# NZ Police logo

# NZ Police Apology

## Delivered by: Tania Kura | Commissioner of Police

As Commissioner of Police, I stand here today with a heavy heart to offer a sincere apology for past organisational failures in protecting and serving those who were most vulnerable in our society - children, young people, and adults in care.

The Royal Commission's findings have shone a light on deeply troubling aspects of Police history. We failed to respond adequately to the distinct needs of Māori and Pacific peoples, as well as disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori, Deaf and Turi Māori in our care. Our at-times singular focus on enforcement, rather than exploring alternatives to criminal proceedings, has been found to be misguided. There were also times when we did not consistently follow our own policies and General Instructions which set out how we should manage and deal with children and young people.

As you told the Royal Commission, sometimes we failed to understand or properly investigate instances of abuse by our own officers when you were in our custody or care. These included when you were in our holding cells, interview rooms, and being transported to other places of care, such as hospitals. For far too long, we lacked a dedicated policy for investigating sexual and serious physical abuse of children. Perhaps most disturbingly, evidence presented to the Royal Commission showed some of our people harboured negative biases against you as victims of abuse and neglect; sometimes not believing your accounts or failing to thoroughly investigate your allegations. We didn’t ask questions if you ran away, and we trusted the explanations of the people we took you back to.

These failures span decades and multiple Police administrations. As the current Commissioner, I take full responsibility for our organisation's past shortcomings. We have listened intently to your experiences. Your courage in coming forward has been profoundly moving.

This is not the first time we’ve acknowledged our faults. We’ve previously recognised issues around our handling of sexual assault cases, and our interactions with Māori and Pacific peoples. Today's apology builds on those past acknowledgements but goes further in recognising the full scope of Police’s failings over the more-than-half-a-century covered by the Royal Commission.

While we cannot undo the harm caused, we are committed to learning and changing. In recent years we have implemented significant changes in our practices, policies, and culture. Today, I reaffirm our unwavering commitment to continue this journey of improvement.

We are dedicated to building a police service that protects and serves all members of society, especially the most vulnerable. We aspire to regain the trust of anyone we have failed by ensuring such failures are not repeated.

To all who suffered due to our past failings - we hear you, we believe you, and we are truly sorry. Your experiences will not be forgotten, and they will continue to shape our path forward as we strive to be the police service that New Zealanders expect and deserve.

[Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions | New Zealand Police](https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/investigations-and-reviews/commissions-inquiry/royal-commission-inquiry-historical-abuse) [and <https://tinyurl.com/pxyvbs42>]

End of information | **NZ Police Apology**

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