

**Child Protection and Welfare Policy
and Practice Document
for
Reception and Integration Agency (RIA)
and
Centres under contract to RIA**

Date: October, 2014

Reception and Integration Agency

Accommodation Centre:_____

INDEX

Policy Document

- Chapter 1. Introduction
- Chapter 2. RIA Statement of Policy
- Chapter 3. Confidentiality
- Chapter 4. Definitions
- Chapter 5. Recognising Child Abuse and Reporting
- Chapter 6. Reporting Structures
- Chapter 7. General Child Protection Measures
- Chapter 8. Record Keeping

Practice Document

- Chapter 9. Steps to be followed where a Child Protection Concern is identified

LIST OF APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1: Standard Report Form
- Appendix 2: Declaration to be completed by (a) any visitor to the Centre or (b) Persons Providing Services to residents in the Centre.
- Appendix 3: Standard letter to parents re. Children left unsupervised (no referral to Duty Social Work Dept. required)
- Appendix 4: Standard letter to parents re: Referral made to Duty Social Work Department.
- Appendix 5: Parents leaving their children in the care of another adult/children absent from the centre form
- Appendix 6: Notice to All Residents – giving details of DLPs in their Centre
- Appendix 7: Reception and Integration Agency Code of Behaviour for Persons Working in Accommodation Centres
- Appendix 8: Telephone Reference Check List.
- Appendix 9: Contact Details for RIA Child and Family Services Unit
- Appendix 10: Contact details for the CFA Duty Social Work Teams
- Appendix 11: Children First Information and Advice Officers.

REFERENCES

The Child Care Act, 1991¹ provides the legislative basis for dealing with children in need of care and protection. The promotion of the welfare of children is the paramount principle underpinning the Act.

This RIA policy is informed by that Act and by the following policies:

- Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011²
- Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook³
- Our Duty to Care': The principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people.⁴

This policy is also informed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.⁵ This convention is, in essence, a "Bill of Rights" for all children. The underlying principles of the Convention may be summarised as follows:

- (i) Non-discrimination (Article 2): All rights apply to all children without exception. The State is obliged to protect children from any form of discrimination and to take positive action to promote their rights.
- (ii) Best interests of the Child (Article 3): All actions concerning the child shall take account of his or her best interests. The State shall provide the child with adequate care when parents, or others charged with that responsibility fail to do so.
- (iii) Survival and Development (Article 6): Every child has the inherent right to life, and the State has an obligation to ensure the child's survival and development.
- (iv) The Child's Opinion (Article 12): The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child.

¹ [Child Care Act 1991 - Law Reform Commission](#)

www.lawreform.ie/_fileupload/Restatement/EN_ACT_1991_0017.PDF

² [Children First National Guidance 2011](#)

www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/Publications/ChildrenFirst.pdf%20

³ Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook

www.hse.ie/eng/services/Publications/services/Children/WelfarePractice.pdf

⁴ [Our Duty to Care](#) www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/ODTC_Full_Eng.pdf

⁵ www.childrensrights.ie/childrens-rights-ireland/childrens-rights-ireland

Chapter 1

RIA POLICY DOCUMENT

Introduction

This policy and practice document deals with safeguarding children in asylum seeker accommodation centres under contract to the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA). It also provides guidance to all accommodation centres and RIA staff. RIA is a functional unit of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of the Department of Justice and Equality.

Direct Provision means that the State, through RIA, assumes responsibility for providing suitable accommodation and certain other services for asylum seekers on a full board basis. Other services - including health, social welfare and education - are provided by the appropriate Departments on a mainstreamed basis.

Generally, personnel working in accommodation centres are not public servants. They are employees or sub-contractors of the proprietor with whom RIA has a contract. Nonetheless, it is a condition of the contract that this policy applies to all staff and residents in centres.

This policy complements other existing RIA protection policies - all of which are available on RIA's website - www.ria.gov.ie

- **Garda Vetting Policy.** All staff in centres under contract to RIA are Garda vetted.
- **Complaints Policy.** The RIA has a complaints procedure. Its aim is to have problems dealt with quickly and efficiently. Residents should not be afraid to complain when they need to. The residents are entitled to use the complaints procedure to tackle issues and problems that arise in RIA accommodation Centres. Complaints by centre residents are dealt with in accordance with the procedures outlined in RIA's Accommodation Centre Services, Rules and Procedures (House Rules) a copy of which is provided to all residents and sets out, inter alia, the obligations placed both on the centre manager and the resident. The complaints procedure explains how one party can seek to have breaches of the obligations by the other party resolved. Making a complaint will not affect how other official agencies consider: - an asylum application; an application for leave to remain; or subsidiary protection application in the State.
- RIA Policy and Practice Document on safeguarding RIA residents against **Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence & Harassment**
- **RIA Code of Practice** for Persons Working in Accommodation Centres and RIA Staff

- **National Policy** agreed between Child and Family Agency, Tusla and RIA in relation to reuniting children with adults
- **Policy on Accommodation of Aged Out Minors** in RIA Accommodation Centres

Communication of this policy

As well as being on the RIA website – www.ria.gov.ie - this Child Protection and Welfare Policy will be made available to residents in centres at all times. Further, all centre staff and residents, including children, will be informed of this policy in a number of ways including:

- Through the Reception and Accommodation Centre meeting families on arrival;
- Through RIA's House Rules and Procedures – translated into eleven languages www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/Pages/House_Rules_Pubs
- Through ongoing engagement with Centre staff;
- Through ongoing engagement with voluntary support groups and other external organisations providing services in the centre or externally;
- Through internal training for RIA Staff;
- Through ongoing engagement with RIA staff at the centres;

Aged Out Minors

This policy does not specifically deal with Aged Out Minors (AOMs) in centres who are not defined as children for the purposes of this policy. Nonetheless, because of the unique nature of this cohort, if any concerns arise regarding an Aged Out Minor (AOM), the DLP in the centre will advise RIA Child and Family Services Unit who will bring any concerns to the attention of the Separated Children's Team, Child and Family Agency (CFA).

Chapter 2

RIA'S STATEMENT OF POLICY

We, the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) and all accommodation centres under contract to it, are committed to safeguarding and protecting children from abuse. The safety and well being of all residents, but particularly children, is our paramount concern.

This Policy recognises that all children have the right to be protected from abuse, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into consideration.

This Policy commits RIA and all accommodation centres to ensuring that all Child Protection or Welfare issues which arise are dealt with without delay. It comprises both a policy and practice document. In relation to the latter, the specific steps to be taken when a child protection concern is reported are outlined in Chapter 9.

This Policy applies to all persons who are resident in accommodation centres under contract to RIA. It also applies to RIA and accommodation centre staff. Further, it applies to all those delivering services to clients in RIA accommodation centres. All staff including service delivery staff must sign a declaration – see Appendix 2 - stating they have read, understood and will adhere to this Policy and that there is no reason why they cannot work with children.

Some on-site Preschools have their own Child Protection and Welfare Policy, their policy must be in keeping with RIA's Child Protection Policy.

All external organisations providing a service in the Centre will receive a copy of the Child Protection and Welfare Policy, and sign a declaration (Appendix 2) agreeing to adhere to it.

This Policy recognises that RIA and the centres under contract to it have a duty of care to all residents. It acknowledges that all children live in a family context with their parents or guardians having primary responsibility for their care and welfare.

Scope of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Child and Family Services Unit, RIA, in conjunction with the Principal Officer, Reception and Integration Agency.

Children living in direct provision are in the care of their parents/guardian. A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years who is not, nor has ever been, married.

The function of this Child Protection and Welfare Policy is to guide and direct the 'Designated Liaison Person' (DLP) - both in RIA and in each centre. This person is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection or welfare of children which may arise specifically in RIA accommodation centres, covering such areas as children left unsupervised, other forms of neglect and abuse, children being absent from centres and suspected trafficking. There are different roles and procedures for the DLP in RIA and the DLP in a centre. These are as set out in Chapter 9.

This RIA Child Protection and Welfare Policy is based on the Department of Children and Youth Affairs document “Children First- National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011”. This guidance document was developed to assist people in identifying and reporting child abuse and welfare concerns. This RIA Child Protection and Welfare Policy emphasises that the needs of children and families, within the structures of Direct Provision policy, must be central to child care, child protection and child welfare.

