



## Home Visit and Off-Site Work Policy

Version 1 | Mahi Tuatahi

Effective Date | [Whakamana tahito](#): June 2025 | [Hune 2025](#)

Next Review | [ā houanga arotake](#): June 2026 | [Hune 2026](#)

Policy Owner | [Rangatira Kaupapa Māhere](#): Chief Executive Officer

Key Accountabilities | [Ngā Takonga Tuatahi](#): Community Services Senior Lead

### Introduction | [Tīmatanga Kōrero](#)

The purpose of this policy is to:

Encourage a workplace culture and work practices that always prioritises workers safety. This policy has been developed to ensure workers carry out home visits, and any other offsite work, with a high level of safety.

This policy will also provide the following:

To make adequate provisions to address possible safety concerns for:

- i. Workers involved in home visits.
- ii. Workers working outside standard business hours.
- iii. Workers working in isolated workplaces.
- iv. Worker working off site for events.

### [Background](#)

He Whānau Manaaki o Tararua Free Kindergarten Association Inc (Whānau Manaaki) Workers should not provide a service in a whānau home unless an acceptable level of risk has been identified, and appropriate risk control measures applied. Initial visits may be carried out and an overall risk assessment must be identified with appropriate control measures put in place to ensure the Worker's safety. Expectations from the process will also be clearly documented.

Whānau Manaaki Team Lead will assist workers through training, through education, and through support, to prevent and minimise risks to safety during home visits and offsite events. Workers are strongly encouraged to regularly consult with their colleagues and managers concerning safe practices.

### [Applies To](#) | [Ko Wai Whakahāngaitia](#)

This policy applies to all staff who carry out Home Visits and Off-Site Work, in particular:

- Pirianga Alofa workers
- Etu Ao Visiting Teachers



### General Principles | Mātāpono Whānui

#### Home Visits

**When doing home visits, at a minimum, these steps will be followed by workers:**

*Risk-Based Information will be gathered:*

- Get as much supporting safety and/or risk level information as possible.
- An initial assessment of risk should be conducted over the phone (where possible).
- If initial phone contact is not possible, then the home visit must be carried out during office hours and with two workers.
- Where there is uncertainty of the level of risk, a discussion of the situation with the Team Lead will take place before any visit.
- The team admin or colleague can be notified, before conducting visits, to make them aware of the time a visit is expected to conclude.
- A check-in with admin can be organised where they can call at the expected end of the visit.
- Workers (male and female) will consider risks of sexual misconduct allegations, particularly in the privacy of a whānau home.

#### 1. VISUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS

*Things to consider in a visual risk assessment in a residential place:*

- Before exiting the vehicle or winding down the window (slightly), can you hear arguing?
- Does the property look out of sorts or in a state of distress?
- Are the family displaying threatening or aggressive behaviour?
- Are the family displaying signs of being mentally unwell?
- Are the family displaying behaviours that are out of character?
- Are the family under the influence of substances?
- If need be, is there a way for you to leave in a hurry?

*Things to consider while working off-site during an event or in an isolated place:*

- Is the place known for dangerous community activity?
- Has the event coordinator (if applicable) provided a risk/issues register for the event and place of the event?
- Is there an emergency plan for the event and place?

*Level Of Risk Will Be Assessed where:*

- The level of risk acceptable and able to be managed with existing procedures.
- The level of risk is acceptable but requires other safeguards e.g., two workers visiting.





- A risk management plan may need to be developed with the Health and Safety Coordinator or management to ensure all appropriate safety measures are in place.
- The level of risk is too high and cannot be mitigated through rearrangement of resources or a risk management plan:
  - Explain and document the reasons.
  - Work with the whānau to identify more appropriate options.
  - Refer as needed (with the whānau consent).

**High / Extreme Risk**

Do not visit whānau; consider alternative arrangements.

**Medium / Significant Risk**

Two workers will do the visit until further assessments lower the risk.

**Low Risk**

Home visit is permissible; however, a visual risk assessment must be conducted prior to entry.

*Risks will be identified and decisions made relating to them.*

The outcomes and/or decisions associated with identified risks may include:

- Cancellation of the visit.
- Two workers doing the visit together.
- Admin notified of visit including check in calls and code words.
- For 'no home visit' decisions: appointments at Whānau Manaaki premises or a public location apply. Visits may also take place at other support agencies.
- Workers will have Necessary Equipment:
  - Mobile phone in good working order – workers to ensure it is appropriately charged.
  - 111 programmed to the speed dial function of the mobile phone.
  - Whānau Manaaki office numbers programmed into the speed dial function of the mobile phone.
  - Workers utilise the Emergency SOS Messaging Notification, built into their mobile phone, to alert Management and Admin in the event of an emergency.

## 2. WHEN NOT TO VISIT OR ATTEND TO AN EVENT

- 2.1 When the assessed risk of aggression is 'high' or 'extreme'.
- 2.2 When violence is known to have recently occurred and the perpetrator (whānau or other person) is at the address or is likely to return, or arrive, during the visit.
- 2.3 When the whānau or other person/people present are exhibiting signs of aggression and/or intoxicated by alcohol and/or drugs.
- 2.4 Unclear direction from event coordinator or landlord of place about known activities or incidences that have occurred at the event or place of event
- 2.5 When there is no emergency plan or unknown risks/register outline about the event or place of event.





*Note: The risk may decrease and attendance may occur if Team Lead escalates the need for the appropriate information from the Event coordinator (similar positions) or owner/landlord of place is in progress and will be provided prior to the event/ use of place.*

In making decisions regarding home visits all factors need to be considered, including any mitigating circumstances such as physical disability that may impact on your ability to manage a dangerous situation. Where risk has been assessed as medium/significant or high/extreme, worker must never visit a residence until a discussion with the manager has occurred and a management plan has been developed. Management plans must always contain risk minimisation strategies.

