

HOW DO WE BUILD THE FUTURE WE WANT TO SEE?

OUR BLUEPRINT FOR A JUST AOTEAROA

BUILD COMMUNITIES NOT PRISONS

DECOLONISE THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

**ENSURE EVERY WHĀNAU AND COMMUNITY HAVE THE RESOURCES
THEY NEED TO THRIVE**

			BLUEPRINT	
			AOTEAROA	

BUILD COMMUNITIES NOT PRISONS

BARRIER

Over the past three decades, people in successive governments have made policy decisions that have fuelled a retributive justice system, focused on punishment rather than prevention and healing. As a result more people than ever before are locked up in prison, trapped in a maze without exits, which fails to address the systemic causes of harm. Instead of working together to fix this, political parties have used justice as a political football and communities have been divided.

ACTION

We call on the government to dismantle the policies and laws that fuel mass incarceration and build a pathway to a restorative justice system that no longer relies on prison. Action is needed now to create meaningful alternatives to incarceration and provide pragmatic solutions to the social issues that push people into the justice system.



FUNDING ACTIONS

Immediate increase to funding of pre-trial and post release housing, to reduce the number of people held on bail or denied parole because of insecure housing.

Significant funding for pre-trial and post-release community services for people facing charges and their whānau, including welfare advocacy services, addiction and mental health support, with a particular focus on kaupapa Māori services.

Substantially increase legal aid funding to ensure that everyone's right to proper legal representation is no longer breached.



POLICY ACTIONS

Mainstream the approach of therapeutic and problem solving courts which offer alternatives to incarceration across all of New Zealand, building on the innovation shown by the Alcohol and Other Drugs, Rangatahi, New Beginnings & Special Circumstances courts.

Mandate all key social service and justice agencies to work together to provide pretrial community services and wrap-around bail support schemes to keep people out of remand, including youth specific services for rangatahi Māori.

Establish Te Pae Oranga (iwi community panels) across all regions, allow more cases to be heard, and require Police to refer all people arrested for low level offences to Te Pae Oranga instead of Court.



LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

Raise the youth justice age to 25, keeping more young people in a restorative system proven to reduce reoffending and helping them flourish.

Repeal the Bail Amendment Act and the Three Strikes law (Sentencing and Parole Reform Act).

Review the Sentencing and Parole Acts, to decriminalise low level offences where the impact of a conviction can significantly outweigh the actual harm caused, prioritise alternatives to incarceration in sentencing and enable more people to leave prison through supported release sooner.

DECOLONISE THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

BARRIER

The justice system is based on colonial values which undermine Māori worldviews and values, and which actively harm Māori whānau, as well as tauwiwi (non-Māori). At every level - care and protection, policing, courts, and prisons - systemic racism creates unjust divisions amongst us, and the Crown has not adequately partnered with Māori to enable meaningful reform to take place.

ACTION

The Crown must support Māori leadership on justice transformation and honour their obligations under Te Tiriti O Waitangi to support tino rangatiratanga. By transferring power and resources to Māori, and transforming the system to embed tikanga and Māori worldviews in the justice systems, we will meaningfully support all communities and whānau to be able to thrive.



FUNDING ACTIONS

Significantly increase funding for Section 27 cultural reports, which provide context for a person's offending and their whakapapa, and fund training for report writers across all regions of Aotearoa.

Invest in Kaupapa Māori Legal Units within each Community Law Centre, to support access to justice in Māori communities.

Establish a tikanga Māori pilot for the Family Court.



POLICY ACTIONS

All government agencies must establish and fund the Mana Ōrite partnership model, placing Māori at all levels of decision-making.

Reform Oranga Tamariki to transfer responsibility of care and protection services and resources to whānau, hapū and iwi.

Mainstream a whānau-centred approach in criminal justice processes, acknowledge the full whakapapa of every incident, the wider set of challenges and the intergenerational context.



LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

Begin a comprehensive process of constitutional transformation, following the recommendations of and process set out in Matike Mai Aotearoa.

Start an immediate review of all relevant criminal justice legislation to ensure it reflects the Crown's commitments under Te Tiriti.

Amend the Sentencing Act to allow judges to order Section 27 cultural reports.

ENSURE EVERY WHĀNAU AND COMMUNITY HAVE THE RESOURCES THEY NEED TO THRIVE

BARRIER

Failed models of policing and punishment not only fail to address the systemic drivers of harm, but in many cases they push people further into crisis. The justice system entrenches the harm caused by mental distress, financial hardship, and addiction. Instead of helping people, the system punishes people for being unable to thrive in the very conditions it creates through racism, inequality and colonisation.

ACTION

The Government must put the needs of communities first by properly resourcing support services, particularly kaupapa Māori services, that provide compassionate and effective solutions for people and whānau experiencing mental distress, addiction, poverty and family harm. We need a fundamental shift away from the justice policies and processes that escalate harm, like aggravated policing and punitive drug laws, and towards a cross-agency focus on improving wellbeing.



FUNDING ACTIONS

Fund a nationwide network of community-based mental health, drug and alcohol addiction and hauora (wellbeing) 'hubs' with a mandate to work with people referred by themselves, their whānau, or justice agencies.

Urgent funding for nationwide violence prevention programmes for people who are at risk of harming others, with a particular investment in kaupapa Māori services.

Invest in victim support services across all districts, particularly for kaupapa Māori services, and upskill the existing workforce in trauma-informed practice.

Appoint whānau ora navigators to be based in every District Court, with support from all Government social service agencies.



POLICY ACTIONS

Replace Police responses to mental health emergency call outs with mental health professionals and build alternative resolution methods for fines outside of the courts.

Overhaul the system of community sentences and home detention to prevent escalation of these sentences into incarceration.

Establish an all of Government approach to treating drugs as a health issue by working with community leaders and service providers, building on the pilot work of Te Ao Oranga in Northland.



LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

Review the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 to decriminalise use and possession of all drugs, and legalise and regulate personal use of cannabis.

Review the Victim Rights Act 2002 to ensure that restorative justice processes are offered at every stage of the court process and post sentencing.