It should be noted that this policy also covers children who may be present in the centre at any time but who are not residents and resident children who are missing from the centre, viz.

- Visitors to the centres. This is dealt with in Chapter 7 and in RIA House Rules and Procedures.
- Children who are missing from the centre are dealt with in Chapter 4.

Accommodation of unaccompanied minors under 18 years of age is the sole responsibility of the Child and Family Agency (CFA, TUSLA).

Children who are being reunited by The Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum, (CFA, TUSLA) with their families, the National Policy agreed between TUSLA/RIA for reuniting children with adults, as indicated in Chapter 1, applies here.

Chapter 3

CONFIDENTIALITY

This policy recognises that, in the event of an allegation, suspicion or disclosure being made to a member of staff or to RIA directly, it is not possible to promise 'not to tell'.

Any information provided by centre staff or RIA to the Social Work Team of the Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) or to An Garda Síochána will remain confidential. Those receiving information will only disclose it where on balance the welfare of the child requires it. The parents and children have a right to know when information is being shared unless doing so would put the child at further risk.

Confidentiality will be maintained. Only those who need to know of a suspicion, allegation or disclosure of abuse are informed, and the numbers that need to know will be kept to a minimum. All reports relating to child protection and welfare will be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis. This will usually mean that such reports will be made known to the DLP, the Manager of Child and Family Services Unit RIA, the CFA (TUSLA) and/or Gardaí. The Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Acts (as amended) and Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 must inform decisions regarding the sharing of such information, with the best interests of the child remaining paramount.

Legal protections in reporting child abuse

Unless it can be proven that it was made in malice, any Child Protection Report will be accepted as being made reasonably, in good faith and in the best interests of the child.

A person who makes a bona fide report to a DLP under this policy is given qualified privilege under the common law. The person making the report to the DLP would be assumed to be acting in the child's best interest. Under the common law, privilege from civil liability can be displaced where it can be established that the person making the report acted maliciously

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides for:

- (i) Immunity from civil liability for any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated officers of Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) or any member of An Garda Síochána.
- (ii) Significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to, and including, dismissal.
- (iii) The creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities "knowing that statement to be false".

Chapter 4

DEFINITIONS

A child protection or welfare issue in an accommodation centre can manifest itself in a number of ways, viz:

Signs of possible

- Child Abuse
- Children absent from centres
- Suspected trafficking

Below are clear explanations of these protection issues

Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined in The National Guidance, Children First 2011 policy as falling into four categories – neglect, emotional, physical and sexual. Each of these categories is defined below. The criminal aspects of the case will be dealt with by An Garda Síochána under the relevant legislation.

Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an *omission*, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and/or medical care.

Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is *significant* is determined by the child's health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways *over a period of time* rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries is not having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose height or weight is significant below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school maybe being deprived of intellectual stimulation.

The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to the found in the *relationship* between a parent/carer and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's

developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Examples may include:

- (i) The imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- (ii) Conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;
- (iii) Emotional unavailability by the child's parent/carer;
- (iv) Unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
- (v) Premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
- (vi) Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;
- (vii) Under or over-protection of the child;
- (viii) Failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child's cognitive and emotional development;
- (ix) Use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
- (x) Exposure to domestic violence;
- (xi) Exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology.

Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviours. The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become *typical* of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

Physical Abuse,

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably with the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Physical abuse can involve:

- (i) severe physical punishment;
- (ii) beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
- (iii) pushing, shaking or throwing;
- (iv) pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;
- (v) terrorising with threats;
- (vi) observing violence;
- (vii) use of excessive force in handling;
- (viii) deliberate poisoning;
- (ix) suffocation;

- (x) fabricated/induced illness
- (xi) allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others. Examples of child sexual abuse:

- (i) Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;
- (ii) Intentionally touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- (iii) Masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- (iv) Sexual intercourse with the child whether oral, vaginal, or anal;
- (v) Sexual exploitation of a child includes inciting, encouraging propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the “grooming” process by perpetrators of abuse.
- (vi) Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. An Garda Síochána will deal with the criminal aspects of the case under the relevant legislation.

It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offences of sexual assault.

Following a referral made by the DLP the decision to initiate child protection action in such cases is a matter for the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA).

Issues outside normal definition of abuse

Issues of concern in relation to children can also arise outside the context of ‘abuse’ as defined above. In the context of an accommodation centre, these issues may include children missing from centres and suspected trafficking of children.

Children Missing from Centres

Children living in direct provision are in the care of their parents/guardian. If there is a suspicion that a child is away from the parents/guardian and no reasonable explanation is offered, a referral to the Gardaí and Child and Family Agency (CFA) should be made. The procedures as outlined in Chapter 9 in making an immediate referral to the Child and Family Agency (CFA) (TUSLA) and Gardaí should be followed.

Suspected Trafficking

The United Nations defines trafficking⁶ as

‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability....The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child (meaning any person under eighteen years of age) for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered trafficking in persons even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in this article’.

More details on trafficking of children are contained in Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook www.hse.ie/eng/services/Publications/services/Children/WelfarePractice.pdf and The Services for Victims of Child Trafficking www.blueblindfold.gov.ie Detailed below are some indicators of child trafficking in the context of Direct Provision System. Concern would arise if the child:

- Has no friends of their own age
- Looks intimidated and behaves in a way that does not correspond with behaviour typical of child of their age
- Has no time for playing
- Eats apart from other members of the ‘family’
- Travels unaccompanied by adults
- Travels in groups with persons who are not relatives
- The presence of child-sized clothing typically worn for doing manual or sex work.

This is not an exhaustive list, however, if a concern arises as to the possibility of a child or other resident being trafficked, or another resident being involved in trafficking, the procedures as set out in Chapter 9 should be followed. However, due to the urgency of this matter the Gardaí should be contacted first by phone.

Both of these circumstances are treated as serious cases. In the case of suspected trafficking the standard report form at Appendix 1 should be faxed to the Chief

⁶ United Nations definition taken from the 2nd Protocol to the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime of 2000. The title of the Protocol is “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime”

Superintendent of the Garda National Immigration Bureau, on 01 6669199, then to the local Duty Social Work Team and a copy emailed to RIA Child and Family Services Unit.

Chapter 5

RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE AND REPORTING

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on their knowledge and information. Child Abuse can often be difficult to identify and may present in many forms. Early detection is important and those working with children should share their concerns about child protection or welfare with the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), colleagues, preferably those in senior line management positions.

Residents are advised of the Child Protection and Welfare Policy and how to report any child protection or welfare concerns, through such means as the RIA's House Rules and Procedures and Centre Managers meeting families on arrival. See Communication of this Policy, Page 6, also Appendix 6 – notice to the residents – this notice informs residents of the DLP in this centre.

Management will recognise that children living in Accommodation Centres, may be particularly vulnerable for a number of reasons including:

- Language difficulties;
- Cultural differences e.g. regarding age of consent and cultural norms;
- Dependence on service providers;
- Previous experience of abuse;
- Fear of not being believed;
- Frequent turnover of staff;
- Fear and uncertainty regarding the future.

There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse. These are:

- Considering the possibility.
- Looking out for signs of abuse.
- Recording the information

How does a concern about a child come about?

Concerns about a child can come from a number of sources such as:

- A child may make a disclosure to a member of staff or another trusted person; (See Chapter 9)
- A resident may inform a member of staff of concerns or that a child has made a disclosure to them. This could involve a resident telling a staff member of an alleged concern involving another resident, non-resident, service provider, staff member or RIA staff member.
- Staff may notice signs of abuse, or be concerned about the child's welfare. For example, staff may witness a Child Protection or Welfare concern involving a

family member, a resident, non-resident, service provider, staff member or RIA staff member

- Staff may be concerned about the behaviour of a member of staff.
- Other person / organisation (e.g. other resident / NGO) advises staff of an alleged concern about a resident(s).

