



**METHODIST
ALLIANCE**
NGĀ PURAPURA WETERIANA

Submission to the Justice Committee on the Summary Offences (Move on Orders) Amendment Bill July 2026

This submission is from:

The Methodist Alliance
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Ko wai tātou | Who we are

The Methodist Alliance is a formal alliance of Methodist Missions, parishes and community based social services and trusts, including cooperating ventures. This grouping constitutes a major provider of a range of services for tamariki/children, rangatahi/young people, and their families/whānau.

The Methodist Alliance brings together a number of large and medium social service providers such as Lifewise in Auckland, Methodist City Action in Hamilton, Palmerston North Methodist Social Services, Wesley Community Action in Wellington, Christchurch Methodist Mission, Methodist Mission Southern in Dunedin, as well as local community services provided by individual parishes. It includes new social service organisations, such as Siaola Vahefonua Tongan Methodist Mission; Puna’Oa - the Samoan Methodist Mission that operates within the Samoan Synod of the Methodist Church; and Te Taha Māori.

Ka whakahōnore mātou i tō mātou whakahoatanga Tiriti – we honour our Tiriti partnership. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the covenant establishing our nation on the basis of a power-sharing relationship. It is the foundation for social, economic and political equality in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Methodist Alliance is grounded in our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the bi-cultural journey of the Methodist Church of New Zealand - Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa, where Te Taha Māori and Tauīwi work in partnership. We claim the right bestowed by Article Four of Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

“E mea ana te Kawana ko ngā whakapono katoa o Ingarangi, o ngā Weteriana, o Roma, me te ritenga Māori hoki e tiakina ngatahitia e ia.”

“The Governor says the several faiths of England, of the Wesleyans, of Rome, and also the Māori custom shall alike be protected by him.”

The Methodist Alliance and our member organisations work collaboratively to achieve our vision of a just and inclusive society in which all people flourish, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Tirohanga Whānau | Overview

The Methodist Alliance opposes this bill, considering the substantial evidence that it will not better the circumstances of people and communities dealing with the current lack of housing, addiction and mental health support in Aotearoa. This bill will criminalise people for experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues without providing a viable or effective alternative and will most negatively impact young people and Māori, breaching te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Main Points

- 1. Move on orders will do nothing to reduce or resolve homelessness.**
- 2. The bill will criminalise people as young as 14.**
- 3. The bill will overwhelmingly impact Māori and breach te Tiriti o Waitangi.**

Taunakitanga | Recommendations

Point 1: Move on orders will do nothing to reduce or resolve homelessness.

People living rough have become increasingly visible, particularly in the centres of Aotearoa's major cities. For the most part, this is driven by the economic, mental health and housing crises created by government decisions, and while the visibility of people begging and living rough undoubtedly has an impact on the other people using these areas, move on orders will not fix this.

Legally obliging a person experiencing homelessness to move will not give them a home to live in, it will not resolve an addiction and it will not provide a job opportunity which pays enough to solve these issues for themselves. The inevitable outcome for people served with a move on order is that they shift a few blocks away and continue doing what they were already doing.

Communities of people sleeping rough will potentially migrate further from city centres, but will end up camped on private property, in church yards and in abandoned buildings. These encampments (as already seen in the Christchurch Red Zone) will be unsupervised, unsafe and unsanitary, exacerbating the existing problems these people are dealing with but also placing them in residential areas – closer to schools and houses but also further away from the services which they need to improve their lives.

The communities which the Methodist Alliance serves are across major cities and embedded in residential communities, but those targeted at homelessness and addiction are particularly active in city centres. If people are moved on from these areas

they will have no way to access our services and will fall further into poverty and homelessness.

Point 2: The bill will criminalise people as young as 14.

A major concern with this legislation is its potential to criminalise people as young as 14, for trying to survive on the streets. Almost half of those experiencing severe housing deprivation are under the age of 25¹, and for these people living rough is tougher than for most. Often these rangatahi are escaping from abusive or unsafe households or have left state care without the appropriate support around them, and resort to begging to survive.

Rangatahi who are exposed to the criminal justice system at a young age are more likely to continue in it throughout their lives, have worse education and employment outcomes and overall will struggle to remain part of society. Young people trying to survive in difficult circumstances need a helping hand, a sense of community and to feel that they are valued, this legislation will do the opposite.

Point 3: The bill will overwhelmingly impact Māori and breach te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Māori are overrepresented in severe housing deprivation, as well as addiction and mental health statistics. This disparity is due to historic and current government decisions which deprioritise outcomes for Māori. The impacts of this bill will be felt disproportionately by Māori – and as seen above by rangatahi Māori.

The Waitangi Tribunal Kāinga Kōwhiri report found that under articles 2 and 3 of te Tiriti o Waitangi the government holds responsibility for housing², and continuing to criminalise those who are sleeping and living rough is a direct breach of this.

Recommendation:

This legislation should not be passed. Instead, further investment must be made into addiction, mental health and housing – particularly culturally appropriate housing for Māori and wraparound support for those experiencing complex needs such as Housing First.

¹ Salvation Army (2025, December 16). Homelessness Rising Across New Zealand: Sector Urges LongTerm Solutions. <https://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/news/homelessness-rising-across-newzealand-sector-urges-long-term-solutions/>

² Waitangi Tribunal. (2024). Kāinga Kōwhiri: The stage one report of the Housing Policy and Services Kaupapa Inquiry on Māori homelessness (Wai 2750). https://forms.justice.govt.nz/search/Documents/WT/WT_DOC_211421672/Kainga%20Kore%20W.pdf

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