to focus mainly on a remand population through moving the majority of sentenced women prisoners to Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP) and Auckland Regional Women's Corrections Facility (ARWCF). We have worked hard to ensure the continued delivery of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to the women.
- A number of staff from Arohata Prison are being deployed at Rimutaka Prison to support the opening of additional high-security beds there. Some remand prisoners from Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) will move to Rimutaka towards the end of the month. Rimutaka Prison has made a number of temporary changes to site operations and activities in order to accommodate the upcoming increase in their population. These temporary pauses on activities are under constant review and will be resumed as soon as it is safe to do so.
- At the same time, we are continuing to ramp up our recruitment efforts with a new television ad campaign due to go live soon. We have recently seen a marked increase in the number of applications we are receiving.

We are absolutely committed to ensuring that the acute pressure being experienced by our prisons is reduced and that the prison system remains safe and secure. By making these changes we will be providing significant relief to our most impacted sites.

We are constantly reviewing our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to routines and access to programmes. Please note our plans are subject to change as fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will influence decisions on movements and their timing.

Ngā mihi nui,

Brigid Kean

Acting Deputy National Commissioner

Department of Corrections

e: Brigid.kean@corrections.govt.nz

Easing staffing levels in prison – upcoming changes at Rimutaka Prison

I am writing to provide you with an update on temporary changes at Rimutaka Prison to support work to ease staffing pressures across the prison network.

As you may be aware, Corrections is currently experiencing challenges when it comes to staffing. COVID-19 stressors, border closures and re-openings, combined with labour shortages across the country have made it more challenging for us to recruit and retain frontline staff.

Staffing pressures continue to impact the provision of services within our environment, such as access to rehabilitation and education programmes, training and education, visits, and unlock hours. This pressure continues to be most acutely felt at Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF).

While these two sites are the most affected, the pressure we face is a network-wide issue and it requires a network-wide solution. Every prison in the country has an important role to play in supporting our staff at other sites so they can succeed. We know this is a challenging time and that pressures will continue to be experienced for some time to come as the results of our significant recruitment efforts are realised.

The safety of people in prison, our staff, and the community remains our top priority, and we're committed to taking action to ensure our facilities continue to operate in a way that's safe and secure.

As you may know, we have plans to undertake a series of prisoner movements to rebalance our population in a way that alleviates pressure on our most impacted prisons. At the same time, we are undertaking a national recruitment drive and progressing a number of staff retention initiatives.

Rimutaka Prison will move to an alternate roster system from Monday 26 September

Over the coming weeks, Rimutaka Prison will be receiving prisoners from Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF) in Auckland to ease the acute pressures being felt by the prison. As a result, Rimutaka Prison is making changes to its staff rosters to ensure a focus on critical activities as the prison population increases at the prison.

This means that there will be some temporary pauses to certain activities at Rimutaka Prison while the site settles into its new roster patterns. It is important step that we take this step to ensure that the site remains safe and secure for everyone at the prison as we continue our work to ease pressure across the prison system.

The following temporary changes will be made from Monday 26 September

- With the exception of the Special Treatment Unit (Te Whare Manaakitanga), all other group and individual rehabilitation programmes and psychological treatment will be temporarily paused. This will include the Drug Treatment Programme, the Tikanga programme and the Medium Intensity Rehabilitation Programme (MIRP). Face to face mental health services will continue to be provided.
- Most reintegrative programmes and activities will be temporarily paused. However, in-person chaplaincy and Kaiwhakamana (cultural support) services will continue, as will ACC counselling. Section 27 cultural reports will continue to be undertaken but via virtual or phone connection. Most court and Parole Board ordered assessments will be conducted virtually or by phone.
- Completion of psychological services reports for the Parole Board will continue in-person. Where the rare situation arises that our staffing levels cannot support in-person visits, virtual meetings will occur.
- Client visits by lawyers to people in prison will be conducted virtually or by phone. These will continue to be arranged via the Prisoner Contact team at National Office. Whānau visits will continue to be delivered virtually and we are working to increase the availability of AVL-capable devices for the prison to use during this period of transition and change.

We know that these are significant changes for Rimutaka Prison. Our overarching concern is the safety and wellbeing of everyone across our sites. We have explored every option available to us to ensure that we continue to deliver as many activities and services to the greatest possible extent that we can safely manage. This work has meant that critical activities which directly impact the wellbeing of our people will continue to be delivered as we work to safely resume those that we are temporarily pausing.

Corrections will be constantly assessing the situation as Rimutaka Prison transitions into its new roster pattern. We have a strong expectation that we will be in a position to begin to safely re-open activities as soon as we can ensure safe staffing levels to support those activities.

Our response plan will alleviate pressure across the prison network

There is no doubt that it's a challenging time for the prison network and that Corrections is feeling the impacts of staffing shortages in the same way that many organisations and businesses across New Zealand are.

However, we are absolutely committed to ensuring that the acute pressure being experienced by some of our sites is reduced and that the prison system remains safe and

secure. By making these changes and increasing the number of people accommodated at Rimutaka Prison, we will be providing significant relief to sites in much more difficult circumstances.

In the longer term, changing where and how we manage the population across our prisons will reduce staff fatigue at our most affected sites, support the delivery of minimum entitlements to prisoners including visits, improve access to health services, and increase access to out-of-cell activities across the network. Movements across the network will also help to better align prisoners' security classifications with the unit they are placed in.

We are constantly reviewing our plans to ensure the least possible disruption to routines and access to programmes. Please note our plans are subject to change as fluctuation in the prison population across sites and other factors will influence decisions on movements and their timing.

Re-opening visits

At the same time, Corrections is working hard to re-open prisons for visits from family and whānau across the network. We understand the impact that the pause on visits has had on people in prison and their family / whānau throughout COVID-19.

At present, nine prisons are open for visits including Northland Region Corrections Facility (NRCF – limited availability), Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF), Waikeria Prison, Manawatū Prison (limited availability), Tongariro Prison (limited availability), Christchurch Women's Prison (CWP – limited availability), Rolleston Prison (limited availability), Otago Corrections Facility (OCF), and Invercargill Prison.

With the exception of Mt Eden Corrections Facility (MECF), all other prisons are facilitating virtual visits with family and whānau via AVL link. All our sites are developing plans to safely resume in-person visits as soon as they are able, and we are committed to doing so. We regularly update the availability of visits on our website at <https://www.corrections.govt.nz/our-work/prison-sentences/staying-connected-with-people-in-prison/visits/prison-visit-updates>.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Dennis Goodin
Prison Director
Rimutaka Prison

* Really good to hear PD feedback last wk 7/11/22

* Prisoner mounts -> limited impact
avail. of beds

- r prison pop. share numbers. 8018 up 5
495 up 5

This week planning focus Rem 3296 up 12
Mcorp main new focus area Releases 61
efficiency/resilience team
-> nurse/adult/non-essential wk
WFP planning

S 9(2)(a)

* welcome - Last year
Media campaign -> lot coverage 7961 up 57
attention

* Arohata - visits this wk

* COVID nos.
leave guidance

* Leigh - NC - update resourcing
DNE - coverage here
so critical