

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

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<b>Position:</b>	Advisor / Senior Advisor
<b>Location:</b>	Office of the Children's Commissioner (Wellington)
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Manager – Monitoring, Advocacy and Rights or Mai World
<b>Issue Date:</b>	September 2022
<b>Delegated Authority:</b>	Nil
<b>Staff Responsibility:</b>	Nil

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### **Children's Commissioners' Purpose**

The Children's Commissioner is an Independent Crown Entity, appointed by the Governor-General, carrying out responsibilities and functions set out in the Children's Commissioner Act 2003. The Office of the Children's Commissioner advocates for system change so Aotearoa New Zealand works better for mokopuna in every way, throughout their entire life. For us, child wellbeing is about whānau wellbeing.

We are committed to honouring and embedding Te Tiriti o Waitangi in all our work. Alongside that we have three key roles under the law<sup>1</sup>:

- **Advocating** for the rights<sup>2</sup>, interests and wellbeing of New Zealanders under the age of 18, including implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- **Monitoring** places where mokopuna are detained and services that are provided for them
- **Ensuring** the voices of mokopuna are heard and acted on by decision makers.

The Children's Commissioner's activities must comply with the relevant provisions of the Public Finance Act 1989, Crown Entities Act 2004 and any other relevant legislation.

### **Our People and Our Values**

The Commissioner's office (the tari) bring specialist skills and expertise to the varied and complex challenges facing mokopuna today. We can influence government to ensure children's needs are respected and progressed. We have the skills to research and evaluate complex information. We understand the power of strong stakeholder relationships, so we work hard to develop and maintain them. The way that we think, and work is driven by behavioural norms and expectations reflected in the organisational values we collectively hold dear.

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to our functions in the Children's Commissioner Act 2003, we also have specific statutory responsibilities under several other Acts : Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 / Children and Young People's Well-being Act 1989; Oranga Tamariki (Residential Care) Regulations 1996; Crimes of Torture Act 1989 (COTA); Human Assisted Reproductive Technology Act 2004.

<sup>2</sup> As articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

To be successful, the values that all the tari employees strive to uphold are:

**Aroha** – Children are sacred beings, they are our Taonga. They are born with their own inherent dignity and mana; they are shaped by those that care for them. We always act with compassion and empathy, adapting readily to respond to their needs.

**Pono** – We believe honesty and integrity are key to doing our job well. We always report things as we see them and never as how others want them to be seen. We stay true to one important thing: we do as we say we will.

**Tika** – We are always about the best possible results for children. We empower others to bring about the best for them. We're independent and always speak out for their interests. We consider the range of needs we have to meet and make every attempt to get it right.

**Mātauranga** – Children are our reason for being. They are involved, participate, and have input into things we do. We act from a place of knowledge; we work from evidence and advise others based on the things we learn.

These values are supported by a clear performance framework that translates these into clear behaviours that all staff must consistently demonstrate.

## **Purpose of this Position**

Advisors and Senior Advisors support the Children's Commissioner to meet their statutory responsibilities to engage with mokopuna to hear and amplify their voices, advocate for the rights, interests and well-being of mokopuna, promote and monitor the implementation of The Children's Convention, monitor places where mokopuna are detained and provide child-centred advice to government agencies, with the ultimate goal of achieving our moemoeā: kia kuru pounamu te rongo – all mokopuna live their best lives.

Advisors will contribute to positive change for mokopuna through the delivery of the work programme for the tari and the provision of well researched and evidence-based advice. It is expected that Advisors will work with the support and guidance of their senior colleagues.

Senior Advisors will operate at a senior level across all key accountabilities and will have responsibility for managing complex pieces of work autonomously, relationship management, representation of the tari in different forums (internal and external) and will take a leadership and mentoring role with regard to their team's work programme and in supporting more junior kaimahi.

Appointments to different levels of the role are based on the Commissioner's judgement of skill and experience.

## **Progression**

Progression from Advisor to Senior Advisor is possible at the discretion of the Commissioner at any time, without the need for a vacancy or a recruitment process. A formal process for progression will be followed. Providing for progression reflects the desire of the tari to develop and invest in kaimahi to enhance their careers and maximise their contribution to achieving positive outcomes for mokopuna.

## **Rotation**

This position description covers Advisor and Senior Advisors across three focus areas for the Commissioner – Advocacy and Rights, Mai World (Participation and Engagement) and Monitoring. Although listed together, the expectation is that kaimahi would only focus on the area within the team they are working in, not all focus areas at once. By mutual agreement, kaimahi may move between the three operational teams where workload requires, where skills are best suited or for developmental purposes.

