# Survivor Experiences Service logo, which says Survivor Experiences Service, For people who experienced abuse in care.

# Records Support

The Survivor Experiences Service offers support for people who have been abused in care to request, receive, and understand care records.

## Who the Service is for

The Survivor Experiences Service is for people who were abused in state, faith-based, or other forms of care (e.g., private schools, non-governmental organisations). We offer two services for survivors and whānau:

* Sharing experiences of abuse in car.
* Records support.

## Support with records

We understand the process of accessing care records can be distressing and re-traumatising. The process can be long and complex, and you may not know what to expect. We can support people who have been abused in care to access and understand your records.

We can:

* Support you to understand which records exist about you.
* Support you to understand which organisations hold your records.
* Support you accessing them – we can request records on your behalf if you wish, so that you do not have to deal with organisations connected with your abuse..
* Support you to read and understand the information and language used in your records, if you wish
* Support you to decide what you want to do with the information.

You do not need to share your experience of abuse in care with us to get this support. But if you would like to do this as well, we can help arrange a time and place for this.

For a definition of what we mean by 'care records', please visit: <https://www.archives.govt.nz/manage-information/the-care-records-definition/read-the-care-records-definition/the-care-records-definition-plain-language-text>   
or <https://tinyurl.com/3hph3pm2>

**Please note:** the Service cannot change any of the processes that the current record holders have – using the Service does not make it faster or allow you to jump the queue. Similarly, the Service has no control over what parts are redacted from your records. We will help you understand why certain parts may have been redacted, and if there are any concerns we can liaise with the organization on your behalf.

## Who can get records support?

Records support is only available for people who have been abused in care (state, faith-based or other forms of care like private schools or non-governmental organisations). People who were in care, but do not identify as survivors of abuse in care, will need to go directly to the record holders to request their records.

The Service will directly support survivors of abuse in care, along with any whānau or other support people they consent to being involved in their requests for records.

At this stage we cannot support whānau of deceased people who have been in care, or whānau of people who are or have been in care seeking access to the records.

## How to get records support

You can contact us to register with the Service and get records support.

* Phone: 0800 456 090 (NZ) 8:30am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday;
* Phone: 1-800 456 032 (AUS) 8:30am – 4:30pm NZT Monday to Friday;
* Email: [contact@survivorexperiences.govt.nz](mailto:contact@survivorexperiences.govt.nz)
* Text: 8328;
* If you are Deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, speech impaired or find it hard to talk, you can use the New Zealand Relay Service – <https://nzrelay.co.nz>

Once you have contacted us, we will assist you to complete your registration. We will also assist with organising any short-term support specific to our Service. We will then support you with accessing and receiving your records.

## Available support

If you need crisis support or other forms of support, please visit our Support Services webpage for information about 24/7 helplines: [**https://survivorexperiences.govt.nz/support-services**](https://survivorexperiences.govt.nz/support-services)   
and <https://tinyurl.com/w5fp83s7>

We understand that by going through this process to access and receive your records, you and your whānau may experience some distress or resurfacing of memories of these experiences.

Your mana and oranga (wellbeing) are at the centre of our interactions with you and your whānau.

You can request support at any stage. The earlier you can talk with us about your needs, the more time we will have to ensure the most suitable support is put in place for you.

While the Survivor Experiences Service cannot provide long-term support, providers such as ACC or community providers may be able to assist you.

## Privacy

Your privacy is our priority. It is important that you understand how your information will be kept and used.

We have systems and safeguards in place to control how we collect, manage and use information. This helps us use information appropriately and keep it safe.

For more information about how we protect your privacy, please see our Privacy webpage: <https://survivorexperiences.govt.nz/about-the-service/privacy/> and <https://tinyurl.com/2fv8k27w>

End of information | Records Support

This Large Print document is adapted by Blind Citizens NZ from the standard document provided by the Department of Internal Affairs | Survivor Experiences Service