Examples of reasonable grounds for concern forming basis for reporting

- Specific indication from the child of abuse – i.e. disclosure;
- Account by a person who saw the child being abused;
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way;
- Injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse where an innocent explanation is offered, however, the pattern or nature of injuries is inconsistent with the explanation;
- A consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

It is important to stress that no one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse; it may indeed indicate conditions other than child abuse. However, it is not the responsibility of staff or of the DLP to investigate or prove abuse. It is their responsibility to report to their DLP who will document and report issues of concern to the Duty Social Work Team and inform RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) of the concern.

Chapter 6

REPORTING STRUCTURES

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Each centre - and RIA itself - will have Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) who will deal with child protection and/or welfare concerns that fall under the scope of this policy.

The Centre Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The Centre Designated Liaison Person (DLP) will be responsible for ensuring that child protection and/or welfare concerns are reported to the Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) and to Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) RIA. In some large centres, it will be necessary to designate more than one DLP. All DLP(s) must undertake Children First, Keeping Safe Training.

Each Centre will display the name and contact details of the DLP(s) in prominent positions in the centre. (Appendix 6)

The centre DLP will deal immediately with the child protection and/or welfare concerns which arise.

Role of Designated Liaison Person in Accommodation Centre

- Be the principal point of contact – for management, residents and RIA - for any child protection or welfare issue which arises in the centre;
- Establish contact with the Duty Social Work Team which is responsible for child protection and welfare in the centre's catchment area;
- Provide information and advice on child protection or welfare issues within the centre. The DLPs are supported in this role having attended the Children First Training, along with on-going interaction with CFA and on-going support, both on-site and over the phone by RIA CFSU;
- Ensure that in the event of a child protection or welfare issue arising where direction is required, that informal communications take place with the Duty Social Work Team and/or with RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU);
- Inform/Speak to parents regarding concerns, save in circumstances where the Duty Social Work Team instructs otherwise;
- Ensure that the centre's child protection policy and procedures are followed, particularly to inform the Duty Social Work Team of relevant concerns about individual children;
- Ensure that RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) is informed through the procedures set out in this document of referrals made to the Duty Social Work Team;
- If a concern is not referred to the Social Work Team, the DLP should advise RIA Child and Family Services Unit of the nature of the concern and the reason for not referring it to CFA (TUSLA);

- Where a child/children from a different family/families are part of the same child protection concern each child's details must be reported on a separate Standard Report Form (Appendix 1);
- Ensure appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover;
- Liaise with Duty Social Work Team/An Garda Síochána and other relevant agencies;
- Ensure that the exchange of information is made on a need-to-know basis only and that confidentiality is maintained as appropriate;
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of all actions taken by the DLP, and all documents relating to child protection concerns should be held in a secure area;
- Ensure that if a family moves from one accommodation centre to another, or leaves direct provision altogether, the relevant centre's child protection file should only be handed to a member of staff in the Child and Family Services Unit, RIA. (See Chapter 8, Record Keeping in Centres);
- Separate from the general theme of this policy, if any concern arises regarding AOM, the DLP in the centre advises RIA CFSU;

The Designated Liaison Persons in RIA

The Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) in RIA have an over-arching role. It is the role of the Manager and Staff of the RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) to act as the DLPs in RIA. They ensure that child protection and/or welfare procedures in centres are being followed; provide advice and support to the centre; provide support to other RIA staff; and keep appropriate records.

It should be noted that The Principal Officer in RIA is also a Designated Liaison Person (DLP), particularly if an incident is reported regarding an allegation against a RIA staff member. See Chapter 7. Also the Manager of the RIA Operations Unit deputises for the Manager of RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) when on annual leave. Both persons have undertaken Children First Keeping Safe Training.

Role of the Designated Liaison Person in RIA Child and Family Services Unit.

- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is being followed by providing advice and support to DLP's in centres, to other staff in RIA, and to others who deal with residents in RIA centres;
- Receive and review notifications of referrals made by centre DLP's of child protection or welfare concerns in the centre;
- Open and maintain a confidential file on those families in respect of whom a child protection or welfare concern has been notified;
- Enter relevant data arising from such notifications onto the confidential stand-alone database;
- Follow up with centre DLP and/or relevant Duty Social Work Team, for status update;
- If a concern is not referred to the Social Work Team, the DLP must advise RIA Child and Family Services Unit of the nature of the concern and the

reason for not referring it to CFA TUSLA. The RIA CFSU maintains a record and monitors the file for any patterns or concerns emerging;

- Attend case conferences and review meetings arising from Child Protection referrals;
- Engage with relevant RIA staff, while maintaining confidentiality, in relation to matters arising from child protection or welfare concerns. This could mean, for example, engaging with RIA Operations staff in relation to transfers; to RIA Health Unit staff in relation to medical and psychological needs;.
- Engage with An Garda Síochána, as appropriate;
- Ensure that all records are kept in a secure location in locked cabinets. Files of families who have left direct provision are archived in this secure location;
- Ensure that access to the Child Protection and Welfare Database is limited to persons who have a role in Child Protection and Welfare in RIA;
- Provide a coordinating role for the Garda Vetting of employees in centres and to maintain a confidential database indicating that persons have been vetted (records of the vetting outcome are not maintained);

Chapter 7

GENERAL CHILD PROTECTION OR WELFARE MEASURES

This policy also encourages residents in centres to be aware of, and to act, in accordance with the Child Protection and Welfare Policy, in this accommodation centre.

RIA has a Code of Behaviour between workers and children, see Appendix 7.

Absence of parents/guardians from centre

If a parent or guardian of a child intends to be absent for any period, s/he must inform the centre manager in writing as to who will be responsible for their child in their absence. The specific details of the absence, when and for how long, must be made known. If the parent/guardian is going to be away overnight, then the name, address, and contact number must be supplied. See Form at Appendix 5.

Contact with children

Staff in centres coming into contact with children should respect their personal space, safety and privacy. In particular they should:

- Be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.
- Use appropriate language
- Never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should they ever tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism, or becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one child.
- Not transport children in their personal cars.
- Be encouraged to report cases of bullying to a Designated Liaison Person. This issue may need to be brought to the attention of management.
- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerned.

Staff Recruitment

As already stated, RIA is not the employer of those who work in the centres under contract to RIA. Nonetheless, RIA acts as a conduit for vetting procedures carried out

on centre staff – see our Garda Vetting policy. Moreover, it requires that companies under contract to RIA engage in the following process when recruiting staff:

- Specifically ask candidates if there is anything which would exclude them from working with adults and children. (This is in addition to the Garda Vetting process.)
- Complete the declaration form at Appendix 2.
- Have a suitable probation period.
- Require three references from potential employees.
- Fully check references. Follow up at least one reference verbally (as per Appendix 8)
- All staff will be formally Garda Vetted.
- On a bi-annual basis, Contractors will sign a declaration stating all staff are Garda Vetted.

The above should all be in place prior to the person commencing employment. In the event of staff being in place prior to the implementation of this policy, management will request that all employees sign the declaration noted above and also agree to be vetted by the Garda Central Vetting Unit.

Procedures regarding allegations involving staff, service providers or visitors

It is not the purpose of this document to set out the HR Process that would apply to employees of various organisations who is the subject of complaint. It can, of course, happen that a Child Protection or Welfare concern can be reported involving:

- (i) a member of staff
- (ii) a RIA staff member
- (iii) a service provider
- (iv) a visitor

This Policy applies to all such persons. All centre staff must sign a declaration – at Appendix 2 - stating they have seen, understand and will adhere to this Policy and that there is no reason why they cannot work with children.

All visitors should remain only in communal areas of the Centre, and should be accompanied by the person they are visiting at all times. Non-resident children must be accompanied by their parent/guardian at all times. See Reporting Structures in Chapter 6.

In all cases involving persons in these cohorts, such concerns should be reported to the centre Designated Liaison Person (DLP). The DLP should apprise centre management/contractor and RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) of the concern and ensure, as far as is possible, that all necessary measures are taken to ensure child protection in the centre. Depending on the circumstances of the case involved, the manager/proprietor should consider not permitting the non-resident, service provider, centre staff member on-site pending the outcome of any further investigation.

