

# Young Serious Offender Declaration

## Fact Sheet

### The Government is taking action to address serious youth offending

The Young Serious Offender (YSO) declaration is part of a wider set of initiatives the Government is undertaking to address serious and repeated youth offending. The YSO declaration will provide more options for the Youth Court and Police to hold serious and persistent young offenders accountable and make powerful interventions to improve their lives.

This work supports the Government's target to reduce serious repeat youth offending by 15 percent.

Legislation to create the YSO declaration will be introduced before the end of 2024.

### What are the eligibility criteria?

Under the proposed legislation, a young person could be eligible to be declared to be a Young Serious Offender if:

- They are 14 to 17 years old at the time of offending; and
- They have committed two offences punishable by imprisonment of 10 years or more that have been proven in court (such as aggravated robbery and wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm) and;
- They are likely to reoffend, with previous interventions having been unsuccessful to stop reoffending.

When a young person meets the eligibility criteria, Police would be able to apply to the Youth Court to consider making a YSO declaration.

### What will the impact of the declaration be?

The YSO declaration would “unlock” a range of new powers for Police and the Youth Court in relation to the young person, including:

- more intensive monitoring, including a greater use of electronic and judicial monitoring
- the removal of all further mandatory Family Group Conferences (except those required to determine custody and care arrangements).
- longer Supervision and Supervision with Activity orders
- the removal of early release from a Supervision with Residence order
- an order to attend a Military-Style Academy
- Police will have the power to arrest without warrant for non-compliance with conditions of an order or a breach of bail conditions.

The YSO declaration will provide the young person with access to more intensive rehabilitation services, and more timely, enhanced services from a range of government departments, social service providers and community, iwi and Māori organisations.

The YSO declaration will last for two years, with some scope for a judge to discharge or vary it according to circumstances.

### How much funding has been allocated to address youth offending?

Addressing Serious Youth Offending: funding of \$35.204 million operating and \$1.966 million capital was approved through Budget 2024 for both the Military-style Academy Pilot and future YSO and Military-Style Academy legislation. This includes funding across Oranga Tamariki, Justice/Courts and Police.

### Where can I find out more?

- Information and advice is being proactively released on a regular basis. Check the Oranga Tamariki website - [Youth justice | Oranga Tamariki — Ministry for Children](#)
- Refer to companion fact sheet **Military-Style Academy Pilot**