



Hui or event brief

Hui or event name:	Meeting with Dr Claire Achmad – Chief Children’s Commissioner, 2 April 2026
Date:	Thursday, 2 April 2026
Time:	12 – 12:30pm
Location:	4.5L Beehive; Online via Teams
Attire:	Business Dress

Purpose:	<p>The Chief Children’s Commissioner has indicated she would like to meet with you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• share updates on what the Children’s Commissioner is hearing from mokopuna, whānau in relation to housing around the motu• discuss linkages between material hardship and housing for mokopuna• discuss linkages between care and protection and housing for mokopuna in Oranga Tamariki care• understand more from the Minister about what would be helpful/useful from the Children’s Commissioner, working with sector partners, relating to youth homelessness.
Background:	<p>Mana Mokopuna is an Independent Crown Entity led by Children’s Commissioner Dr Claire Achmad.</p> <p>Dr Achmad wrote to Minister Bishop in August last year raising concerns about child and youth homelessness in New Zealand and asking the government to take specific actions to reduce youth homelessness.</p> <p>Last December you met with Dr Achmad in your capacity as Associate Housing Minister to discuss homeless, particularly child/youth homelessness [HUD2025-008126 refers]. This is a follow up meeting to that meeting. She has indicated the following topics will be covered at the meeting.</p>



Insights from what the Children’s Commissioner is hearing from mokopuna, whānau in relation to housing

- The Commissioner acts as an independent advocate for children and youth under 18 in Aotearoa and care-experienced mokopuna aged up to 25. A core part of her role is ensuring children's voices are heard in decisions that affect them.
- We anticipate she may want to share insights that relate to the points she is interested in discussing: the link with material hardship, housing and Oranga Tamariki care and protection, and youth homelessness.

Linkages between material hardship and housing for mokopuna

- In February, Mana Mokopuna – led by the Children's Commissioner – drew public attention to recent Stats NZ data on material hardship, highlighting that:
 - in the year to June 2025 14.3% of children (approximately 169,300) were living in material hardship.
 - this latest figure is an increase on the previous year (when 158,500 children were living in material hardship) and an increase of 47,500 children since 2022.
 - Māori, Pacific, and disabled children are, on average, impacted much more than others: 25.1% of mokopuna Māori, 26.9% of disabled children, and 31.0% of Pacific children experience material hardship compared with 14.3% of children overall.
- On housing deprivation, Mana Mokopuna noted in a recent position statement on housing security that:
 - children make up the highest proportion of people living in crowded or uninhabitable environments. (HUD note: the crowding measure noted here shows the highest prevalence is for 15–29-year-olds followed by under 15-year-olds.)
 - almost half of all people experiencing housing deprivation are under 25 years old.
- In the position statement, they also referenced linkages between increased poverty levels, narrowing criteria for support, and fewer emergency housing grants with rising numbers of



children experiencing housing deprivation, sleeping in cars, and living rough.¹

- *HUD comment:* The most recent data we have on 'Children living in unaffordable housing' comes from the 2024/25 Annual Report on the Child and Youth Strategy and Child Poverty Related Indicators (publication pending).²
- The report, due to be released 2 April, notes, 56.7% of children live in low-income households which spend more than 30% of their income on housing. High inflation negatively impacted housing costs for renters and owners but rental price increases put particular pressure on low-income households. (Noting this data does not include families in government supported housing – such as emergency, transitional, or social housing – where rentals costs are capped at a level below this).
- The report also notes disabled children, and children living in disabled households, are most likely to be in unaffordable housing, followed by other priority groups (Māori and Pacific children).




Linkages between care and protection and housing for mokopuna in Oranga Tamariki care

- In a 2025 position statement on housing security, Mana Mokopuna has highlighted children transitioning out of Oranga Tamariki care and Justice settings as being particularly vulnerable to housing insecurity. They point to affordable, safe, stable housing as the most significant barrier to wellbeing as mokopuna transition from state care to independence and adulthood.
- Mana Mokopuna has called for increased resourcing to enable earlier support and assistance focused on mokopuna leaving Oranga Tamariki care.
- We believe Dr Clair Achmad wants to see more systemic work between agencies to support access to safe and stable housing for those leaving care.
- Last year HUD worked with key agencies (Oranga Tamariki, Ara Poutama Aotearoa, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry

¹ The Mana Mokopuna position statement 'Safe, Healthy, Affordable Housing' can be accessed on their website or via the following link [Our policy positions | Mana Mokopuna](#)

² The report is scheduled to be published on the afternoon of Thursday 2 April. No changes were made to the final report as a result of Ministerial consultation. Data from the report will be publicly available following the reports release.



