

Tēnā koe,

Ngā mihi nui! Thank you for opening your heart and home to tamariki in need of care while their usual caregiver is not able to care for them.

Tamariki in the custody of Oranga Tamariki

The tamariki coming to you are in the custody of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki. This means Oranga Tamariki needs to take special measures to ensure their safety. This includes making sure the people that take care of them can provide a safe, stable and loving home, and are supported to meet the needs of the tamariki.

Tamariki may be:

- Part of your whānau or family group
- Known to you – neighbours, pupils, in the sports team you coach, your children's friends
- Part of your community but not known to you

Becoming a provisionally approved caregiver

Oranga Tamariki has put a special process in place so that we can safely and quickly place tamariki with new caregivers who are provisionally approved, until their usual caregivers are able to care for them again.

You will have met with an Oranga Tamariki social worker, completed an application form and been through a number of safety checks. The social worker will give you the All About Me Plan for each child coming into your care. This plan is really important. It has all the information about the child's needs. If you do not receive this plan, call the social worker and request it.

Welcoming tamariki into your home

Tamariki may be worried about their usual caregiver, anxious about going to stay somewhere different, and frustrated and angry if they have lived with many different caregivers.

Let tamariki guide you on how to help them settle in. Let them know they are safe. They may like some time on their own in the space that will be theirs. They may feel unsure about the expectations and routines in your home. Take time to let them know how things work. Consider what changes you could make so they feel valued and welcome – perhaps cooking food they like, asking if they would like to say karakia at mealtimes, or letting them choose a chore they can do to contribute.

Tamariki who have experienced trauma may find it difficult to connect with people and trust them. Spend time with tamariki doing activities together so they can get to know you. Be calm and patient.

Looking after the belongings of tamariki

Tamariki will bring essentials with them (clothing, toiletries) and items that are special to them (pounamu, toys, mementoes from whānau, special people and places, photographs, etc.)

Please help tamariki to keep these safe so that when they return to their usual caregiver, these items will go with them.

Helping tamariki stay connected to their whānau

It is really important that tamariki are able to maintain relationships with their whānau. Your social worker can help you keep these connections going while tamariki are in your care. This may mean tamariki visit members of their whānau (including siblings), or it could be telephone conversations or other kinds of connections.

It can be unsettling for tamariki to spend time with members of their whānau. They may become anxious or excited leading up to connecting; they may feel sad and angry about having to leave their whānau; they may feel let down if whānau do not visit; or it may be hard for them to adjust back to being in your care after time spent with whānau.

You can help tamariki have positive interactions with whānau; they might like to take something to show whānau, or you could help them think about what they might talk about. By being positive about their whānau you can build the mana of tamariki.

COVID-19 is currently a concern for all of us and may have an impact on face-to-face visits for tamariki with their whānau. Your social worker can advise you on the frequency of visits, how to manage social distancing, and what happens if someone is in self-isolation.

Financial Support

While tamariki are in your care, Oranga Tamariki will provide you with financial support to contribute to the costs associated with caring for children. Financial support differs based on the age of the tamariki in care, as follows:

Caregiver allowance

A care allowance is paid fortnightly and covers board, personal items and pocket money. We also provide a four-weekly clothing allowance, and allowances for Christmas and birthday presents.

The rates set out in the table below will be updated on 1 April 2020.

Age of Child/Young Person	Weekly Rate	Weekly Pocket Money	Birthday and Christmas Allowance (half the weekly board rate)	4 Weekly Clothing Rate
0 – 4 years	\$172.84	\$2.10	\$86.42	\$81.92
5 – 9 years	\$197.27	\$6.70	\$98.64	\$92.88
10 – 13 years	\$215.53	\$10.10	\$107.77	\$114.68
14 + years	\$233.71	\$15.60	\$116.86	\$137.64
Family home caregivers	\$219.31	Rates as above (paid in addition to board rates)	\$109.66	Rates as above

*Pocket money is included in the weekly care allowance rate, except for Family Home caregivers who receive this as an additional amount.

