

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

POSITION STATEMENT

1. Inform Health Limited acknowledges that the welfare and safety of children may in certain circumstances override a client's right to privacy.
2. Inform Health Limited will take prompt action in the event that it becomes aware of current harm or risk of current harm to children, including risk of harm to self or others.
3. Inform Health Limited will have in place appropriate safety checking for all people employed or engaged in work that involves contact with children.

NOTIFICATIONS OF CONCERN

4. Concerns for the safety of a child or young person may arise in the course of assessment and intervention at Inform Health Limited, which Inform Health Limited believes are appropriate to report to Oranga Tamariki / Ministry for Children (OT), whether or not the consent of the Inform Health Limited client to do so has been obtained, in accordance with s.15; Oranga Tamariki Act / Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989 (OTA89).
5. These concerns may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. An Inform Health Limited client disclosing that they have sexually or physically abused a child or young person, and present a current risk to a child or young person
 - b. An Inform Health Limited client who is a child or young person disclosing that they have been sexually or physically abused
 - c. An Inform Health Limited client disclosing that they are at risk of harming a child or young person
 - d. An Inform Health Limited client disclosing that a third party is at risk of harming a child or young person
 - e. An Inform Health Limited client disclosing that they are at risk of taking their own life or inflicting serious self-harm
 - f. An Inform Health Limited client disclosing that their living situation includes a child or young person, and for whom there is no approved safety plan, or this living situation is in breach of the approved safety plan.
6. In determining whether or not such concerns are to be reported, Inform Health Limited will apply the following criteria, consistent with relevant legislation, common law and professional ethics:

- a. There is a serious risk of harm to self or identifiable others, and
 - b. The threat of serious harm is imminent, and
 - c. Disclosure to statutory agencies or other third parties is the only option to prevent or lessen the risk, and
 - d. The statutory agencies or other third parties to whom disclosure is made can act quickly and effectively to address the risk, and
 - e. The risk of harm to others outweighs the harm caused by disclosure to the client.
7. In cases where such concerns are being reported, Inform Health Limited will apply the following process:
- a. The Inform Health Limited clinician will confirm their reasons for such disclosure with An Inform Health Limited manager prior to the information being forwarded. Where the client, child or whanau is Maori, a cultural advisor will also be consulted before any information is forwarded.
 - b. Inform Health Limited will have due regard to the Privacy Act 2020 and the Health Information Privacy Code 2020.
 - c. Ideally, Inform Health Limited will inform the client that these concerns are being reported, and the client will be given the opportunity to pass this information on themselves. However, Inform Health Limited may report without client knowledge or consent for reasons of practicality or safety.
 - d. Where the risk is immediate, Inform Health Limited will report the information as soon as practicably possible.
 - e. Inform Health Limited will maintain a record of information passed, including the name of the client concerned, the information provided, and the agency and contact person to whom it was reported.
8. Wherever possible, reporting to statutory agencies shall be made in writing. Where concerns are reported to OT, Inform Health Limited will use the Ministry's standard "Report of Concern to Child, Youth and Family" form, where available.

WORKER SAFETY CHECKING

New Employees and Contractors

9. All new employees, contractors and Board members of Inform Health Limited will be required to undergo NZ Police vetting as a standard part of their application for employment or engagement.
10. Inform Health Limited will ensure that the checking process includes:
 - a. Confirmation of Identity
 - b. Consideration of any specific information required to be considered by s.32; CA14
 - c. An assessment of the risk the applicant would pose to the safety of children or young persons if employed or engaged.

11. The checking process for new employees will also include:
 - a. At least two referee checks
 - b. Evidence of qualifications and professional registration
 - c. A chronological work history for at least the last five years.
12. All offers of employment or engagement shall be contingent on the applicant having no record of offences that may indicate a risk to children or young people, including any relevant conviction otherwise covered by the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004.
13. In the event of such information being received, Inform Health Limited will immediately withdraw the offer of employment or engagement or terminate employment/engagement where this has commenced. Convictions for offences that do not indicate a risk to children or young people shall not be a basis for withdrawing an offer of, or terminating employment/engagement under this policy, but will be considered under other organisational policies and guidelines.
14. New contractors do not need to undergo NZ Police vetting if they have previously been engaged by Inform Health Limited and have been vetted to the satisfaction of Inform Health Limited within the previous 12 months.

Existing Employees and Contractors

15. All existing employees, contractors and Board members of Inform Health Limited will be required to undergo NZ Police vetting at intervals not greater than 3 years since their previous safety check. As per s. 31; CA14, Inform Health Limited will ensure that the checking process includes:
 - a. Confirmation of Identity
 - b. Consideration of any specific information required to be considered by s.32; CA14
 - c. An assessment of the risk the applicant would pose to the safety of children or young persons if employed or engaged.
16. Existing employees whose safety checks raise concerns that Inform Health Limited believe would pose unacceptable risk to the safety of children or young persons, will be deemed to be in serious breach of their employment agreement, which would result in termination of employment.
17. Existing contractors and Board members whose safety checks raise concerns that Inform Health Limited believe would pose unacceptable risk to the safety of children or young persons, will have their contracts of engagement terminated.

This Child Protection Policy was approved by the Board of Network Health Charitable Trust on 26 May 2025 and is effective from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2028 unless updated earlier.

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