

Allied support workers – legal limits

When in doubt, **stop and escalate**

You are:



- a support role within a statutory system
- working under direction and supervision
- supporting social work practice through assigned tasks
- responsible for identifying, recording and escalating concerns
- operating within defined role boundaries
- supporting statutory work, not exercising statutory powers.

You do not have authority to:



- exercise any powers under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- determine whether a statutory threshold is met
- decide whether a care and protection or youth justice response is required
- approve, amend or cancel plans
- vary contact arrangements
- approve placements or placement changes
- make risk or safety assessments
- undertake social work analysis or formulate professional opinions
- complete court reports, assessments or recommendations
- represent Oranga Tamariki in professional decision-making forums.

You never:



- accept responsibility for a case
- make care, contact, placement or safety decisions
- present yourself as the decision-maker
- tell tamariki, rangatahi, whānau or caregivers that you can approve requests or make decisions
- determine risk levels, safety thresholds or intervention requirements
- change supervision, contact or placement arrangements without direction
- provide assessments, recommendations or opinions for court purposes
- undertake work reserved for a registered social worker.

You must:



- work only within assigned tasks and approved role boundaries
- seek guidance whenever uncertain about authority or responsibilities
- escalate matters involving assessment, risk, safety or decision-making
- distinguish between observation and assessment
- record factual information rather than professional opinion
- ensure casenotes are reviewed by the social worker where required.