



Public Service Commission

Te Kawa Mataaho

4 June 2026

9(2)(a) privacy

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Official Information Request

Our Ref: OIA 2026-0123

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request which was transferred by NZTA to the Public Service Commission Te Kawa Mataaho (the Commission) on 13 May 2026 for:

“AS an OIA I would like to know from your policy analysts what are the government's communication policies, is it to make it easy for citizens to communicate with the government? What are the policies with respect to older retired people?”

Our Response

The Commission does not have one single overarching ‘government communication policy’. Instead, the Government’s approach to communicating with the public is guided by legislation and associated guidance included in the Plain Language Act 2022 (the Act).

You can find the Act and Guidance that the Commission has released on our website at the links provided in the table below.

Item	Document Description	Website Address
1	Plain Language Act	https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2022/54/en/latest/#DLM4357602
2	Plain Language Act Guidance for agencies	https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/guidance/plain-language-act-2022-guidance-for-agencies

The purpose of that Act is to improve the effectiveness, accountability, and accessibility of information published by public service agencies (section 3). The Act requires agencies to use plain language, which is defined as language that is appropriate to the intended audience and is clear, concise, and well organised (section 5). In practice, this means agencies are expected to present information in a way that supports people to understand and use it, including when engaging with government services.

The Act does not contain specific policies relating to particular groups such as *older retired people*, that you have enquired about. However, its requirement to consider the intended audience and improve accessibility applies to all members of the public. Supporting guidance issued by the Public Service Commission also highlights the relationship between plain language and accessibility, including the need to consider people who may face barriers to understanding written information. This approach is intended to support a wide range of users, including older people.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this response (with your personal details removed) on the Commission's website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicky Dirks', with a stylized, cursive script.

Nicky Dirks

Manager – Ministerial and Executive Services
Public Service Commission Te Kawa Mataaho