In such cases, the parents/guardian of the child should be kept informed at all times of actions taken in relation to the referral

Member of centre staff

All Contractors must have in place a Code of Conduct for their employees. It is an obligation contained in the contract between RIA and the Centre provider that any child protection or welfare complaint made in relation to any member of their staff is notified to RIA Child and Family Services Unit. In circumstances where an allegation against a staff member is made, this child Protection or Welfare policy must be followed and RIA must be informed immediately. In relation to any investigation which a contractor carries out in relation to a complaint made under this policy, RIA can demand that an independent person be appointed as part of that investigation. Where the circumstances warrant it, a complaint can be referred directly to An Garda Síochána, in which case the contractor must liaise with An Garda Síochána and RIA in relation to arrangements to ensure the resident child safety pending the outcome of any Garda investigation.

Whilst the safety of the child is paramount, the principle of natural justice should apply, which means that a person is innocent until proven guilty. When an employer becomes aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children, by an employee during the execution of that employee's duties, the employer should privately inform the employee of the following:

- The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her;
- The nature of the allegation;

The employee should be afforded the opportunity to respond. The employer should note the response and pass on this information when making a formal report to the Social Work Team. Also note that any action that would delay or frustrate the process must be avoided

Member of RIA staff

If the person complained of is a RIA staff member, the centre manager should report the matter to the Principal Officer of RIA who will make a judgement on whether the matter should be reported to An Garda Síochána and/or Department of Justice and Equality, Human Resources Unit. The Principal Officer of RIA should, in consultation with the contractor, consider whether the officer concerned will be allowed return to the centre pending the outcome of any consequent investigation.

As above, the RIA staff member should be privately informed of the following:

- The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her;
- The nature of the allegation;

The RIA staff member should be afforded the opportunity to respond. The Principal Officer of RIA should note the response and pass on this information when making a formal report to the Social Work Team.

External Service provider

Where a concern arises in relation to an external service provider the contractor must immediately inform RIA CFSU of any such complaint. The contractor must ensure that the employer concerned is immediately informed. Depending on the circumstances of the case involved, the RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU), Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) and/or Gardaí and the Contractor will jointly consider whether the external service provider should be disallowed from working in the centre, pending the outcome of any further investigation carried out by his employer.

Visitor

Where a concern arises in relation to a visitor, the contractor should, depending on the circumstances of the case involved, consider not permitting the visitor on-site pending the outcome of any further investigation carried out by the centre DLP or An Garda Síochána. In all such circumstance the RIA Child and Family Services Unit should be notified.

Chapter 8

RECORD KEEPING IN CENTRES

All concerns regarding a child will be copied to the Manager of Child and Family Services Unit, RIA. This is to enable 'tracking' of any child Protection or Welfare concerns which may arise in relation to children and families throughout their RIA accommodation history.

Each accommodation centre will have an agreed recording procedure whereby all concerns are documented. IT records must be password protected and paper files must be in a secure location in a locked filing cabinet.

Where a family is moved to a new centre or leaves direct provision their records must not be transferred. The records must be held, and an arrangement made with the RIA Child and Family Services Unit, for collection. When a centre closes down all records must be handed over to a member of the RIA Child and Family Services Unit team for archiving.

Where a child protection or welfare record is being maintained in a centre, the parents/guardians must be informed.

As explained, all concerns relating to children will be recorded on the Standard Report Form at Appendix 1 and copied and stored as outlined above. Subsequent records created relating to the concern should be linked with the completed form and may include:

- Records of conversations with residents, (including children), staff, other professionals, (Social worker, Gardaí, RIA etc);
- Records of follow-up phone calls;
- Formal correspondence.

All child records must be kept in accordance with legislation under Freedom of Information Amendment Act 2003 (FOI) and Data Protection Act 1988 and 2003

PRACTICE DOCUMENT

Chapter 9

PRACTICE DOCUMENT

STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED WHERE A CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE CONCERN IS IDENTIFIED

All centres are required to have the names and contact details of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) clearly displayed in a prominent location within the centre.

In all cases, a child protection or welfare concern is to be brought in the first instance to the attention of the centre's Designated Liaison Person. Thereafter, the steps to be followed depend on the seriousness of the concern following consultation with Child and Family Agency (TUSLA) and/or RIA Child and Family Services Unit.

In the case of suspected trafficking the standard report form at Appendix 1 should be faxed to the Chief Superintendent of the Garda National Immigration Bureau, on 01 6669199, then to the local Duty Social Work Department and a copy emailed to RIA Child and Family Services Unit.

The level of the concern will be determined in consultation with Duty Social Work Team and or the Child and Family Services Unit in RIA.

Child Protection and Welfare Reporting Protocol

If a member of staff in an accommodation centre, a RIA staff member, or a person conducting an inspection of the centre becomes aware of a child Protection or Welfare concern this must be reported to the centre DLP. The person making the referral must inform the child's parents unless it is considered that this would place the child at further risk. Where a concern is referred to the Duty Social Work Team, it is not the responsibility of the person who initially identified the concern or the centre DLP, to investigate the matter further. It is their responsibility to document and report issues of concern.

Retrospective Disclosures

Not all child protection or welfare incident/concerns are contemporaneous matters. It can happen that a member of staff or another person in the centre is made aware by a child of an issue of child abuse – which may have happened in the past. In this rare circumstance the issue should be brought to the attention of the DLP who in turn should contact the CFA for advice. The DLP should also make RIA Child and Family Services Unit aware of this incident. If the disclosure is made in respect of someone who is not the person's parent/guardian, the DLP should inform the parent/guardian of this disclosure.

Concerns raised by another organisation

All external visitors to the centre must sign the declaration at Appendix 2. In the event that the concern is identified by another organisation or professional (e.g. the Community Welfare Official, Public Health Nurse, Voluntary support group), it is their responsibility to follow the child protection guidelines of their own organisation,

and to make contact with the Social Work Team. Where, in the first instance, the concern is brought to the attention of accommodation centre staff, this should be documented by the centre DLP on the Standard Report Form at Appendix 1 and sent to RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU).

Children absent from Centre

Residents are obliged to inform management if their child is going to stay somewhere other than the Accommodation Centre overnight. The parent or guardian must inform management in advance who the child will be staying with, where and for how long. (See 'RIA House Rules and Procedures' on RIA's website www.ria.gov.ie) Centres will have appropriate recording systems in place to manage this. In accordance with the form as set out at Appendix 5, a copy of the completed form should be emailed to the RIA Child and Family Services Unit in each case.

In the event of staff becoming aware that a child is not in the accommodation centre overnight, or there are concerns regarding the child's whereabouts at any time, the parent/guardian should be asked to explain. If concerns remain, the notification procedures at Chapter 9 should be followed.

In the rare circumstances that centre managers are informed that resident children are taken into the care of the Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA), the RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) should be notified.

Responding to a child who discloses abuse

Remember, a child may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time during your work with them. It is important that you are aware and prepared for this.

- Be as calm and natural as possible
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. Do not panic
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child
- Remember, the child may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief
- Accept what the child has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child quite possibly may love or strongly like the alleged abuser while also disliking what was done to them. It is important therefore to avoid expressing any judgement on, or anger towards, the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.

Steps to be followed where a child welfare concern arises

If a child welfare concern is made known to, or is witnessed by, a member of staff the following sequence of steps should be followed. This sequence take into account that a concern may, depending on its circumstances, need only be reported as far as RIA's Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) for monitoring. (Step 1–7) or, as in most circumstances, continue with a referral to Duty Social Work Team (Step 8 – 15)

Reporting a concern as far as RIA's Child and Family Services Unit

- Step 1: The safety and welfare of the child must take priority. The staff member should ensure that the child is not in immediate physical danger.
- Step 2: The staff member should immediately contact the Centre's Designated Liaison Person who will be on/off site and contactable on 24/7 basis.
- Step 3: Where applicable, the DLP should contact the child's parent/guardian if appropriate.
- Step 4: The DLP should speak to the parent/guardian and explain the report he/she received from the staff member and seek clarification of the circumstances involved.
- Step 5: Depending on the response and the understanding of the parent/guardian, the DLP should seek the advice of the Duty Social Work Team and RIA Child and Family Services Unit. (Contact details are at Appendix 9 and 10)
- Step 6: If the DLP is satisfied that parent/guardian understands the gravity of the situation and that the concern is not of a serious nature, a notification letter (Appendix 3) is given to the RIA Child and Family Services Unit. The Manager must inform the parent/guardian that this notification will be sent to RIA CFSU. In this instance the Duty Social Work Department is not contacted. RIA will then record the matter on its Child Welfare database. In some cases the manager of Child and Family Services Unit in RIA may subsequently discuss the matter directly with the parent/guardian concerned.
- Step 7: When the DLP decides there are no reasonable grounds for concern and not to proceed any further (i.e. by following the further steps 8 to 15 below) with a reported concern, the reasons for not so doing should be given in writing to the person who reported the concern. That person, if they feel strongly that the concern should have proceeded further, can make the referral to the Duty Social Work Team. A copy of such a referral should be emailed to RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU).