Visit orangatamariki.govt.nz/caring-for-someone/overview for current information.

Additional financial support

Other financial assistance, on top of the standard care allowance outlined in the table, may be available to you. This applies when:

- You are a new caregiver and you qualify for a \$350 set-up grant. This money helps you prepare to care for a child. Talk to your social worker about this.
- You care for a child who is in nappies. This \$20 payment is added to your weekly allowance payment.

Other payments tamariki in your care may qualify for, but are not included in the standard care allowance, include:

- Purchasing your child or young person's first uniform
- School camps
- School stationery
- Club costs (sports and interest groups)
- School fees
- Early childhood fees
- After school care fees

You might need to provide extra or a higher level of care than is normally expected. This care might include taking the child or young person to frequent appointments for assessment or treatment. Talk to your social worker about any additional financial support.



Keeping safe

Below are some suggestions to help our caregivers keep themselves, their whānau and tamariki in their care safe:

- Ask the social worker for an All About Me Plan (this is the child's plan) and how risks are to be managed
- Be aware of the special needs of the child/young person
- Discuss your support plan with your social worker (Caregiver Support Plan)
- Be consistent in your responses so tamariki are aware of where the boundaries are
- Be aware of your own limits and say no when you need to
- Be prepared not to react, lash out or make a hasty decision when a child may be pushing to get a reaction
- Have clear rules and safety guidelines in place in your home (e.g. not to sleep with child in same bed) and discuss these as a family
- Keep your social worker informed about situations and incidents, including any changes to the child's health
- Have a support network
- Ask for help and keep asking

Support for caregivers

- In an emergency call 111.
- Your social worker is your first point of contact. They will create a support plan with you to ensure you are receiving the right resources and supports needed.
- If you need information or help to meet the needs of the tamariki in your care call your social worker.
- If you cannot reach a social worker, or it is after hours, call our Caregiver Guidance and Advice Line on 0505 CARERS (0508 227 377).

Babysitting and staying overnight

If you cannot look after the tamariki in your care for a few hours, you can use your judgement to have a safe babysitter care for them. This can extend to an overnight stay with whānau and people you know and trust to keep tamariki safe. If tamariki would like to stay with a friend overnight, you can use your judgement to decide if the adults in that household can provide safe care.

If you need someone else to look after the tamariki for more than one night, please contact your social worker who can try to find an approved caregiver who can help.

Helping tamariki move back into the care of their usual caregiver

When it is time for tamariki to return to the care of their usual caregiver you can help them get prepared. You could help them pack their belongings, making sure they have everything. There may be something they enjoyed in your care that you might like to gift to them. This could be a photograph, a book they have enjoyed or a recipe for the food they liked at your home. Let tamariki know what has been positive about the time they have spent with you and ask them about what they are looking forward to most when they return to their usual caregiver.

If there has been any change to their routine, healthcare etc., please let your social worker know so they can inform the usual caregiver.



COVID-19 support and guidance

If you, a child in your care, or anyone else in your household becomes unwell, you need to:

- Follow Ministry of Health guidance on COVID-19 which you can find on their website. Here you will find information about accessing medical care and self-isolation.
- Contact your social worker immediately so that we can support you.
- Visit the Oranga Tamariki website where you find the latest information for caregivers about COVID-19.
- You can reach us any time of day or night on **0508 CARERS (0508 227 377)**.

Please be assured that if someone in your household falls ill with COVID-19, we will work with you to develop an emergency support plan.

Becoming an approved caregiver

If you would like to become an approved caregiver following this experience, let your social worker know. You can become a respite caregiver for the tamariki you have supported or a caregiver for other children.

We thank you for stepping up to offer care to tamariki while their usual caregiver is not able to.

Nāku noa nā

Janet Smart
GM Caregiver Recruitment and Support



**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Children