



Headquarters
New Zealand Defence Force
Defence House
Private Bag 39997
Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045
New Zealand

OIA-2026-5656

25th February 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 4 February 2026 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), the below information regarding New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) recruitment medical standards:

The Policy: A copy of the current "Defence Health Rules" (or equivalent document) sections pertaining to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and the use of stimulant/non-stimulant medication (e.g., Methylphenidate, Lisdexamfetamine).

The relevant current NZDF document is Defence Health Rules, Part 3, Chapter 6, which is publicly available online¹. This part of your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(d) of the OIA.

The Justification: Any internal reports, risk assessments, or clinical reviews conducted or cited by the NZDF in the last 5 years that justify the current "stand-down" periods or permanent exclusions for applicants using ADHD medication.

The medical status of applicants for recruitment into the NZDF is evaluated on a case-by-case basis, there is no blanket rule for stand down periods or the exclusion of applicants who are using ADHD medication.

The Precedent: Data on how many applicants in the last 24 months were declined entry primarily due to an ADHD diagnosis or current medication use, and how many "medical waivers" were granted for these conditions in that same period.

The NZDF does not maintain a central record of applicant medical information. To provide this information would require a manual search of approximately 1,400 individual application records. This part of your request is therefore declined in accordance with section 18(f) of the OIA as it would require substantial collation.

Policy Alignment: Any internal correspondence or briefing notes discussing the impact of the February 2026 ADHD prescribing changes on NZDF recruitment entry standards.

How an applicant is prescribed medication for diagnosed ADHD has no impact on NZDF Recruit Medical Standards and no changes have been made to Defence Health or Recruiting rules in relation to recent changes.

¹www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/Uploads/DocumentLibrary/OIA-2025-5255_Mental-health.pdf

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that responses to official information requests are proactively released where possible. This response to your request will be published shortly on the NZDF website, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

GA Motley

Brigadier

Chief of Staff HQNZDF