Reporting a concern further to the Social Work Team of the CFA

- Step 8: The DLP informs the parent/guardian that the concern, because of its serious nature, will be referred to the Duty Social Work Team.
- Step 9: The DLP issues a warning letter (Appendix 4) to parent/guardian.
- Step 10: The DLP makes telephone contact with local Duty Social Work Team to seek their advice - contact details are at Appendix 10. It may be useful for the DLP to discuss the concerns first with the Duty Social

Work Team who can assist the DLP in deciding whether or not to formally report their concerns to the Team. Such consultation should be made immediately the concern comes to light. In most cases, the advice will be to the effect that the DLP should make a referral to the Social Work Team.

- Step 11: If so advised, the DLP completes the Standard Report Form at Appendix 1 and sends to the Duty Social Work Team and copies to RIA Child and Family Services Unit.
- Step 12: The completed Standard Report Form must be faxed or posted – not emailed - to the relevant Duty Social Work Team. The Form should then be emailed – not faxed – to RIA Child and Family Services Unit, – details at Appendix 9.
- Step 13: In cases where an out of hours concern occurs, the Gardaí should be contacted by the DLP. A completed Standard Report Form should be faxed to the Duty Social Work Team and emailed to RIA Child and Family Services Unit the next morning.
- Step 14: The centre DLP will act on any advice from the Duty Social Work Team and will facilitate any subsequent visit the Duty Social Work Team may wish to make.
- Step 15: The centre DLP will continue to monitor the situation and keep RIA Child and Family Services Unit and Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) informed, where relevant.

Steps to be followed by RIA Child and Family Services Unit upon notification of child concern or Retrospective Disclosure:

- Step 1 The RIA Child and Family Services Unit can be contacted by the centre DLP either initially by 'phone or by way of a completed report form at Appendix 1 sent by email.
- Step 2. RIA reviews the referral and contacts the centre DLP to ascertain any further facts e.g. (i) whether a warning letter was issued to the parent/guardian (ii) whether the advice of the Social Work Team was sought
- Step 3: In all cases where RIA Child and Family Services Unit has been contacted by the centre DLP in respect of a child protection or welfare concern, a Child Record is entered on the RIA's confidential 'Child Protection and Welfare Database'. This creates a record of the child's details, other family members, the name of the centre, the DLP and a note of the concern. RIA Child and Family Services Unit also monitors for any pattern emerging.
- Step 4. In cases where the concern results in the completion of a Standard Report Form at Appendix 1, an Incident Report is entered on the 'Child Protection and Welfare Database' and is associated with the previously created Child Record. This incident report is a more detailed account of the concern and details the type of case involved, as well as the Social Work Team involved. Such incident reports have automated review dates set on the Database. It should be noted that if other concerns take place at a later date, they too will result in further incident reports associated with that particular child, thus allowing a full child history to be seen.
- Step 5: RIA Child and Family Services Unit monitors progress on the case with the DLP and where appropriate, directly with the relevant Social Work Team.
- Step 6: The Social Work Team will inform the DLP by letter or verbally that it considers the case closed at which point RIA Child and Family Services Unit will be informed and mark the incident 'closed' on the RIA's Child Protection and Welfare Database. If no notification is received from the Social Work Team, RIA CFSU can contact Social Work Team for an update.
- Step 7: RIA CFSU will notify the Social Work Team of any cases open to Social Work where the family opts out of direct provision or where they are transferred to another centre within RIA's portfolio of accommodation.

APPENDIX 1

STANDARD RIA CHILD PROTECTION OR WELFARE REPORT FORM

This form is to be completed by the RIA Centre Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and sent to the RIA Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) and - in the circumstances set out in Steps 8-15 of the Practice Document - to your local Duty Social Work Team.

In the case of suspected trafficking the standard report form at Appendix 1 should be faxed to the Chief Superintendent of the Garda National Immigration Bureau, on 01 6669199, then to the local Duty Social Work Team and a copy emailed to RIA Child and Family Services Unit.

Guidance Notes:

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. This will assist RIA and the Social Work Team in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate by putting a line through the question. It is likely that RIA and/or a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.

If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone RIA Child and Family Services Unit or the duty social worker and discuss your concerns with him/her.

Transmission of Form

(A)

This form must be emailed to the Child and Family Services Unit, RIA, immediately.
(email addresses not for website)

(B)

This form should be faxed or posted to the Duty Social Work Team for your area immediately. The contact details of the Duty Social Work Team are at Appendix 10.
(email addresses not for website)

CONFIDENTIAL

STANDARD RECEPTION AND INTEGRATION AGENCY CHILD PROTECTION OR WELFARE REPORT FORM

(for reporting Child Protection & Welfare Concerns to the Duty Social Worker)

To: Duty Social Worker: _____

Date of Report _____

Details of Child Name:	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Centre Address:	DOB:	Age
	Nationality:	
Centre Phone No:	School:	
Person ID No.:		
Details of Person Reporting Concern(s) Name:	Telephone No.	
Address:	Occupation:	
	Relationship to client:	
Reporter discussed with parents/guardians: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Parents Aware of Report Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to the CFA? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Details of Report <i>(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.) Use additional pages if necessary</i>		
Medical attention: Was medical attention required/offered?		

CONFIDENTIAL

STANDARD RIA CHILD PROTECTION OR WELFARE REPORT FORM (for reporting Child Protection & Welfare Concerns to the Duty Social Worker)

Relationships

Details of Mother:	Details of Father
Name:	Name:
Address: (if different to child)	Address: (if different to child)
Person No:	Person No:
Telephone No's:	Telephone No's:

Other Family Members

Name	Relationship	DOB	Person No.	Additional information School/Occupation/Other

Details of Care Arrangements in place for above children

Name	Relationship	Address	Person No.	Telephone Details

Duration of this arrangement

Starting date and time of arrangement	Finishing date and time of arrangement

Names and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child

	Name	Address/Phone No.
	Social Worker	
	PHN	
	GP	
	Hospital	
	School	
	Gardaí	
	Pre-School/Creche/YG	

Other (specify):

--	--	--

Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child

Relationship to child:	DOB:	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Name:		Occupation:	
Address:			

Details of person completing form

Name:	Occupation:
Signed	Date:

APPENDIX 2

**Declaration to be completed by
(a) any visitor to the Centre or
(b) Persons Providing Services to residents in the Centre.**

I the undersigned, state that I have read and understood the Child Protection and Welfare Policy for..... Accommodation Centre. I agree to adhere to this policy which may include the sharing of Child Protection information.

I declare that there is no reason why I should not work with children or be in contact with them.

If in the course of my interaction in this centre I become aware of a Child Protection and/or Welfare concern as outlined in this policy I undertake to communicate such concerns immediately to the Designated Liaison Person for this centre, that person

being _____ Telephone No. _____

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

For those providing services to residents in _____Accommodation Centre:

I am aware that there is a Child Protection and Welfare Policy in place for this centre which is based on Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

I declare that there is no reason why I should not work with children or be in contact with them.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

NOTE: This signed declaration should be retained by the Designated Liaison Person in a secure filing system, for review by a staff member of the Child and Family Services Unit RIA.

APPENDIX 3

**Standard letter to RIA Child and Family Services Unit
(No referral to Duty Social Work Team required)**

Confidential

Name of Child: _____

Mother's Name and Person No. _____

Name of Centre: _____

Date of Incident: _____

To: The Child and Family Services Unit, RIA.

