

Guidance on making declarations to Te Kaunihera

Te Kaunihera Manapou | Paramedic Council (Te Kaunihera) has both registration and practising certificate application forms which include a range of ‘fitness for registration’ or ‘fitness to practise’ pātai | questions.

These can be grouped three main themes – health, competence, and conduct – and relate back to your ability to perform the required functions to safely practise as a paramedic in Aotearoa | New Zealand (Aotearoa). The following information is intended to help you with what to expect if you need to make a declaration to us.

He whānau kotahi tātou katoa, ahakoa nō tēnā kapa, nō tēnā kapa tātou, kei konei tātou ki te awahina i ā tātou hapori, i ngā wā katoa, i nga wāhi katoa e hiahiatia ana

We are all the same whānau regardless of our employer, here to help the community and one another whenever we are needed, wherever we are needed

What do you mean by “perform the required functions to safely practise as a paramedic”?

Te Kaunihera’s purpose under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act) is to protect the public. With this in mind, we consider that a paramedic practising in Aotearoa must always:

- Make safe judgements
- Demonstrate the skill and knowledge required for safe practice
- Behave appropriately
- Maintain the trust of the public and their patients
- Not act in ways that adversely impact on public safety.

The declarations you make in your applications help us to determine if you meet these criteria.

What is the difference between “fitness for registration” and “fitness to practise”?

“Fitness” is a term used in the HPCA Act to describe your suitability to practise as a paramedic in Aotearoa.

If you are applying for registration, the declarations that you make relate to your fitness for registration. This contrasts with fitness to practise declarations, which are about your ongoing ability to practise as a paramedic. We ask you to make these declarations each year when you apply for a practising certificate.

What types of things relating to competence or conduct will I need to declare?

We need to know about anything relating to a criminal conviction, investigation, inquiry, or other process where your conduct or competence may have been called into question, either in Aotearoa or overseas.

You would need to declare if you have been, or are currently, involved with any of the following:

- Investigations relating to professional disciplinary proceedings
- A review of your competence (or similar process) or a restriction on your practice based on your clinical performance
- An adverse finding in any disciplinary action. This includes issues raised with the Health and Disability Commissioner’s Office or any regulatory authority
- A condition imposed or an order made against you by a regulatory authority or similar body
- If any registration you have held, in any country, has been suspended, withdrawn, revoked, cancelled and/or removed for any reason
- Your employment has been terminated on the grounds of misconduct or for reasons related to competence

- Police or military investigations, or convictions (including traffic offences involving alcohol or drugs)
- Any investigation and/or disciplinary action by any educational institution, health authority, government agency, or any other organisation

This isn't an exhaustive list, and the matters listed above aren't only limited to paramedicine. If you have practised in another health profession or have received a conviction outside of your mahi | work, you would need to declare this also.

If you are in any doubt as to whether something needs to be declared, please [contact](#) the Kairēhita Tuarua | Deputy Registrar for an anonymous, confidential discussion.

How do I know whether my health meets the threshold to be declared?

We do not usually need information about:

- Short-lived conditions which respond quickly to rest and treatment, and from which a full recovery is made
- Medical problems that do not affect your ability to practise paramedicine.

You will, however, need to declare the following:

- Substance use problems (drug or alcohol use)
- Any impairment that has been caused by substance abuse
- Mental health conditions
- Infection with a transmissible disease¹
- Medical conditions affecting motor skills, cognition, or that limit your capacity to practise
- Brain injury.

The above list is not exhaustive. You also need to declare if:

- You have a relapsing condition, even if it has been stable for awhile
- You have a condition you would need to disclose in an occupational health situation
- Your workplace needs to know about a health condition and its potential to impact on your practice, for example, certain supports are needed, or you have a condition such as type 1 diabetes that could impact on your practice
- You have a newly diagnosed condition which you are still learning to integrate into your everyday life and practice.

¹ Refer to the [Guidelines for registered health care workers on transmissible major viral infections](#)

What happens after I make a declaration?

In your application form, you will be asked to provide a summary about the declaration you have made. Te Kaunihera kaimahi | employees will then ask you for further information so that we can fully understand the situation.

Depending on your situation, we may decide to take no further action, we may ask you for further information, or in certain cases we may need to ask a Triage Committee to make a decision on whether what has been disclosed is affecting, or could affect, your paramedic practise in a way that could put members of the public at risk.

A triage committee is a small group of professional advisors and either the Kairēhita | Registrar and/or Kairēhita Tuarua | Deputy Registrar. Any information provided with your application will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be shared with other parties without discussing the matter with you first.

What information will Te Kaunihera need for my declaration?

This will depend on the type of declaration you make.

For health-related disclosures, we will typically ask you to provide a:

- Reflective statement which provides details of your condition or impairment, such as the duration and treatment, your insight and understanding of any triggers, details of strategies utilised and your management plan for paramedic practise; and
- Recent supporting letter signed by your current treating practitioner/s or health team which confirms the details of your management, any medication you are currently taking, and including a comment on whether they believe that the condition or impairment would impact your ability to perform the functions required for paramedicine. The letter may include suggestions on your practice should be supported. For example, limited work hours.
- Return to work plan, or letter of support from your employer about how they will help you manage an impairment within the workplace or your health condition.

For other disclosures (criminal convictions, investigations, employment terminations, registration suspensions etc.), we may ask you to provide:

- A reflective statement describing the incident(s)
- A copy of each of the relevant reports, findings, decisions, orders.
- Any relevant letters from your employer/former employer, or overseas regulator.
- Any other information you think relevant.

If more information is needed or if we need something specific, we will contact you to let you know.



Will declarations extend the time it takes to process my application?

This will depend on the declaration you make, and the complexity of what is being declared. If we need to seek further information to make a decision, this will extend the time taken to process your application. If all the information is available, any delay will likely be minimal.

Where possible, we will always try to process applications as quickly as we can. It is helpful if you let us know if you have employment so that we can keep this in mind.

What is a condition?

The HPCA Act allows Te Kaunihera to include conditions on a paramedic's scope of practice, which will appear on the [Public Register](#). Information on what a condition means and why they are placed can be found [here](#).

What if I need more information, have a pātai | question, or want to discuss a specific situation?

You can get in touch with us either by phone on (04) 381 9080 or by emailing us at info@paramediccouncil.org.nz.