

26 January 2022

s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)
Ref: H202117326

Tēnā koe s 9(2)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 8 December 2021 for:

*“how many te reo Māori names have had to be queried or rectified in order for people to get their vaccine pass?
What are the nature of the queries?
What has been the solution to these issues?
How many vaccine pass exemptions have been given to people because of misspelt Māori names?
How many vaccine pass exemptions have been given to people because of misspelt names?”*

The Ministry does not hold the information you have requested. As such, your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

Please note, the issue regarding name changes and corrections was a high priority for the Ministry from the time that the vaccine pass requirements were confirmed. Our focus was to provide a quick, easy, accurate and accessible system to make these change requests. The reasons for people requiring names to be changed were extremely diverse, and in a lot of cases incredibly personal or sensitive to the individual making the request. In most cases the requests amounted to “please change my name from A to B” with very little other data or explanation. These requests were made by email or phone with the record updated to show that a name change had been requested, but not the reason.


As of 18 January 2022, there have been 57,469 name change requests completed based on the Jira ticket management system. Please note that not all of these requests have resulted in an actual name change as some were clarification of details or requests that were not possible to resolve due to system limitations (an example of this was that the system could not produce a macron on a name that was French in origin).

With regards to the exemption letters, name change requests that were being completed were among the reasons for an exemption letter being issued, however this data was not captured. Any requests would have been included in the number provided above.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Astrid Koornneef', with a horizontal line underneath.

Astrid Koornneef
Director
National immunisation Programme