I refer to the concern regarding _____

Yours sincerely,

Signed _____

Name _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 4

Confidential

Standard letter to parents re: referral made to Duty Social Work Team.

Name of Parent: _____

Person No.: _____

Date: _____

Dear _____,

I refer to the concern on _____(date) whereby an issue arose regarding your child's/children's welfare and/or protection.

Due to the serious nature of this concern, I will now inform the Child and Family Agency (CFA), which is the organisation responsible for child protection and welfare. This letter has also been copied to the Reception and Integration Agency, Child and Family Services Unit where it will be kept on file.

All reports relating to child protection and welfare will be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

Yours sincerely,

Signed.....

Name.....

c.c. Reception and Integration Agency, Child and Family Services Unit.
Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Team.

APPENDIX 5

(A) Parent/Guardian leaving their Child/Children in the care of another adult resident

or

(B) If your child/children will be absent from the centre overnight.

The following form must be completed by the parent/guardian prior to leaving the centre.

Name of Child: _____ **Room No.** _____

(A) If you are proposing to leave your child/children in the care of another resident in the centre, you are required to advise the centre manager in writing of the following:

1. The reason for your absence: _____
2. The anticipated duration of the absence _____
3. The name and room number of the person who will be minding your child/children: _____
4. Your contact number in the event of an emergency situation: _____
5. The address at which you will be staying _____

NB: If the absence is overnight or extended into the evening when the child/children will be asleep, you must ensure that your child/children are with the nominated adult at all times.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature of nominated carer: _____ **Date:** _____

(B) If your child/children is/are staying away from the centre please complete this section and advise the centre manager of the following:

1. The reason for your child/children absence:

2. The anticipated duration of the absence _____
3. The name and address of the person who will be caring for your child/children:

4. The contact number of the person: _____

Parent/guardian signature: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX 6

Notice to all Residents

The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) operates a Child Protection and Welfare Policy for this Accommodation Centre to ensure the safety and welfare of all children living here.

The Child Protection and Welfare Policy is based on “Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children”. This centre has a Designated Liaison Person who is the contact with outside agencies and is available to any resident, staff member or other person in the centre who has child protection concern.

The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring that the correct reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred quickly to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) or in an emergency, to An Garda Síochána (The Irish Police).

If you have Child Protection and/or Welfare concerns they should be supported by evidence that indicates the possibility of abuse or neglect. These concerns should be reported to the Designated Liaison Person for this centre. For more information on the type of neglect or abuse, see the House Rules for your centre.

The Designated Liaison Persons for this Accommodation Centre are:

Name	Contact Phone Number
1.	
2.	

This policy is in place to protect the children in the centre and to protect the safety of all residents.

APPENDIX 7

Reception and Integration Agency Code of Behaviour for Persons Working in Accommodation Centres

1. What is the Code?

The Code of Behaviour for persons working in accommodation centres is a list of statements that describe the standards expected of persons working in accommodation centres as they go about their daily work.

The Code will:

- affirm the standards required, and
- ensure that workers know what standards of practice employers, colleagues, service users and the public expect of them.

2. Objective of the Code:

The objective of this Code is to provide guidelines for all persons who, working in accommodation centres, come into contact with or become involved with the lives of service users. The guidelines set out the practice expected of any person working in accommodation centres. The guidelines, if followed, will contribute to the protection, safety and welfare of service users and will also reduce the risk of false accusations being made against persons working in the accommodation centres.

3. Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of all persons working in the accommodation centres to ensure that they have read and understood this Code of Behaviour.

4. Need for Awareness:

Good practice will contribute towards the creation of a healthy and safe environment for persons working in the accommodation centres and for residents. It is important to be aware of the impact of behaviour and language. Behaviour or language of a discriminatory nature on the following grounds is neither appropriate nor acceptable:

- Age
- Disability
- Family Status
- Political Belief
- Race
- Religion

- Gender
- Marital Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Social status

Some examples of the type of behaviour and language that are unacceptable would include the following:

- Bullying/Harassment
- Derogatory Remarks and Gestures
- Destructive Criticism
- Embarrassment
- Favouritism
- Humiliation
- Name Calling
- Racism
- Sarcasm
- Sexual Innuendo / Sexual Harassment

5. Code of Behaviour between Workers and Children.

This code of behaviour between workers and children is established to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding, or the potential for allegations of misconduct.

Individual workers have a responsibility to protect and promote children's rights by:

- Treating children with dignity, sensitivity and respect;
- Listening to children;
- Valuing and respecting children as individuals;
- Involving children in decision-making, as appropriate;
- Children should be encouraged and praised;
- A worker should never favour one child or children over others.

Workers should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.

While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerns.

Workers should never physically punish or be verbally abusive to a child, nor should they ever tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.

Children should be encouraged to report cases of bullying, including cyber bullying to the designated liaison person.

Workers should respect the personal space, safety and privacy of individuals.

6. General Guidelines for persons working in the accommodation centres:

Persons working in the accommodation centres must:-

6.1 Maintain a high standard of personal practice at all times in the asylum seeker accommodation service.

In particular you must:

- 1 Ensure the safety of service users and persons working in Accommodation Centres at all times;
- 2 Follow all Health and Safety Policies and Procedures;
- 3 Adhere to the Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Practice Document for Accommodation Centres;
- 4 Minimise the risk of false allegations against staff by establishing safeguards; and
- 5 Establish appropriate record keeping mechanisms in line with existing policy in which to document unusual or concerning incidents.

In particular you must not:

- 1 Abuse, neglect or harm service users or colleagues;
- 2 Exploit service users or colleagues in any way;
- 3 Abuse the trust of service users or the access you have to personal information about them or to their property;
- 4 Form inappropriate personal relationships with service users;
- 5 Discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against service users or colleagues;
- 6 Condone any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by service users or colleagues;
- 7 Put yourself or other people at unnecessary risk;
- 8 Behave in a way, inside or outside work, which would call into question your suitability to work with service users;
- 9 Make comments or jokes which may give offence or which could be construed as inappropriate; or
- 10 Use offensive language and inappropriate behaviour.

6.2 Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being and promote the interests of the service users.

This includes:

1. Treating each service user as an individual;
2. Respecting to the greatest extent possible the individual views and wishes of the service users in your care;
3. Respecting and maintaining the dignity and privacy of service users; and
4. Respecting diversity and different cultures and values.

6.3 Strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of the service users.

This includes:

1. Being honest and trustworthy;
2. Communicating in an appropriate, open, accurate and straightforward way (using the services of an interpreter where necessary) ;
3. Respecting confidential information about service users;
4. Being reliable and dependable;
5. Honouring commitments, agreements and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explaining why to service users;
6. Declaring issues that might create conflicts of interest and making sure that they do not influence your judgement or practice; and
7. Adhering to policies and procedures about accepting gifts and money from service users.

6.4 Promote the independence of the service users.

This includes:

1. Bringing to the attention of your employer, and/or the appropriate authority, resource or operational difficulties that might get in the way of the delivery of safe care;
2. Informing your employer, and/or the appropriate authority, where the practice of colleagues may be unsafe or adversely affecting standards of care;
3. Complying with employers' health and safety policies, including those relating to substance abuse;

4. Taking complaints seriously and responding to them or passing them to the appropriate person; and
5. Recognising and using responsibly the power that comes from your work with service users.

6.5 Respect the rights of service users while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.

This includes:

1. Following risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether the behaviour of service users presents a risk of harm to themselves or others;
2. Taking necessary steps to minimise the risks of service users from doing actual or potential harm to themselves or other people; and
3. Ensuring that relevant colleagues and agencies are informed about the outcomes and implications of risk assessments.

6.6 Be accountable for the quality of their work.

This includes:

1. Meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a safe, lawful and effective way;
2. Maintaining clear and accurate records as required by procedures established for your work;
3. Informing your employer or the appropriate authority about any personal difficulties that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely;
4. Seeking assistance from your employer or the appropriate authority if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work, or you are not sure about how to proceed in a work matter;
5. Working openly and co-operatively with colleagues and treating them with respect;
6. Recognising that you remain responsible for the work that you have delegated to other workers; and
7. Recognising and respecting the roles and expertise of workers from other agencies and working in partnership with them.