## Working Relationships

<p><b>Internal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manager Monitoring, Manager Mai World or Manager Advocacy and Rights</li><li>• Senior leaders within the tari</li><li>• Chief Policy Advisor and Principal Advisor</li><li>• Mata Māori</li><li>• Other Senior Advisors and Advisors</li><li>• Communications Team</li><li>• Corporate Services Team</li><li>• Human Resources Manager</li></ul>	<p><b>External:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mokopuna and/or agencies and organisations representing them</li><li>• Whānau, hapū and iwi</li><li>• Oranga Tamariki including national office, residential institutions, community-based care homes and service delivery sites – youth justice and care and protection</li><li>• Other Government agencies, particularly: Treasury, DPMC, Ministry of Social Development, Independent Children’s Monitor, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Justice, NZ Police</li><li>• Mental health facilities including but not limited to District Inspectors, DAMHS, MHAIDS, Mental health advocates and experienced advocates like Peer Tree, Buddies, Community mental health (especially around transitions and admissions) and Respite homes</li><li>• Other facilities that may need to be explored under OPCAT</li><li>• Human Rights Commission</li><li>• Ombudsman’s Office</li><li>• Independent Children’s Monitor</li><li>• Academic community</li><li>• Children’s sector and rights advocates</li><li>• Wider NGO sector including Barnardos NZ</li><li>• Community partners</li></ul>
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## Key Accountabilities

Key Result Areas	Accountabilities
Monitoring	<p>Advisors and Senior Advisors in the Monitoring team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the achievement of the annual work programme for the Monitoring team</li> <li>• Undertake monitoring of the treatment and care of mokopuna detained in residential facilities, carrying out agreed activities in accordance with the scope and design for each monitoring project, in line with OPCAT guidelines and relevant legislation and within the framework of Mana Mokopuna</li> <li>• Engage purposefully, sensitively and effectively with mokopuna, families and whānau, Oranga Tamariki managers and staff, DHB managers and staff of mental health and forensic units, and Iwi, NGO and community stakeholders to gathering their feedback, understand their experiences and gain information to inform monitoring assessments</li> <li>• Contribute to analysing material and information gathered as part of monitoring, to identify systemic issues that need to be addressed</li> <li>• Prepare clearly written reports and recommendations on practice and service delivery to inform policy development and service improvement within places of detention and promote the views, interests and well-being of mokopuna</li> <li>• Contribute to the provision of feedback on monitoring findings to relevant agencies, particularly Oranga Tamariki, with the view to help improve the lives of mokopuna within their facilities</li> <li>• Contribute to the preparation and delivery of presentations on findings and issues related to the rights of mokopuna in statutory care and/or custody</li> <li>• Undertake assessment of practice in the context of relevant legislation and guidelines including OPCAT guidelines, Crimes of Torture Act, UNDRIP, Mental Health Act, Māori methodology models and tikanga</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Additionally, Senior Advisors will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead all aspects of monitoring activities in line with the mana mokopuna framework, ensuring kaimahi and mokopuna wellbeing is at the centre</li><li>• Provide tailored mentoring and coaching to more junior kaimahi to upskill and develop in areas specified in development plans</li><li>• Contribute to the knowledge base on issues and policies related to the rights and well-being of mokopuna, and strategies of engagement with mokopuna, by presenting to audiences and/or participating in other ways within the community.</li><li>• Contribute to the development of best practice guidelines regarding monitoring, data collection, engagement with mokopuna</li></ul>
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<p>Mokopuna participation and engagement</p>	<p>Advisors and Senior Advisors in the Mai World team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the achievement of the annual work programme for the Mai World team</li> <li>• Carry out best practice engagement with mokopuna</li> <li>• Undertake research, analysis and advocacy efforts related to mokopuna rights and well-being and to ensure their views are considered and their voices are heard by decision makers</li> <li>• Prepare clearly written reports and recommendations to promote the views, interests and well-being of mokopuna</li> <li>• Work with a range of communities and agencies to promote and protect the rights of mokopuna and ensure the engagement of mokopuna in anything that may impact them</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of the Participation Hub, and the growth of the children and young people’s participation sector</li> </ul> <p><b>Additionally, Senior Advisors will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead activity within the annual work programme for the Mai World Team</li> <li>• Provide tailored mentoring and coaching to more junior kaimahi to upskill and develop in areas specified in development plans</li> <li>• Contribute to the children’s sector knowledge base through the delivery of presentations and participation in wānanga, talanoa and advocacy within community</li> <li>• Lead high quality engagement with networks of children and young people, practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and key decision makers and to champion children’s participation and represent the Office of the Children’s Commissioner</li> <li>• Contributing to and lead work that influences and promotes the way in which mokopuna are seen, supported and given opportunities to participate and have their rights upheld</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of best practice guidelines regarding monitoring, data collection, engagement with mokopuna</li> </ul>
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<p>Advocacy and Rights</p>	<p>Advisors and Senior Advisors in the Advocacy and Rights team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the achievement of the annual work programme for the advocacy team</li> <li>• Analyse policy, funding, service delivery, cabinet papers and legislative mechanisms to determine the impact on mokopuna</li> <li>• Undertake research and analysis to inform the development of sound mokopuna-centred policy advice</li> <li>• Prepare clearly written and evidenced briefings, position statement papers, OIA and Privacy Act request responses, responses to correspondence and submissions to promote the interests and well-being of mokopuna</li> <li>• Contribute to advocacy planning, advice and support to the Children’s Commissioner</li> <li>• Undertake advocacy work aimed at promoting and protecting the best interests of mokopuna</li> <li>• Identify and take opportunities to promote the Children’s Convention</li> <li>• Support the delivery of the rights programme, including reporting to the UN</li> </ul> <p><b>Additionally, Senior Advisors will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead activity within the annual work programme for the Mai World Team</li> <li>• Provide tailored mentoring and coaching to more junior kaimahi to upskill and develop in areas specified in development plans</li> <li>• Provide external advice, contributions, and maintain relationships with the Child Rights Sector</li> <li>• Identify innovative ways to influence and advocate for positive change for mokopuna</li> <li>• Contribute to the knowledge base on issues and policies related to the rights and well-being of mokopuna, and strategies of engagement with mokopuna, by presenting to audiences and participating in other ways within the community</li> <li>• Manage all queries and concerns (mostly via the child rights line and the children’s inbox) from the public regarding children’s rights, including supporting follow up with other agencies as required</li> </ul>
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Relationship Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build and maintain strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders</li> </ul> <p><b>Additionally, Senior Advisors will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use their strong networks to engage on issues impacting mokopuna, with the view to influence positive change</li> </ul>
General Advisory Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the provision of timely and sound advice to the Children’s Commissioner and the tari’s management team, on issues that impact on mokopuna</li> <li>• Provide cover for the Child Rights Line and management of the Children’s inbox as required</li> </ul> <p><b>Additionally, Senior Advisors will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent the Office on inter-departmental groups, advocating for and amplifying the voices of mokopuna, showing a high level of competence and professionalism</li> <li>• Provide mentoring and coaching to more junior kaimahi</li> </ul>
Te Tiriti Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Championing the rights of Māori as Tangata Whenua</li> <li>• With the support of the tari, actively work to improve skills and knowledge of Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori</li> </ul>
Strategy and Policy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the development of long-range policies and strategies for the Office, sharing expertise and knowledge freely</li> </ul>
Project support and other duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in projects and perform other duties as required</li> </ul>

