

Media Release

Law versus our kawa & tikanga

Chairman, Ngāhiwi Tomoana, Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated

13 May 2020

Ngāti Kahungunu has been consistent in its support for COVID-19 lockdown including the 10 people per hui/tangi regulation in Levels 4 & 3. As we enter Level 2 we advise whānau to continue being cautious, despite the heavy-handed nature of the new legislation that decrees the maximum amount of 10 people.

In wide consultation with other iwi, with the Police, and with Health Officials, the last thing they want to do is have presence at or outside marae functions. In order to pre-empt that happening it would be wise for Marae Committees to contact your Local Kaiwhakarite, Police Iwi Liaison Officer or Māori Wardens to share information about the nature of your hui/tangi. By doing this we can mitigate and manage any risks associated with the unexpected arrival of more than 10 people which could mean for instance multiple consecutive groups of 10 up to 100 people at any one time. If pre-arranged and monitored closely this situation can be mitigated for a positive cultural result.

We can regulate *te taha tangata* but we can't regulate and rule *te taha hinengaro me te taha wairua*. We appeal for you to exercise your judgment in keeping your whānau safe.

We have expressed our concerns and given this advice to Crown Ministers, to the Police Commissioner, to the Ministry of Health including the Director-General of Health and Chief Executive, Dr. Ashley Bloomfield. We reminded them that our marae are governed by their own rules & regulations which are often stricter than Crown law.

Ngāti Kahungunu is the third largest iwi with 35,000 registered members. Geographically the tribe has the second longest coastline in the country from Paritū in the North to Turakirae in the South. Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated maintains an independent position to provide research, advice and advocate for the interests, rights, values, beliefs and practices of Ngāti Kahungunu alongside our whānau and hapū. Our mission is to enhance the mana and well-being of Ngāti Kahungunu.