7. Breaches of Guidelines:

Where these guidelines are not being observed by persons working in accommodation centres this should be addressed by contacting the management of the centre for follow up action where the guidelines have been breached.

APPENDIX 8

Telephone Reference Check List

Applicant's Name _____

Position Applied For _____

YES NO Is there written permission to contact the referee on file

Referee _____ Position/title _____

Organisation _____ Relationship to candidate _____

Phone No. _____ Fax No. _____

Date(s) of:

Attempts to reach _____ Conversation _____

Referee Unable/unwilling to provide reference.

- Introduce yourself and purpose of call
- Verify the referee's current and past relationship to the candidate, and the length of time they have known the candidate.
- Verify employment information already provided by candidate (e.g. dates of employment, positions, responsibilities, reason for leaving).
- Explain the position.

Ask the specific questions:

1. This candidate may have unsupervised access to children, would you have any concerns in this regard ?
2. Would you comment on candidate's qualifications for this position?
3. Could you describe the primary responsibilities in the position(s) candidate held with your organisation?
4. On what activities did candidate spend most of her/his time?

5. What criteria were used to evaluate candidate's performance?
 6. Were you satisfied with the results?
 7. Can you give me an example of how candidate handled unfavourable feedback?
 8. Can you tell me about candidate's strengths/skills?
 9. Candidate commented on strengths/accomplishments/awards etc during his/her time at your organisation. Could you comment/describe ?
 10. Can you comment on where candidate's skills/ performance could be improved?
 11. Has the candidate ever demonstrated any temperament or personality traits that you believe might cause a problem in the position for which they have applied?
 12. The position being applied for will require the candidate to _____
Please could you respond to some specific questions about candidate's ability to meet those position requirements?
 13. Can you describe the circumstances surrounding candidate leaving your organisation?
 14. Given what we have discussed so far and based on the performance of candidate in his/her position(s) with your organisation, would you recommend this candidate for the position for which they have applied?
 15. Given the opportunity, would you re-employ this individual? Yes No. If no, why not?
 16. Are there any other details you might be able to share with me about the candidate's work related characteristics that might help us in our selection decision?
- Thank the referee for her/his time and assistance

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note: Action for Contractor.

In the event that you are unable to contact the referee, you must seek another reference from the potential employee.

PLEASE COPY THIS FORM FOR EACH REFERENCE REQUEST

APPENDIX 9

Contact Details for Child and Family Services Unit

ADDRESS:

**Reception and Integration Agency,
P O BOX 11487,
Dublin, 2.
Telephone 01 4183200.**

Child and Family Services Unit -Designated Liaison Persons:

(email addresses not for website)

APPENDIX 10

Contact Details for the Child and Family Agency Duty Social Work Teams:

NB: In the event of a child protection or welfare concern, you should contact the duty social work team. If they are unavailable, or the concern has arisen outside of office hours, (including weekends), and it is considered urgent, you should contact the Gardaí nearest to the Accommodation Centre.

The following list of Duty Social Work Depts. was updated on 4th February, 2014.

• Dublin Mid Leinster: Duty Social Work Services		
Dublin South East	Duty Social Work Department Our Lady's Clinic Patrick St Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin	Tel: 01 6637300 Fax: 01 2844955
Dublin South East Clonskeagh	Duty Social Work Dept. Vergemount Hall Clonskeagh Dublin 6	Tel: 01 2680320/ 01 2680333 Fax: 01 2680406
Churchtown	Duty Social Work Dept. Churchtown Primary Care Centre, Unit 9, Nutgrove Retail Park, Churchtown, Dublin 14.	01-4916400
Wicklow	Child and Family Protection Services, Glenside Health Centre, Glenside Road, Wicklow Town	Tel: 0404 60800 Fax: 0404 60888
Dublin South Central Lord Edward St.	Duty Social Work Department Carnegie Centre 21-25 Lord Edward St Dublin 2	Tel: 01 6486500 Fax: 01 6486702
Donore Avenue	Duty Social Work Dept. Family Support Service, 78B Church House, Donore Avenue, Dublin 2.	Tel: 01-4164441
Kildare West Wicklow	Duty Social Work Dept. Chamber House, Chamber Square, Tallaght Dublin 24	Tel: 01-4686288/9

Dublin South Central	Duty Social Work Department Cherry Orchard Hospital Ballyfermot Dublin 10	Tel: 01 6206387 Fax: 01 6206388
Kildare	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Dept St. Mary's, Craddockstown Road, Naas Co. Kildare	Tel: 045 882400 Fax: 045 882424
Laois	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Department Child and Family Centre Dublin Road, Portlaoise	Tel: 057 86 92567 Fax: 057 86 62535
Offaly	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Department Derry Suite Castle Buildings Tara St Tullamore, Co Offaly	Tel: 057 93 70700 Fax: 057 93 70748
Longford	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Department Tivoli House Dublin Road Longford	Tel: 043 3350584 Fax: 043 3350798
Westmeath Athlone	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Dept. Athlone Health Centre Coosan Road Athlone Co Westmeath	Tel: 090 64 83106 Fax: 090 64 91329
Mullingar	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Dept. Child and Family Centre St. Loman's Hospital, Mullingar Co Westmeath	Tel: 044 93 84450 Fax: 044 93 84396

• Dublin North East: Duty Social Work Services		
Cavan	Child and Family Agency, Drumalee Cross Cavan	Tel: 049 4377305 & 049 4377306 Fax: 049 4377377
Monaghan	Child and Family Agency, Support Services Building, Rooskey Monaghan	Tel: 047 30426/047 30427 Fax: 047 77908
Dublin North Central	Duty Social Work Office 22 Mountjoy Square Dublin 1 Ballymun Civic Centre (2nd Floor) Main St Ballymun Dublin 9	Tel: 01 855 6871 Fax: 01 855 0589 Tel: 04 8467235 Fax: 01 8467522
Dublin North Coolock	Duty Social Work Department, Coolock Health Centre Cromcastle Rd Coolock Dublin 5	Tel: 01 8164200 01 8160314 Fax: 01 8487747
Swords	Duty Social Work Dept., 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin	Tel: 01-8708000
Blanchardstown	Duty Social Work Dept., Roselawn Health Centre, Roselawn Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.	Tel: 01-6464518
Dublin North City Finglas	Duty Social Work Dept., Health Centre, Wellmount Park, Finglas Dublin 11	Tel: 01 8567704 Fax: 01 8567702
North Inner City	Duty Social Work Dept., 492 North Circular Road, Parkview, Dublin 1.	Tel: 01- 8566856

Louth Dundalk	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Dept., Local Health Care Unit Wilton House Stapleton Place Dundalk Co Louth	Tel: 042 9392200 Fax: 042 9392264
Drogheda	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Dept., Ballsgrove Health Centre, Ballsgrove, Drogheda, Co. Louth.	Tel: 041-9838574
Meath	Child and Family Agency, The Enterprise Centre, Trim Road, Navan Co Meath	Tel: 046 9097876 Fax: 046 9097906

• South: Duty Social Work Services		
Carlow	Duty Social Work Office Ground Floor St Dymphna's Hospital Athy Road Carlow	Tel: 059 9136587 Fax: 059 9136502
Kilkenny	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Office, Child Care Dept Carlow/Kilkenny St. Canice's Hospital, Dublin Road. Kilkenny	Tel: 056 7784057 Fax: 056 7784000
Cork - North Lee	Child and Family Agency, North Lee Social Work Dept., Floor 2, Blackpool Cork	Tel: 021 4927000 Fax: 021 4927001/021 4927002
Cork - South Lee	Child and Family Agency, South Lee Social Work Dept. St Finbarr's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork.	Tel: 021 4923001 Fax: 021 4312960