## **Technical/Professional knowledge and skills**

*NB: The technical and professional knowledge will depend on the needs of the team and the level of the role*

- Excellent engagement, relationship management and inquiry skills
- A confident and skilled communicator, presenter and facilitator, with strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Demonstrated experience in engaging ethically and positively with children, young people and their families, particularly mokopuna Maori and whānau
- Culturally competent with demonstrated experience of working effectively to improve outcomes for mokopuna Māori and Pacific mokopuna
- Expertise and experience in advocating with, and for, mokopuna Māori and working from a Te Ao Māori worldview is highly desirable
- Analytical skills and a proven ability to synthesise information, draw conclusions and make clear recommendations
- Research (both qualitative and quantitative) and evaluation skills
- Excellent understanding of machinery of government and policy and legislative processes
- Sound understanding and knowledge of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and how this can be implemented in policy, research, monitoring, participation and advocacy work
- Knowledge of and experience in applying Te Tiriti o Waitangi and international rights instruments particularly the Children's Convention.
- Within the Monitoring team, an understanding of the provisions of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, the Commissioner's role as a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) in accordance with the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) and other relevant legislation
- An understanding of statutory Care and Protection and Youth Justice service provision and practice, the care and protection and youth justice residential care system, and the overall responsibilities of Oranga Tamariki
- A working understanding and knowledge of statutory, legislative and public service processes with regards to children's participation (including the Children's Convention, UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).
- Experience in monitoring or reviewing the implementation of policies and practices in a statutory agency or in undertaking relevant child-centred case-based or site investigations or evaluation would be advantageous but not essential
- Tertiary qualification in a relevant discipline with a professional practice background and/or equivalent experience relating to children's rights, interests and wellbeing, in research, policy development and/or equivalent experience relating to children's rights, interests and welfare
- Proficiency in Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori, or a commitment to broadening your knowledge in these areas

**Senior Advisors will also have:**

- Experience in intersectional advocacy, including advocating with, and for, groups who face discrimination in Aotearoa, including lived experience
- Well established networks within government, community, the NGO sectors and child and youth focused advocacy groups
- Demonstrated project management and leadership skills
- Ability to provide effective coaching, mentoring and support to other kaimahi
- Ability to undertake complex pieces of work autonomously, without supervision
- Understanding of, and demonstrated ability to affect change within the machinery of government, policy and legislative processes

**Special Requirements**

- Demonstrated commitment to embedding Te Tiriti based practice within previous roles, and commitment to progressing the Te Tiriti journey of the tari, including participating in te reo lessons or cultural development activities
- Values diversity, and contributes to an inclusive working environment
- Willing to travel to fulfil job requirements