

This is a historical policy document developed prior to the Common Payment Framework on 27 January 2026. It no longer contains Waimokoia rapid payment amounts, which are now maintained in a separate document titled 'Waimokoia Standard Findings' under the [Rapid Payment webpage](#).

Ministry of Education Rapid Payment Policy for sensitive claims and approach to Mt Wellington / Waimokoia Rapid Payments

Background

1. In 2021 the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State Care published its interim report into state redress following an investigation examining Crown redress processes for people who allege they suffered abuse and neglect in the care of the State. Crown agencies worked together, coordinated by the Crown Response Unit, to respond to the redress recommendations via a number of workstreams.
2. A "rapid payments" workstream focussed on recommendations that:
 - Institutions should use their best endeavours to resolve claims in the lead-up to the establishment of the puretumu torowhānui scheme and should offer settlements that do not prejudice survivors' rights under the new puretumu torowhānui scheme or under any legislation enacted in response to our recommendations on civil litigation (Recommendation 91).
 - The Crown should immediately set up and fund a mechanism to make advance payments to survivors who, because of serious ill health or age, are at significant risk of not being able to make a claim to the puretumu torowhānui scheme. The mechanism should stop when the scheme starts (Recommendation 93).
3. We considered making rapid payments an advance payment option, with claimants being able to choose to continue to full assessment after receiving the payment. We decided against this because:
 - The metrics designed for rapid payments are intended to offer claimants a payment that is broadly on par with average settlement payments, meaning that most claimants would be unlikely to receive a top-up payment following full assessment.
 - Rapid payments are an optional process to give claimants who value being able to settle their claim quickly and without needing to tell their story or have their allegations assessed the option of doing so. If rapid payments were introduced as an advance payment claimants would not have the option of quick resolution without assessment.

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- Introducing rapid payments as an advance option would increase the administrative burden for the Ministry, as an additional step would be introduced to the claims process. This would likely increase wait times rather than reducing them.

Education Rapid Payment options

4. There are two types of rapid payments available:
 - Rapid Settlement Payments for claimants who attended an eligible school (initially Waimokoia/Mt Wellington residential school and expanding to McKenzie and Campbell Park residential schools as research is completed)
 - Priority Settlement payments for eligible claimants with a terminal illness (irrespective of the school they attended, but only for schools falling within the Ministry's liability).
5. The primary objective of introducing rapid payments is to address issues around delay and the level of evidence required during the assessment process. In providing an additional, faster option for some claimants, delays should be ameliorated for all claimants.
6. Rapid payment processes are intended to provide claimants who meet the required criteria with the option of a faster response to their claim. These interim processes that will operate until a new integrated Puretumu Torowhānui redress system is established or unless terminated earlier through a change in government policy.
7. Rapid payments are optional, and eligible claimants will be encouraged and supported to obtain legal advice if they wish to inform their decision. Claimants will still be able to choose individualised assessments if they wish.
8. Rapid payments will not be right for all claimants and are primarily designed to provide an option for a simplified and much faster pathway for claimants who value fast resolution over other factors, such as telling their story and having their individual allegations assessed and responded to.
9. As these processes are optional, claimants will be able to choose the full assessment process if they do not want to engage with the rapid processes as they have been designed.
10. Rapid payments are based around metrics that have been designed to provide outcomes that are broadly consistent with the full assessment process.

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11. We intend to take a continuous learning approach to the process and will make adjustments and improvements as they are identified once the rapid payment policy is operational.
12. We will monitor rapid payments to ensure there are no unintended negative consequences for survivors, and will report on progress and any further changes that need to be made. We will also share lessons learned with other claims agencies.

Staff checks

13. Part of the sensitive claims process is to check whether staff mentioned in claims are working in schools today. If we find that they are, we may make a referral to a school Board, Police or the Teaching Council as appropriate and with regard to the Privacy Act and relevant Court orders.
14. The Ministry also has obligations under Article 1 of the Convention Against Torture and section 9 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 to refer incidents of torture to Police for investigation.
15. As rapid payments do not require detailed allegations, it could be more difficult to collect information about staff who may still be working in schools today, and to fulfil our obligations to report allegations of torture to Police.
16. We will discuss this with each claimant (or their counsel) to request they inform us of any possible offender that could be working with children today. This will be an optional process for claimants accessing rapid payments, and payment will not be contingent on them speaking with us about what they remember.

Rapid Payments for Waimokoia/Mt Wellington¹ claimants

17. Rapid settlement payments are an additional option for claimants that attended Waimokoia, McKenzie or Campbell Park residential schools. These schools are the subject of approximately 45% of Education sensitive claims. We have significant information about each of these schools, and so are able to make standard findings about what was happening there at particular times.

¹ Waimokoia Residential School was previously called Mt Wellington. Rapid payments are available to claimants who attended Waimokoia or Mt Wellington.

