

What is the role of the Registrar?

For incorporated societies

Under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 the function of the Registrar of Incorporated Societies is to maintain a public register and to receive documents that societies are obliged to file. These are principally applications for incorporation, changes to the registered office, alterations to the registered rules and the annual financial statement.

The Registrar has some limited powers of inspection to ascertain that societies are complying with section 58 of the Act, but these do not extend to intervening in internal matters within a society or a breach of a society's rules.

For charitable trusts

Under the Charitable Trusts Act 1957 the Registrar of Incorporated Societies is restricted to registering charitable trust applications, amendments to trust deeds and changes of registered office addresses. He has no power under the Act to inquire into a Board's activities or operation.

Section 58 of the Act gives the Attorney General the power to examine and inquire into the condition and management of any charities in New Zealand.

The Attorney General can be contacted at the following address:

The Solicitor General
Crown Law Office
P O Box 2858
Wellington 6140

The Crown Law Office website address is www.crownlaw.govt.nz

If you have concerns about a charitable organisation you should also check to see if it is registered with the Charities Commission. The Commission administers the Charities Act 2005 and is a separate office to that of the Registrar.

The role of the Charities Commission, among other things, is to maintain a register and monitor charitable organisations in New Zealand, promote public trust in charitable organisations and encourage best practice in governance and use of resources, and provide advice on matters relating to charities.

The Charities Commission can be contacted at the following address:

Charities Commission
P O Box 8072
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

The Charities Commission website address is www.charities.govt.nz