



# Monitoring places of Police detention

INDEPENDENT POLICE CONDUCT AUTHORITY

Police detention facilities must be safe and humane and meet international standards.

The New Zealand government has signed a United Nations agreement which requires Police detention facilities to be independently inspected. The inspections are designed to protect against torture, or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

The inspections are carried out by the Independent Police Conduct Authority. The Authority is not part of the Police. It is headed by a High Court judge.

The inspections are important for two reasons: they help to protect the human rights of prisoners; and they ensure that Police who work in these facilities know what conditions need to be observed.

## What is a Police detention facility?

A detention facility is anything that is used to hold or transport prisoners.

It can be a cell in a Police station or a court, or a vehicle such as a Police van or car.

## What sort of conditions are inspected?

The conditions inspected include: **treatment** such as the use of force or restraints; **protection** such as official registers and procedures for making a complaint; **material**

**conditions** such as food, bedding, lighting, and personal hygiene; **activities and access** such as contact with a lawyer or family member, and observation of religious needs; **health services** and access to medical care; **staff** conduct and training.

## What can the Authority do?

The Authority can inspect facilities, view records, interview prisoners, and make recommendations.

It aims to prevent abuses happening in the first place, rather than just dealing with complaints of ill treatment after they have happened.

## What should you do if you have concerns?

In the first instance, prisoners should raise concerns with the Police officers on duty. Police can also raise concerns, either with a senior officer or a staff representative. Alternatively, concerns can be raised directly with the Authority by Police or detainees.

## Contact us

### Independent Police Conduct Authority

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