West Cork	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Department Coolnagarrane Skibbereen Co Cork	Tel: 028 40447 Fax: 028 40449
North Cork	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Dept., 134 Bank Place Mallow Co Cork	Tel: 022 54100 Fax: 022 54150
Kerry Tralee Killarney	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Department, Kerry Community Services Rathass Tralee Co Kerry Child and Family Agency, Killarney Duty Social Work Department St Margaret's Road Killarney Co Kerry	Tel: 066 7121566 Fax: 066 7195610 Tel: 064 6636030 Fax: 064 6670714
Tipperary South Tipperary	Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Team South Tipperary Community Care Services Western Road Clonmel Co Tipperary	Tel: 052 6177303 Fax: 052 6177301
Waterford Dungarvan	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Dept. Waterford Community Services Cork Rd Waterford Child and Family Agency, Duty Social Work Department St Joseph's Hospital Dungarvan Co Waterford	Tel: 051 842827/051 842841 Fax: 051 842811 Tel: 058 20906 Fax: 058 44485

On the 4/2/14 the Details for Wexford CFA are not available on the Tusla website Wexford North	Gorey Health Centre Hospital Grounds Gorey Co Wexford	Tel: 053 21374/053 9430100 Fax: 053 9421492
	Enniscorthy Health Centre Millpark Road Enniscorthy Co Wexford	Tel: 053 9233465/053 9243700 Fax: 053 9233469
	New Ross Health Centre Hospital Grounds New Ross Co Wexford	Tel: 051 421445 Fax: 051 421238
Wexford South	Duty Social Work Dept Ely Hospital Ferrybank Wexford	Tel: 053 9123522 Ext 201 Fax: 053 9147706

• West: Duty Social Work Services		
Donegal East	Child and Family Agency Links Business Centre Lisfannon Buncrana Co Donegal	Tel: 074 9320420 Fax: 074 9320419
Donegal West	Child and Family Agency Euro House Killybegs Road Donegal Town	Tel: 074 9723540 Fax: 074 9723489
Donegal West Central	Child and Family Agency Millenium Court Pearse Road Letterkenny Co Donegal	Tel: 074 9123672 Fax: 074 9123697
	DonegalWest Central Child and Family Agency, County Clinic, St. Conal's Hospital, Letterkenny Co Donegal	Tel: 074 9123672 Fax: 074 9123697

Clare	Duty Social Work Dept River House Gort Road Ennis Co Clare	Tel: 065 6863907 Fax: 065 6863984
Galway City	Child and Family Agency, Galway City Social Worker Dept., Local Health Office 25 Newcastle Road Galway	Tel:091546366/546370/ 546325/546369 Fax: 091 527601
Tuam	Child and Family Agency, Child Protection Social Work Department Mellows House Vicar Street Tuam Co Galway	Tel: 093 37265
Loughrea	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Child Protection Department Health Centre, 60 Main Street, Loughrea Co Galway	Tel: 091 847820 Fax: 091 842927
Ballinasloe	Child and Family Agency, Ballinasloe Social Work Department Health Centre Brackernagh Ballinasloe Co Galway	Tel: 09096 46200 Fax: 09096 46211
Oughterard	Child and Family Agency, Oughterard Social Work Department Health Centre Oughterard Co Galway	Tel: 091 552200 Fax: 091 552023

<p>Limerick East & West</p> <p>Old Clare Street</p> <p>Ballynanty</p> <p>South Hill</p> <p>Newcastle West</p>	<p>Child and Family Agency, Roxtown Health Centre Child Protection and Welfare, Old Clare St Limerick</p> <p>Child and Family Agency, Ballynanty Health Centre Kileely Rd Ballynanty Limerick</p> <p>Child and Family Agency, South Hill Health Centre, Child Protection & Welfare South Hill Limerick City</p> <p>Child and Family Agency, Limerick West Newcastle West Health Centre Newcastle West, Co Limerick</p>	<p>Tel: 061 483091 Fax: 061 419063</p> <p>Tel: 061 457102 Fax: 061 457101</p> <p>Tel: 061 209985 Fax: 061 209998</p> <p>Tel: 069 66653 Fax: 069 62980</p>
<p>Mayo</p> <p>Ballina</p> <p>Castlebar</p> <p>Swinford</p>	<p>Child and Family Agency, Ballina Social Work Team Mercy Road Ballina Co Mayo</p> <p>Child and Family Agency, St. Mary's Headquarters, Castlebar Co Mayo</p> <p>Child and Family Agency, Swinford Social Work Dept. Swinford Co Mayo</p>	<p>Tel: 096 21511/096 24841 Fax: 096 70442</p> <p>Tel: 094 9042283</p> <p>Tel: 094 9050133</p>

North Tipperary	Child and Family Agency, Social Work Department Limerick Rd Nenagh Co Tipperary	Tel: 067 46636 067 46660
Roscommon Convent Road	Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon	Tel: 090 66 37014
Boyle	Child and Family Agency, Health Centre Boyle Co Roscommon	Tel: 071 96 62087 Fax: 071 96 63496
Castlerea	Child and Family Agency, Riverside House, Main Street, Castlerea Co Roscommon	Tel: 090 66 37851
Golf Links Road	Child and Family Agency, Golf Links Road, Co. Roscommon	Tel: 090 6637528
Sligo	Child and Family Agency, Markievicz House Barrack Street Sligo	Tel: 071 91 55133 Fax: 071 91 55142
West Cavan	Child and Family Agency, One Stop Shop Teach Laighne Humbert Street Tubbercurry	Tel: 071 91 20454 087-9299666
Leitrim	Child and Family Agency, Community Care Office Leitrim Road Carrick on Shannon Co Leitrim	Tel: 071 96 50324 Fax: 071 96 20334

APPENDIX 11

Contact details for Child and Family Agency (CFA) – Children First Information and Advice Officers.

Updated on the 31st January 2014

Name	Area	Contact Address	Contact Numbers.
Information and Advice Person	CFA, W.H.A. Galway	Community Care Services, The Anex, Western Area, Child and Family Agency, Seamus Quirke Rd, Galway	Phone No: (091) 548440 Fax No: (091) 524226
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA W.H.A.</u> Roscommon, Mayo	Primary Community and Continuing Care, 2 nd Floor, St. Mary's Headquarters, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	Phone No: (094) 9042579 Fax No: (094) 20452
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA, Midland Area</u> Longford, Westmeath, Laois, Offaly	Top Floor, Primary Care Unit, St. Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.	Phone No: (044) 9395510 Fax No: (057) 9357846
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA, N.W.A</u> Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal, Cavan	Markievicz House, Barrack Street, Sligo	Phone No: (071) 9155181 Fax No: (071) 9155131
Information and Advice Person Margaret Fitzgerald Maureen Crowley	North Lee, North Cork, Kerry South Lee, North Lee, West Cork, Kerry	Children First Department, Block 36, St. Finbar's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork	Phone No: (021) 4923220
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA West</u> Tipperary North	Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.	Phone No: (067) 46652 Fax No: (067) 46693
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA West</u> Clare	River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.	Phone No: (065) 6863919 Fax No: (065) 6863983
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA West</u> Limerick	Community Development, CFA Officer, Ballycummin Avenue, Raheen Industrial Estate, Raheen, Limerick.	Phone No: (061) 483520 Fax No: (061) 468902
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA South</u> Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford,	Community Care, Athy Road, Carlow.	Phone No: (059) 9136546 Fax No:

	Waterford, South Tipperary		
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA Dublin North East – Cavan/Monaghan</u>	Primary & Community Care, Child and Family Agency, Support Services Building, Rooskey, Co. Monaghan.	Phone No: (047) 39051 Fax No:
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA Dublin North East Meath</u>	Children Care Services, Enterprise Centre, Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath.	Phone: 046-9097846 Fax: 046-9097900
Information and Advice Person x 2	<u>CFA Dublin Mid-Leinster</u> Dublin South City, Dublin South West, Dublin West Kildare, West Wicklow	Children and Families, Training and Development Unit, Brickfield House, Brickfield Drive, Crumlin, Dublin 12	Phone No: (01) 4156961 Fax No: (01) 4156919
Information and Advice Person	<u>CFA – Dublin Mid Leinster</u> Dublin South (Dun Laoghaire); Dublin South East; Wicklow	Block B, Civic Centre, Main Street, Bray, Co. Wicklow.	Phone No:(01) 2744273 Fax No: (01) 2744287