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18. Rapid payments will be offered first to claimants who attended Waimokoia, expanding to McKenzie and Campbell Park once research has been completed into those schools.

Metrics for rapid payments

19. Metrics are based around what we know was happening at the school during each decade of its' operation. Standard findings developed from research into Waimokoia informed the development of payments to be offered to claimants who attended Waimokoia during each decade.
20. Payment amounts were developed for each decade in accordance with our approach to developing payment offers under our full assessment process. This involves considering findings in accordance with amounts offered for similar findings in previously settled claims, with a view to offering consistent payments.
21. Payment metrics include specific payments for some decades, to reflect time periods when known or allegedly abusive staff were present. A summary of payment metrics is provided below. The full standard findings, and associated metrics, are set out at Annex 1.

Table removed, please refer to updated table under Waimokoia Standard Findings on the Rapid Payments webpage.

22. We tested payment amounts on closed Waimokoia claims. Total and average rapid payments were slightly higher than payments actually made. There were several outliers, because the rapid process will not test allegations.
23. Internal analysis indicates that the rapid payment policy is likely to provide an average payment that is slightly higher than our average overall payment of approximately \$16,000. Information about the testing is attached at Annex 2.
24. The rapid payments process means that we will not be testing claimant's individual allegations at all. It is therefore likely that although the overall payments are expected to be slightly higher than under full assessment on average, some individual claimants will receive a higher or lower payment than they would under a full assessment.

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25. If a claimant has made allegations relating to Waimokoia and another school/s, only the part of the claim relating to Waimokoia will be eligible for the rapid payments process. The claim relating to the other school/s will be addressed separately under our usual process. In practice, their claim would be split into two distinct claims.
26. If a claimant is eligible for a rapid payment, but prefers a full assessment, we offer an expedited assessment process.

Priority settlement payments for claimants who are terminally ill

27. Any claimant who has been diagnosed with a terminal illness and has a life expectancy of no more than 12 months regardless of any available treatment will be eligible for a priority settlement payment of \$10,000. A medical certificate will be required.
28. Claimants who are elderly or ill will not be automatically eligible. These claims will still need to go through a full assessment (including interview and consideration by an external assessor) and are already prioritised for assessment. The intent of the priority settlement payment is to provide claimants at a very high risk of dying before their claim is resolved with an option to resolve it quickly.
29. Claimants electing to receive a priority settlement payment will be asked to sign a settlement agreement closing their claim. This means their claim will be resolved without assessment.
30. We considered making the priority settlement payment an advance payment option, with claimants being able to choose to continue to full assessment after receiving the payment. We decided against this as we wanted to provide a simple and fast option for terminally ill claimants to settle their claims before their death. Making the priority settlement payment an advance payment would prolong the process for eligible claimants and their whānau.
31. Priority settlement payments have been set at a lower level than the Ministry's average payment. This reflects that these payments will be available to people attending any school for which the Ministry is responsible. We do not have the same level of information about most schools as we do for the three schools that are the focus of rapid payments, so cannot develop appropriate metrics to inform a higher payment.

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32. The priority settlement payment is an optional provision and will only be provided if requested by an eligible claimant.
33. People who are eligible for both rapid and priority settlement payment processes (i.e. they attended Waimokoia and have a terminal illness) will be able to choose to receive either payment, but not both.

Rapid Payment Settlement

34. As with settlement offers made under full assessment, settlement offered under rapid payments will include a financial payment (in accordance with metrics), reimbursement of actual and reasonable legal costs and an apology from the Secretary for Education.
35. Claimants electing to receive a rapid payment will be asked to sign a settlement agreement closing their claim (or if they have made allegations about Waimokoia and another school, they will be asked to sign a settlement agreement closing the Waimokoia component of their claim). This means their claim (or the Waimokoia component) will be resolved without full assessment. Settlement will be full and final, with the proviso that settlement will not preclude claimants from accessing any new redress system if they are eligible, provided the government decides to make any new redress system available to claimants whose claim has been settled.

Other support available

36. We currently offer to pay for six counselling sessions for all people going through our claims process, and are able to extend this support if more sessions are needed.
37. From April 2024 we will be piloting a wellbeing support service that will run alongside our claims process. This service will provide claimants with the option of receiving more intensive support that will link them to local services that provide practical support (for example budgeting services, housing providers, Rongoa Māori providers).
38. Funding has been appropriated for this service which can be applied to one-off supports that will make a practical difference to the claimant and their whānau, such as tattoo removal.

Limitation implications

39. The Ministry Limitation policy will be amended to provide for the rapid payments processes, which will sit within it. This will be advised to eligible claimants as they enter the process.

Annex 1: Waimokoia rapid payment standard findings and payments (for the purpose of settlement only)

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Annex 2: Further analysis

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