### 3. WHEN TWO WORKERS SHOULD VISIT

- 3.1 The risk of aggression is 'medium/significant'.
- 3.2 Violence has occurred in the past, and now there are concerns the whānau may be unwell or becoming unwell (regressing).
- 3.3 Reports have indicated that the whānau is 'upset' or 'distressed'.
- 3.4 The worker does not know the whānau.
- 3.5 The worker is not trained in the assessment of aggression or assessment of the environment.
- 3.6 The worker is not trained in de-escalation or self-defence strategies.

### 4. VISITS (HOME OR COMMUNITY) OUTSIDE WORK HOURS

- 4.1 Whether on the way to work or on the way home from work, these should not occur without:
  - 4.1.1 Prior approval from a manager.
  - 4.1.2 Documented justification for this decision.
  - 4.1.3 Procedures put in place to manage such visits.

It is encouraged to have the visits during work hours, in particular, during wintertime. Use facetime to do the interview.

Is it important that the Calendar for every team member is shared amongst the team. Every visit should have the details.

### 5. WHEN A HOME VISIT HAS BEEN ASSESSED AS UNSAFE

- 5.1 Where home visits are assessed as unsafe then alternative arrangements must be made.

These may include:

- 5.1 Visits made in a public setting. The appointment happens at a Whānau Manaaki office in a meeting room close to reception.
- 5.2 A multi-party appointment takes place with other agencies involved with the whānau or another worker within Whānau Manaaki.



- 5.3 Risk level is High/or Extreme:
- Where the referral has come from another provider, the referral will be directed back with an explanation it is unsafe, and no further services will be delivered.
  - For self-referrals, the worker must notify the whānau that engagement is too unsafe.
  - Use online technology to support service delivery e.g. Facetime or Zoom.

### 6. ARRIVING FOR A HOME VISIT

- 6.1 Park on the street in a well-lit place where you can't be blocked in or obstructed.
- 6.2 Do a visual risk analysis of the property.
- 6.3 If worker become concerned for their safety, or are threatened with physical harm, they are to leave immediately and/or call Police. They must inform Team Lead of the event.

### 7. DURING A HOME VISIT

- 7.1 Safety procedures will be adhered to by all workers during home visits.
- 7.2 Be cautious when entering a whānau home.
- 7.3 If an unfamiliar person opens the door, make sure the whānau is home and that you feel safe before entering. It may be necessary to abandon the visit if you have any concerns.
- 7.4 Ask whether there are other people at home. Be aware of the presence of others.
- 7.5 Be aware of house layout and exit routes.
- 7.6 Keep keys and mobile phone on your person.
- 7.7 Conduct a quick low-key assessment by asking yourself and using your senses:
- Is the whānau clear-minded and reasonable?
  - Is there anything different in their conduct?
  - Are they showing signs of agitation or aggression?
  - Are there any signs of alcohol or drug use? (smell)
  - Are other people nearby?
  - Is anyone arguing?
  - Are there any weapons?
  - Is the home unusually messy? Is it different than usual?

*Note: Never attempt to physically stop violent behaviour or get involved in arguments. If there is an identified safety risk due to aggression, leave immediately.*

- 7.8 All potential hazards must be reported on return to the office.
- 7.9 If a medical emergency arises while on the home visit, call 111 and wait for help.

### 8. AFTER A HOME VISIT

- 8.1 Report any incident or significant observations to your manager.
- 8.2 Document any incidents, concerns, or significant observations in the Whānau Notes.
- 8.3 Speak to your manager if you need debriefing, counselling, or support services.



### 9. AFTER A HOME VISIT INCIDENT

- 9.1 If there is concern for the welfare of the whānau or others, immediately contact the police and/or ambulance. Contact Whānau Manaaki Team Lead or Manager.
- 9.2 Seek medical treatment for yourself, if required.
- 9.3 Debrief with Team Lead or Manager to request further support and/or ongoing counselling if needed.
- 9.4 Within 24 hours ensure an GOSH form is completed and assessed by management.
- 9.5 Debriefing and support for whānau and others involved can be made available.

### 10. TEAM LEAD/ MANAGER'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

- 10.1 Ensure guidelines and policies are in place for safe home visiting, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for workers.
- 10.2 Ensure clearly documented safe work policies and procedures are in place and are communicated to all workers.
- 10.3 Ensure Health & Safety orientation is provided to all new workers.
- 10.4 Ensure ongoing training in safe work practices are provided to worker.
- 10.5 Ensure systems are in place for continuous identification of hazards, risk assessment, and elimination or control of hazards.
- 10.6 Ensure consultative mechanisms, incident reporting and follow-up procedural assessments are in place.
- 10.7 Ensure assessments have been carried out correctly.
- 10.8 Ensure all workers are fully briefed and updated on whānau assessments they need to carry out before visits.
- 10.9 Ensure effective systems are in place to monitor worker's movements and respond as necessary.
- 10.10 Ensure violence and aggression in the work environment are managed, with support for injured worker and return-to-work strategies.
- 10.11 Ensure systems are implemented for ongoing review of effectiveness of procedures and worker compliance e.g., audits, management plans, team meetings and worker appraisals.
- 10.12 Ensure, with worker involvement, there is follow-through implementation and monitoring of actions resulting from review processes.

### Relevant Legislation and Regulations | **Whaitake Ture me Waeture**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

### Policy Review Cycle | **Kaupapa Arotake Hurihanga**

This policy is to be reviewed every year. Whānau Manaaki may amend or cancel this policy or introduce a new policy, as it considers it necessary within the current cycle of the policy. Any amendments will be considered by the policy Working Group and will need to be approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board. The policy will continue on the same review cycle.