	<p>of Health) to identify and develop options for improvements to the transitions space. We provided you with advice, recommending you meet with your Ministerial colleagues [HUD2025-007005].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work focused on the transitions population has since been combined with the early interventions to prevent the need for emergency housing workstream. Potential opportunities for improvements in this space will form part of broader work on severe housing need, s 9(2)(f)(iv) <p>What would be helpful/useful from the Children’s Commissioner, working with sector partners, relating to youth homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our most recent homelessness insight report (covering the six-months to 30 September 2025) noted the themes from those who work with young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ more young people are becoming homeless, often hidden, living in cars, couch-surfing or moving frequently, including growing numbers of young families and pregnant mums. ○ issues are complex, including experience of trauma, in some cases this can mean a reliance on prescription or other drugs. ○ youth-specific urgent care options are needed, and young people want to stay in their own communities. 		
<p>Attendees:</p>	<p>Ministry of Housing and Urban Development: Kate Garvie, Policy Manager (acting), Responding to Severe Housing Needs ; Laura Vasquez, Senior Policy Advisor, Responding to Severe Housing Needs</p> <p>Ministry of Social Development Karen Hocking, Group General Manager, Enablement</p>		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="410 1615 847 2020"> <p>Dr Claire Achmad - Chief Children's Commissioner</p>  </td> <td data-bbox="847 1615 1447 2020"> <p>Dr Claire Achmad is a recognised advocate for children in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. Claire was appointed Deputy Chair of the Children and Young People’s Commission from 1 July 2023, and from 1 November 2025, Claire took up the role of Chief Children’s Commissioner and Chair of the Commission.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Dr Claire Achmad - Chief Children's Commissioner</p> 	<p>Dr Claire Achmad is a recognised advocate for children in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. Claire was appointed Deputy Chair of the Children and Young People’s Commission from 1 July 2023, and from 1 November 2025, Claire took up the role of Chief Children’s Commissioner and Chair of the Commission.</p>
<p>Dr Claire Achmad - Chief Children's Commissioner</p> 	<p>Dr Claire Achmad is a recognised advocate for children in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. Claire was appointed Deputy Chair of the Children and Young People’s Commission from 1 July 2023, and from 1 November 2025, Claire took up the role of Chief Children’s Commissioner and Chair of the Commission.</p>		



**Talking points
or key
messages**

Introductory/general

- Thank you for your work advocating for children and young people. We also want young people to have safe, stable, and appropriate housing.

**Insights from the Children’s Commissioner from mokopuna,
whānau in relation to housing**

- I appreciate the important role you play and opportunities you have to hear directly from children and young people.
- I welcome the insights you can share with us.
- [On homelessness data and insights] Housing officials are continuing work on ways to improve how we measure and understand homelessness.
- This includes engagement with people and organisations, including those with lived experience of homelessness, to help ensure future approaches reflect the realities faced by children and young people.

**Linkages between material hardship and housing for
mokopuna**

- I acknowledge the importance of a coordinated response in addressing homelessness. There are many overlapping factors at a personal, household, broader economic, and social level that can interact to affect homelessness.
- We are being really clear about the purpose of our housing investment - making sure people facing the most serious housing need can get into stable, secure homes.
- That means grounding decisions in good data, but also in what communities and frontline services are telling us about what’s actually happening for families and for children.
- Our strengthened focus on understanding need and targeting funding accordingly will mean we are investing in the right mix of housing solutions, in specific locations and for populations in particular need.
- We know there are young people in housing need right now and we continue to invest in services and programmes that support young people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, including youth transitional housing and rangatahi supported accommodation.



- The Emergency Housing Priority One fast track is helping reduce the number of children in emergency housing and getting them into stable housing.
- We are seeing improvements following the short-term actions to address rough sleeping announced in September 2025. These included increased support services such as outreach support and housing assistance centres for those living on the streets, in the four main centres of Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch.

Linkages between care and protection and housing for mokopuna in Oranga Tamariki care

- Officials at HUD, along with Oranga Tamariki, Ara Poutama Aotearoa, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Health have identified opportunities to improve transitions out of state care and custody.
- HUD officials are considering this in the context of broader work s 9(2)(f)(iv)
- We will look to ensure the insights you share inform this work.

***[If raised]* Move-on orders**

- Increases in homelessness at any time are a concern, particularly when people are living without shelter, and I acknowledge the impact of this.
- Housing Ministers and agencies will continue to be focused on ensuring programmes and services are targeted appropriately and are effective in providing the right housing support at the right time to respond to homelessness and identify opportunities for early intervention.
- Where possible, HUD officials will continue to work with Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Justice to promote mitigations and reduce potential impacts on people experiencing rough sleeping and homelessness.

What would be helpful/useful from the Children’s Commissioner, working with sector partners, relating to youth homelessness

- I am interested to understand what opportunities you see from the conversations you have been part of, and what you are hearing, in your role.



- I appreciate in your capacity as Children's Commissioner you will meet with people who share insights and experiences that may be useful to feed into broader conversations, such as housing. I am interested in you continuing to share the insights you gather.

Contacts (from visiting organisation)

Name	Role at hui or event	Mobile number
TBC		