



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

31 October 2023



Ref: OIA OIA-2023/24-0221

Tēnā koe



Official Information Act request: Definition of Governor-General and the style manual used by the government for application forms

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received on 2 October 2023. You requested:

*This is a request under the freedom of information.
Can you please provide me with the true definition of "Governor-General" as this seems to be a mistake according to the Grammatical English, as it has a hyphen between the two words, which would make it a deception according to my understanding of the rules of Grammar?
Also, can you please provide me with a link to where I can find the styles manual that the Government uses to create it's various forms supplied to the public for applications. I have recorded this letter as it seems the last one wasn't replied to."*

Between 1853 and 1917 the Sovereign was represented in New Zealand by a 'Governor of New Zealand'. On 11 May 1917 King George V changed that title with a formal declaration by Letters Patent that there shall be a 'Governor-General and Commander in Chief in and over Our Dominion of New Zealand'. The Earl of Liverpool, who had held office as Governor since 19 December 1912, was sworn in as the first Governor-General on 28 June 1917. The *Letters Patent Constituting the Office of Governor-General of New Zealand* are the legal authority for the existence of the office of Governor-General. Subsequent revisions of the Letters Patent have continued the title 'Governor-General' including a hyphen, which is, therefore, the correct title for the office in New Zealand. The current Letters Patent can be viewed at <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/1983/0225/latest/whole.html>.

A style guide for material created by public sector entities for government digital channels is available at [digital.govt.nz](https://www.digital.govt.nz/standards-and-guidance/design-and-ux/content-design-guidance/) here <https://www.digital.govt.nz/standards-and-guidance/design-and-ux/content-design-guidance/>. A further style guide is available at [data.govt.nz](https://www.data.govt.nz/about/about-data-govt-nz/our-style-guide/) here <https://www.data.govt.nz/about/about-data-govt-nz/our-style-guide/>. Some individual agencies may also publish their own specific style guides, which can be found on their websites.

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You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Nāku noa, nā



Rachel Hayward
Clerk of the Executive Council