

# Briefing for decision

## Aged Care Commissioner – Appointment

**Date due to MO:** 22 January 2026      **Action required by:** 26 January 2026

**Security level:** **IN CONFIDENCE**      **Health Report number:** H2026077512

**To:** Hon Casey Costello, Associate Minister of Health

**Consulted:** Health New Zealand:

**Proactive release:** This **title** is proposed by the Ministry of Health for proactive release:

## Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
<b>Stasha Mason</b>	Manager, Statutory Appointments and Integrity Services, Performance and Governance – Te Pou Tokomanawa	9(2)(a)
<b>Cherish Low</b>	Principal Advisor, Statutory Appointments and Integrity Services, Performance and Governance – Te Pou Tokomanawa	9(2)(a)

## Minister's office to complete:

- Approved       Decline       Overtaken by events  
 Needs change       Seen  
 See Minister's Notes       Withdrawn

Comment:

# Briefing for decision

## Aged Care Commissioner – Appointment

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**Security level:** IN CONFIDENCE      **Date:** 21 January 2026

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**To:** Hon Casey Costello, Associate Minister of Health

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### Purpose of report

1. This report provides the papers required for the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee (APH) to note the appointment of Erin James as the Aged Care Commissioner for a five-year term of office.

### Summary

2. In briefing H2025076372 you agreed to recommend to the Governor-General the appointment of Erin James as the Aged Care Commissioner for a term of five years.
3. The Aged Care Commissioner is appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Minister of Health or their delegate. All of due diligence processes have been completed in line with the Public Service Commission – Te Kawa Mataaho *Board Appointment Induction Guidelines*.
4. No conflicts of interest have been identified, and no concerns were raised about Ms James that would preclude her appointment.
5. This appointment is scheduled for consideration at the **10 February 2026** APH meeting.
6. The papers for APH and associated documents for this appointment are attached for your approval at **Appendix A**.
7. Proposed talking points are attached at **Appendix B**.
8. A covering letter, appointment advice sheet and associated instruments for the Governor-General are attached at **Appendix C**. Note that the advice sheet needs to be signed and dated before it is provided to the Governor-General, but that the instruments are not counter-signed by you until after the Governor-General has signed them.
9. The letter of appointment is attached for your approval and signature following Cabinet agreement and approval by the Governor-General at **Appendix D**.
10. A draft *New Zealand Gazette* notice is attached at **Appendix E** for your approval and signature.

## Next Steps

Steps	Timing
Ministerial consultation commences (one week)	26 January 2026
Minister's office lodges paper with Cabinet office	4 February 2026
Paper considered by APH	10 February 2026
Paper confirmed by Cabinet and minute published	16 February 2026
Cabinet Office provides a collection/dispatch service for Minister's office for delivering documents to the Governor-General	17 February 2026
Minister countersigns the appointment instruments and Minister's office send the appointment letter to the successful candidate and the signed Governor-General documentation is returned to the Ministry	Once documents are signed and returned from the Governor-General
<i>New Zealand Gazette</i> notice published	Once appointee confirms acceptance of her appointment

## Recommendations

We recommend you:

- a) **approve** the appointment papers for APH consideration at **Appendix A**
- b) **note** that the papers at **Appendix A** will be lodged in time for the APH meeting on **10 February 2026**.

On noting your intent to APH and confirmation by Cabinet

- c) **sign and date** the covering letter and appointment advice sheet to the Governor-General attached at **Appendix C**.

Upon receiving the signed instruments of appointment from the Governor-General:

- d) **counter-sign** the appointment instruments at **Appendix C**
- e) **sign and send** the attached letter of appointment at **Appendix D**
- f) **sign** the *New Zealand Gazette* notice attached at **Appendix E** and return it and the Governor-General documentation to the Ministry of Health for processing.

Stasha Mason  
Manager, Statutory Appointments and  
Integrity Services  
**Performance and Governance – Te Pou  
Tokomanawa**  
Date: 21 January 2026

Hon Casey Costello  
**Associate Minister of Health**  
Date: