



Families with Children in Care

A guide to your rights
if your child is in care



Partnership with
Families Project



Family
Advocacy
Service

support for families with children in care

Handbook

This guide for families with children in care was compiled by advocacy workers from Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary with valued input from parents who have children in care and from the Health Service Executive (HSE) staff from these areas. We have produced this booklet so that you will have the information you need to support you if your child goes into care.

The advocacy workers wish to thank all those who helped them to produce this booklet, including parents with children in care, the staff of Clarecare, Limerick Social Service Centre, North Tipperary Community Services, Health Service Executive (HSE), the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and AViD Graphic Design.



**Partnership
with Families
Project**





Families with Children in Care

This booklet has been put together by the projects that support parents with children in care in Clare, Limerick and North Tipperary.

Clare Advocacy Service

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The Partnership with Families Project

Loreto House, Nenagh, North Tipperary

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The booklet gives clear information to families who have children in the care of the Health Service Executive (HSE). It tells you:

- what your rights are if you have children in care;
- what you can and cannot do in relation to your child in care;
- who can help you;
- what kind of help different people can give you; and
- the role of the advocacy worker, the social worker, the foster carers and other people involved with your child.

However, this guide can only give general information. It is up to the courts to decide the rights of people involved in any particular situation.

You should always talk to a solicitor for advice on any legal issue.



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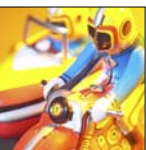
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Introduction

'I can't believe this is happening to me'

Having a child in care can be a nightmare for parents. It's not surprising that a parent's first reaction is often one of shock, disbelief and denial. As one parent described it:

"One minute you're playing the role of their parent involved with their whole lives...to all of a sudden... you no longer have your children with you... you're no longer a parent involved in all the various activities that go with being a parent, including their education, daily nurturing, religious development, play and interaction."

As a parent, you might be wondering how this could happen to you and your family. You may be experiencing a variety of feelings about your child, your family and the social service system. These feelings may be intense. You may feel isolated, confused, alone or angry because others don't understand what you are going through. In this booklet, we will take you through the various structures that can support you and the roles and responsibilities of the various workers involved in the care system.

Parents and carers

The birth of a child alters the lives of those who are responsible for bringing up the child. It's a new learning experience. Parenting usually ties the activities of adults to their children for the remainder of all of their lives.

Who is responsible for protecting children?

- Responsibility for caring for and protecting children lies firstly with parents or carers.
- If there is a concern that parents or carers are having difficulty caring for their children, it may be necessary for the HSE Social Work Department to become involved.
- Under the 1991 Child Care Act, the HSE is legally obliged to protect and promote the welfare of children up to the age of 18.



Advocacy Service

If you are a parent who is experiencing difficulties in meeting the needs of your children, you may come into contact with different professionals in the Social Work Department of the HSE. This process can sometimes be traumatic, particularly when you are feeling vulnerable.

In Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary, there is an Advocacy Service that can help and support you. The Advocacy Service is funded by the HSE but is independent of it.

What is the Advocacy Service?

- The Advocacy Service is for parents of children in the care of the HSE.
- The purpose of the service is to support you to continue your involvement with your children while they are in care.
- The service is voluntary. Families can decide whether or not they wish to use it.

This support service is confidential.

What is the role of the advocacy worker?

The advocacy worker:

- helps you to play a full part in the child-in-care reviews and child protection case conferences

(we will explain about these meetings later in the booklet);

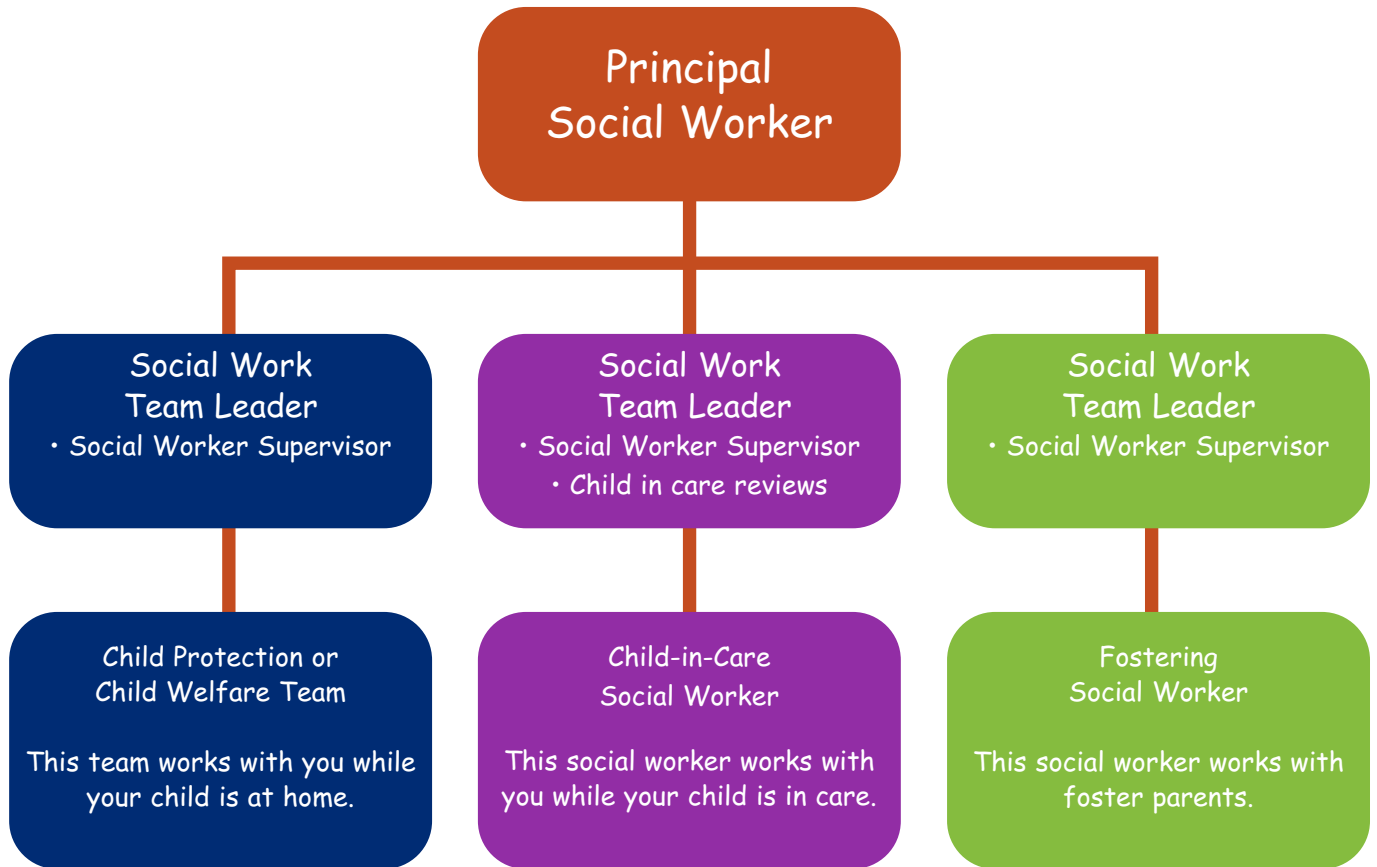
- accompanies you to meetings or court appearances;
- makes sure you are consulted on your children's care plans;
- helps you to link with other health and social service supports such as social work, family and community supports, other parents of children in care, counselling or other appropriate services;
- listens to you, gives one to one support and links you with parents' groups.

The HSE Social Work Service

If there is a concern that you are having difficulty caring for your children, the HSE Social Work Service will get involved. While your children are in care, you will have a lot of contact with the social work service. The diagram below shows the various people within the social work department with whom you may come into contact.

Introduction

Structure of HSE Social Work Service



Voluntary care

Section 1



What is voluntary care?

Voluntary care means that you ask or agree that your child be cared for by the Health Service Executive (HSE).

When might my child need to go into voluntary care?

You might have to put your child in care if you are sick or unable to cope or if, for some reason, you can't look after your child for a while. The time while your child is in care may help you to make any changes you need to make so that you can continue to care for your child at home in the long term.

Putting your child in care is a big decision to make. If you are thinking of doing this, it would be a good idea to talk about it with someone you trust first. You could also contact your local social work team to discuss the situation.

Do I sign anything when my child goes into voluntary care?

Yes. The social worker will ask you to sign a 'consent form'. They should explain to you what signing the form means. If you are not clear about anything on the form, ask the social worker to explain it more. If you can't read, ask the social worker to read it to you. It is very important that you understand what you are agreeing to when you sign this form, so only sign when you fully understand what the form means. Ask the social worker to give you a copy of the consent form.

What am I agreeing to when I sign this consent form?

When you sign this form, you give the HSE permission to look after your child for as long as may be necessary. You also give permission for your child to receive any medical care they may need if they get sick or have an accident while in care. You will usually be told before any treatment is given, unless it is an emergency.

Can I decide who my child will live with while they are in voluntary care?

No, that is up to the HSE. However, you can tell the HSE if you would prefer your child to live in a foster home or a children's residential home.

Section 7 of this booklet tells you the difference between the two. If you have a relative or friend whom you would like your child to live with, please tell the social worker, as the HSE would prefer to place a child with family if possible.

If I want to take my child out of voluntary care, what do I do?

Tell the social worker that you want to take your child home. The social worker will arrange this if they believe it is in the best interests of your child. However, the social worker can refuse to let you take your child home. This is explained below.

Will my child be sent home immediately?

If your child is coming home, the social worker will ask you to agree a time that suits everyone. It will



Voluntary care

Section 1

be better for your child if arrangements are not rushed. Your child will need to get used to the idea of going home and the social worker will need time to organise everything properly. This is something the social worker will discuss with you when your child comes into care.

Can the social worker refuse to let my child home?

Yes. The social worker can refuse but if they do, the HSE must tell you why. If you disagree with the decision, the HSE may decide to go to court to seek an order to keep your child in care. To get this, the HSE has to apply to the District Court. The HSE must satisfy the court that there are good reasons for not letting your child go home. If the court grants an order, your child will no longer be in voluntary care. They will be in statutory care (under a court order). **Section 2** of this booklet tells you what this means.

What can I do if the social worker won't let my child home?

If the social worker decides not to let your child home, they have to tell you why. If you are not happy with the explanation, you can ask to talk to the social worker's boss, who will be a social work team leader. You can also ask to meet with the principal social worker, who is in charge of running the social work service. You should also talk to a solicitor (see contact list at end of handbook). **Section 9** of this booklet tells you how to go about getting this or other decisions changed.

Statutory care

Section 2



What is statutory care?

Statutory care means that the court has ordered that your child be placed in the care of the HSE.

What is the difference between voluntary and statutory care?

If you give permission for your child to be taken into care, they are in voluntary care. If you don't give your permission, the HSE must get permission from the court to take your child into care. Under the Child Care Act 1991, the HSE has a duty to protect children from harm or neglect. This duty gives the HSE the right to go to court to ask that a child be placed in care. If the court agrees, it will issue a care order that places the child in statutory care. [Section 3](#) of this booklet explains the different types of court order.

It is important to know whether your child is in voluntary or statutory care. This should be written in your child's care plan, but if you are not sure, ask the social worker. [Section 8](#) of this booklet tells you about care plans.

When can the HSE get a care order?

If the HSE believes that your child is not being cared for or protected at home, it can ask the court to grant a care order. [Section 3](#) of this booklet tells you about care orders.

Can I decide who my child will live with while they are in statutory care?

No, that is up to the HSE to decide. However, if you have a family member or a friend whom you would like your child to live with, tell the social worker. The HSE might decide that this would be a good arrangement. A social worker would have to meet and assess the person you suggest.



Court orders

Section 3

What is a court order?

A court order is a decision made in court by a judge. The court order gives the HSE permission to take your child into care. The court will only grant a court order if the HSE satisfies the judge that it would be in your child's best interests to be in care.

Are there different types of court orders?

Yes. There are five types of court orders:

- Supervision Order
- Emergency Care Order
- Interim Care Order
- Full Care Order
- Adoption Order

Who can apply for a court order?

Only the HSE can apply for a court order.

Can my child be placed in care without a court order?

Yes. A Garda can enter your home, or any place where the Garda believes that your child is in immediate danger, and remove your child. This is known as a 'Section 12' of the Child Care Act 1991 and only happens when there is an immediate danger for your child.

Does the Garda need a warrant?

No.

What happens after the Garda removes my child?

The Garda must place your child in the care of the HSE as soon as possible. The HSE must then apply to the court for an Emergency Care Order if it intends to keep your child in its care. Otherwise, your child can be returned home to you.

Court orders

Section 3



Supervision Order

What is a supervision order?

A supervision order allows your child to stay living with you, but gives the HSE the right to go into your home to check that your child is being properly cared for. The judge will only make a supervision order if they think that your child may be at risk. The supervision order may contain a list of things that you have to do. These are known as the 'conditions' of a supervision order. Ask your social worker for a list of these in writing.

How long does a supervision order last?

A supervision order can last for up to 12 months and can be renewed.

Emergency Care Order

What is an emergency care order?

An emergency care order is a court order that allows the HSE to take a child from its home and put the child into a safe place. The judge issues a warrant to the Gardaí to remove the child. A judge will only give an emergency care order if they believe that a child is in immediate serious danger.

Will I be told if the HSE has applied for an emergency care order for my child?

Yes. You don't have to be told before the application goes to court, but you must be told as soon as possible. Usually, a social worker will contact you and tell you that your child has been placed in care.

What should I do if I know that the HSE is looking for an emergency care order?

Talk to a solicitor. They will help you decide what to do. You can arrange to go to the court and explain your situation to the judge. It is a good idea to talk to the social worker as well. The social worker will explain the reasons for the emergency care order.

How long does an emergency care order last?

It cannot last longer than eight days.



Court orders

Section 3

Will I be told where my child is?

Usually, you will be told where your child is. If the HSE decides that it is not in your child's best interests to tell you where they are placed, the HSE has to tell you the reason and what you can do about this.

Can I visit my child if she or he is on an emergency care order?

Yes, unless the judge decides that it would not be in your child's best interests.

Can my child be examined without my consent under an emergency care order?

Yes, if the judge orders it. This can include a medical or psychiatric examination as well as treatment or assessment of your child. You should ask the social worker to explain to you what is happening.

Will I be given a copy of the court order?

The HSE should give you a copy of the order. If you don't receive a copy, you can insist on having it.

Interim Care Order

What is an interim care order?

An interim care order is a temporary court order to put children into care. Sometimes the HSE will apply for an interim care order when it is planning to apply for a full care order.

How long does an interim care order last?

It lasts a maximum of 28 days, unless you agree to longer. It can be renewed by the court after 28 days.

Court orders

Section 3



Full Care Order (sometimes just called a 'Care Order')

What is a care order?

A care order is an order made by a judge in the District Court. If there is proof that your child is not being cared for properly, the court can give permission for your child to be placed into the care of the HSE. The HSE is then responsible for your child and for making decisions about where your child will live, who will look after them and so on.

How long does a care order last?

A care order lasts until your child's 18th birthday or for a shorter period if the court decides. However, a care order can be changed or cancelled by the court before that. Section 9 of this booklet tells you how to try to get a care order changed.

Will I be told if the HSE is applying for a care order?

Yes. The HSE must tell you before it applies for a care order. The District Court will send you a summons. This will tell you the date, time and place of the court. The social worker and your solicitor should explain to you what the summons means and what to expect in court. If there is anything you don't understand, ask them to explain it.

What should I do when I get the summons?

Talk to a solicitor as soon as possible. A solicitor will help you decide what to do before and during the court case. It is important that you go to the

court and have a solicitor with you. You should also contact your local advocacy service which will support you (see page 35 for contact details for your local advocacy service). Section 7 of this booklet tells you how to get a solicitor.

Does the judge always agree with the HSE?

Not always. The HSE must give proof that it would be unsuitable for your child to stay with you and be properly cared for. Your solicitor will put your case to the judge or you can talk to the judge yourself.

Can I represent myself in court?

Yes, but it is better to get legal advice if you are thinking of doing this.

Do I have a right to get a copy of the court order?

Yes. If you don't get one, ask the District Court Office for it or ask your solicitor to get it for you. Your social worker will also have a copy of the care order and will be able to give you a copy.

Can I appeal the court order?

Yes, you can appeal the court order.



Court orders

Section 3

Adoption Order

What is adoption?

If your child is adopted, it means that you are no longer the legal guardian and so you no longer have parental rights.

Can my child be adopted while in care?

Yes. If your child is in foster care or residential care for more than a year and if, for example, you have made no effort to keep in contact, the HSE may apply to the High Court to have your child adopted. This does not mean that they will succeed in having your child adopted.

Can the court make an adoption order against my will?

This can only happen in extreme circumstances, for example if you have abandoned your child for a long time. If you know that an adoption order is being applied for, you should talk to a solicitor as soon as possible. Your solicitor will advise you what to do.

If my child is adopted, can I continue to see them?

If your child is adopted at birth, you will usually have no further contact unless your child looks for it when they get older. However, if your child is older and is adopted from care, you may be able to keep in contact with them after the adoption. You should talk to your social worker, advocacy worker or solicitor before the adoption takes place. They can help you decide what to do.

Court orders

Section 3



Always talk to your solicitor about a court order.

Supervision Order

- Allows your child to stay at home
- HSE has right to enter your home to check if your child is being cared for
- May have conditions that require you to do certain things
- Lasts up to 12 months but can be renewed

Emergency Care Order

- Allows the HSE to take a child from their home and put the child in a safe place
- Can only be done when HSE gets Emergency Care Order from judge
- Lasts a maximum of 8 days

Interim Care Order

- Temporary order to place children in care
- Lasts a maximum of 28 days but can be renewed

Full Care Order

- Court order to place your child in long-term care until their 18th birthday
- HSE responsible for making all decisions about your child

Adoption Order

- You will no longer be the legal guardian of your child.
- You will no longer have parental rights.
- Seek legal advice from your solicitor.



My parental rights

Section 4

Are there decisions that only I, as my child's legal guardian, have the right to make?

Yes, for example you can decide your child's religion. You can request that your child be placed with a family of the same religion as yours or with a family who agrees to bring up your child in your faith.

Must the HSE agree to my request?

The HSE must try and do what you ask regarding your child's religious upbringing. If they cannot do this due to lack of foster families from the same faith, they can still place your child in care, but you can appeal to the District Court. [Section 9](#) of this booklet tells you how to try to go about getting decisions changed.

What other decisions do I have the right to make?

If your child is in statutory care, most decisions will be made by the HSE. However, you are entitled to be consulted in important decisions about your child and to be kept up to date on how your child is doing - as long as it is in your child's best interests. [Section 8](#) of this booklet tells you more about decisions and how you can be involved. [Section 9](#) tells you how to get decisions clarified or changed. Usually, your child's social worker will tell you what is happening in your child's life.

Can my right to be involved in decisions be taken away?

Yes. The HSE can ask the court to decide that you are no longer able to be your child's legal guardian. After listening to all sides, the court can decide to do this and then you would no longer have the right to be involved in decisions.

What should I do if the HSE applies to do this?

The HSE must give you at least seven days' notice. You should talk to a solicitor as soon as possible. She or he will advise you what to do. Your solicitor can tell the judge about your situation and what you would like, or you can tell the judge yourself. [Section 9](#) of this booklet tells you how to try to go about getting decisions changed.

Solicitors - how can they help?

Section 5



When should I get in touch with a solicitor?

A solicitor is the best person to talk to about any legal matters and especially about your rights as a parent. This is particularly important when:

- you are not sure about your parental rights;
- the HSE wants to take your child into care;
- the HSE wants to change things about your child in care;
- you want to change anything to do with your child in care; or
- you want your child to come home.

Should I keep in regular contact with my solicitor?

This can be a good idea so that you get to know your solicitor well and they know you and your situation well. That way, when important decisions have to be made, your solicitor is in a good position to advise you about what to do. Sometimes there is a waiting list of people wanting to see solicitors. This is another reason not to wait until there is a crisis before you contact a solicitor.

If I don't know any solicitors, how can I get in touch with one?

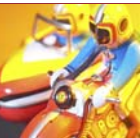
Your local Citizens Information Centre may be able to put you in touch with one. Your advocacy worker or the social worker could also tell you how to go about it. See the contact list section at the end of this booklet.

Is there a charge to see a solicitor?

Yes, unless you have a right to free legal aid. The amount will vary depending on whether you just want to ask the solicitor's advice or you want the solicitor to represent you in court. Your right to free legal aid depends on how much money you have. If you are getting a social welfare payment, you will probably be entitled to free legal aid.

What happens if I'm not entitled to free legal aid?

If you are not entitled to free legal aid and you cannot afford a solicitor, contact the HSE, which may be able to help you.



Role of the Health Service Executive

Section 6

If my child is not in care, will the HSE help me to take care of them?

One of the HSE's main jobs is to look after the rights of children and make sure they are properly cared for. If the HSE believes you are having difficulty taking proper care of your child, it should give you support so that your child can go on living at home. The HSE will only take your child into care if it believes it is in your child's best interests and that no other way can work.

If you are having difficulty caring for your child at home, it is best to talk with a social worker in your local health centre. Remember, taking a child into care is seen as a serious decision by the HSE and is only done as a last resort. The HSE would prefer that your child stay at home with you and so it will try to support you at home as much as possible. Don't be afraid to ask for support if you feel you need it.

What is the role of the HSE while my child is in care?

The HSE is legally responsible for making sure that your child is cared for properly while they are in care. The HSE is also responsible for helping you and your extended family to be involved as much as possible in your child's life, as long as it is in your child's best interests. The HSE's responsibilities include:

- deciding where your child will live and who will look after them;

- visiting your child regularly to make sure they are being cared for properly;
- making a 'care plan' for your child and reviewing it regularly;
- helping you and your child's carers to work together in the interests of your child;
- helping you to keep in touch with your child;
- telling you how your child is doing; and
- helping you to improve your situation so that your child can come home.

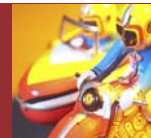
Remember: The HSE would prefer your child to be in care for as short a time as possible, so it will work with you to try and get your child home.

What is the role of the HSE's social worker while my child is in care?

The social worker will keep in touch with your child to make sure that they are cared for properly. The social worker's main job is to make sure that whatever is done is in your child's best interests. The social worker should also keep in regular touch with you to help you and encourage you to be involved in your child's life as much as possible.

Role of the Health Service Executive

Section 6



Do social workers have special training?

Yes. Social workers must have at least four years of special training. This training helps them to understand children and children's needs. It also helps them to work well with a child's family and carers.

Is it important that I get on well with the social worker?

Yes, but it is not always easy especially if the social worker is the person who took your child into care. You may feel angry with the social worker and resent the fact that they decide how much contact you can have with your child. It will take time to sort out these things and for you and the social worker to get to know one another. Often you may disagree as to what is best for your child.

The social worker's job is to help you as well as your child, so try and talk to them about any difficulties that come up and see if these can be sorted out.

What can I do if I can't get on with the social worker?

If you feel that you have tried and that you cannot get on with your social worker, ask to talk to their boss (the team leader and the principal social worker) and see if they can help to sort things out. If things can't be sorted out, the principal social worker might arrange for you to have another social worker. Your advocacy worker may be able to

help you talk things through or to arrange a meeting between you and the principal social worker.

What is the role of the team leader and the principal social worker?

Their job is to supervise the work of the social worker and to make sure that what the social worker is doing is in the best interests of your child. They are also responsible for making sure that you and your family are allowed to have as much involvement as possible in your child's life. It is usually a good idea to talk with the team leader or principal social worker about any problems you have with your social worker or with the HSE.

What can I do if I feel the HSE is treating me unfairly?

If you are unhappy about any decision made by the HSE, you can ask the HSE to change it. If the HSE won't change the decision, you can go to court and ask the judge to review the decision and have it changed. [Section 9](#) of this booklet tells you how to try to go about getting decisions changed.

There are some booklets listed at the end of this book that may help you understand what the HSE can do. You should ask for a copy of these.



Who will look after my child?

Section 7

Where will my child live?

Your child may live in one of the following:

- a foster home;
- a residential children's home (or supervised hostel);
- a relative's home; or
- supported lodgings.

What is the difference between foster care and residential care?

Foster care means your child goes to live with another family. These have done special training and have been accepted by the HSE to look after children. Residential care means your child goes to live in a house with children from other families and a number of professionally trained childcare staff.

Your rights as parents or as legal guardian are the same whether your child is in foster care or residential care.

Foster home

What is a foster home?

A foster home is an ordinary family home where foster carers live with their own children. Most children in care (90%) live in foster homes and go to a local school so that they can still be part of the day-to-day life of a family.

Who are foster carers?

Foster carers are ordinary people who apply to the HSE for permission to look after children who are in care. They cannot provide foster care without the permission of the HSE.

How does the HSE decide who to accept as foster carers?

A social worker meets the family about five or six times. The social worker tells them what foster care involves and asks them how they would deal with different things that might happen. The social worker spends a long time doing this to make sure that they have a clear idea of what the family would be like as foster carers. The social worker also checks with people who know the family well (including their doctor and Gardaí) to see if they are suitable. When the social worker has done all this, the HSE decides whether to accept them as foster carers.

The HSE has a Child Care Approvals Committee that approves all foster carers.

Who will look after my child?

Section 7



There are National Foster Care Standards and you should get a copy of these from your social worker to help you understand the rules for foster care.

Do foster carers get special training?

Foster carers receive training over a number of months from the HSE before a child is placed with them. This helps them to look after the child and to work well with the child's family and social workers. As well as this, the HSE and the Irish Foster Care Association organise ongoing training every year and encourage all foster carers to take part.

Do foster carers get an allowance?

Yes. Foster carers get a monthly allowance to help cover food, clothes and other expenses for your child.

Will I be told where my child is living?

Yes, unless the HSE decides your knowing this is not in your child's best interests.

Do my child's carers have any legal rights over my child?

No. The HSE has legal rights and can make decisions about your child. Carers can only make decisions in co-operation with the HSE.

What is the role of my child's carers?

Their role is to take care of your child for as long as the HSE decides. The HSE must be satisfied that they are looking after your child properly and allowing you to be as involved as possible in your child's life. The care plan lists what carers need to do to support your child while they are living with them. See [Section 8](#) of this booklet for more information about care plans.

Is it important that my child's carers and I work well together?

Yes, but it may not always be easy for you. It is difficult to stand by and watch someone else look after your child. You may feel guilty about not being able to look after your child yourself. You may resent the fact that the carers see more of your child than you do. You may be afraid that your child will love them more than you. All these things can make it difficult for you to work well with foster carers. If you are finding it difficult, talk to your social worker and ask them to help sort things out. You could also ask your advocacy worker for help.

What can I do if I can't work with the foster carers?

If you have tried and you feel that you just can't work with them, or that they are not allowing you to be as involved as possible, you can ask to have your child moved to another home. If your child is



Who will look after my child?

Section 7

in voluntary care, you can take them home (But the social worker may refuse this - see [Section 1](#) on voluntary care). If your child is in statutory care, the HSE will decide whether to move them. If your child gets on well with the carers, the HSE may decide that it is not in your child's best interests to move them.

What can I do if the HSE won't agree to move my child?

You can go to court and ask the judge to make a decision to move your child. The judge will only do this if you can prove that the carers are being unreasonable and that it would be in your child's best interests to move them. You should talk to a solicitor before deciding to go to court. A solicitor will advise you whether you could convince a judge.

Residential children's home

What is a residential children's home?

This is not a family home, but it is run like one as much as possible. Placements are paid for by the HSE. A residential children's home can be run by a voluntary organisation, a religious order or the HSE. There are usually up to five children in a house with a team of childcare workers looking after them. Usually, there will be at least two workers in the home at any time.

Children in residential homes usually go to school in the centre or attend a local school.

Do childcare workers get special training?

Yes. The HSE insists that only childcare workers who have a recognised qualification are employed in residential children's homes. This training helps them to understand children and children's needs. It also helps them to work well with the child's family and social worker.

Why would my child be in a residential children's home?

A residential children's home may suit your child's needs best. If you have more than one child in care, they may be placed in a residential home so that they can be together.

Who will look after my child?

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Relative's home

Can my child be placed with a relative?

Your child may be placed with relatives if the HSE agrees. As with foster carers, relatives have to go through an assessment before they are approved as carers. Most children living with relatives have been placed there by the HSE in an emergency situation and before there has been time to carry out a full assessment. The assessment usually happens soon after your child is placed.

Supported accommodation

What is supported accommodation?

This is a bit like foster care except that your child needs to be 16 years of age before being placed in supported accommodation. Ordinary people who have been assessed and trained in the same way as foster carers provide supported accommodation. They help young people who are preparing for independent living and who don't need the kind of support that foster carers give.

Decisions about my child - who makes them?

Section 8

Do I have the right to be consulted about decisions affecting my child while they are in care?

Yes, as long as you are your child's legal guardian, you have the right to be consulted about decisions regarding how your child will be looked after.

Who else is involved in making decisions?

The HSE is responsible for making sure your child is properly cared for and that you are consulted as much as possible when decisions are being made - as long as your involvement is in your child's best interests. The carers and the court are also involved in making decisions.

Who else is involved in making decisions?

The carers can make the day-to-day decisions such as the kind of clothes your child will wear or when your child will go to bed. Carers cannot make major decisions such as where your child will live. Where possible, carers should take your views into account when making their decisions. If you feel they are not doing this, talk to the social worker about it. The HSE can talk to the foster carers about taking your views into account, as long as this is in your child's best interests.

What kinds of decisions do the courts make?

The courts will make major decisions such as whether your child should be taken into care. They can also decide how much contact you and your family can have with your child in care and if your visits will be supervised. [Section 3](#) of this booklet tells you more about how court decisions are made.

Will the court continue making decisions after my child goes into care?

The court will only get involved if you or the HSE asks it to. You or the HSE can ask the court to change a decision, but the judge will only do so if they feel that it is in the best interests of your child. [Section 9](#) of this booklet tells you how to try to go about getting decisions changed by the court.

What kind of decisions does the HSE make?

Although the court can decide where your child will live and how often you can see them, these decisions are usually left to the HSE. The HSE will put together a care plan for your child that lists these decisions.

Decisions about my child - who makes them?

Section 8



Care plan:

What is a care plan?

A care plan describes how your child will be looked after while they are in care. The plan tells everyone involved what they have to do and how best to work together in the interests of your child. It includes:

- decisions about where your child will live and how they will be looked after;
- what part you, the carers and social worker will play in looking after your child;
- what contact your child will have with you and with their family;
- what help will be given to you, your child and their carers;
- how and when the care plan will be reviewed;
- what you and your family need to do before your child will be allowed home (unless the social workers have decided that returning home is not an option).

Can I have a copy of the care plan?

Yes. The social worker should give you a copy of the care plan and explain it to you, especially the parts that tell you what you have to do and how much contact you can have with your child. The social worker should also give a copy to the carers. If your child is old enough, the social worker should give your child a copy too.

Can I be involved in putting together my child's care plan?

Yes, you have a right to be consulted when decisions are being made about your child's care and future. The social worker should tell you what the HSE plans to do. If you agree, the social worker may ask you to sign the care plan. If you disagree, the social worker should write this in the care plan.

How does the Health Service Executive make the decisions in the care plan?

There are two main ways of making these decisions:

- child protection conferences; and
- child-in-care reviews.

Decisions about my child - who makes them?

Section 8

Child protection conferences

What is a child protection conference?

A child protection conference (sometimes called a case conference) is a formal meeting that the HSE will hold if it has major concerns about your child. At this meeting, your child's situation will be discussed and plans will be made for your child's future care. You will be invited to attend and you should do so.

It is difficult for the HSE to make decisions about your child without your involvement. However, under the law the HSE is obliged to make decisions about a vulnerable child and will do so even if you don't attend the case conference.

Who can go to a child protection conference?

The HSE decides who can go to a child protection conference. Those invited may include the principal social worker, the social worker, the family doctor, the public health nurse, Gardaí and any other professional who knows the child and has been involved with them. You will be invited unless there are exceptional reasons why you should not be there. Your advocacy worker may also attend to give you support.

What decisions can be made at a case conference?

A case conference can decide:

- whether your child needs to be taken into voluntary care (if so, the conference will ask your permission for this);
- whether the HSE should apply to the court to take your child into statutory care (if you don't agree to voluntary care);
- where your child should live while in care;
- what kind of contact your child should have with her or his family; and
- whether your child can return home.

If you don't attend the child protection conference, the social worker will let you know what decisions were made about your child.

Decisions about my child - who makes them?

Section 8



Child-in-care reviews

What is a child-in-care review?

If your child is in care, their situation must be reviewed regularly. This is to see how your child is getting on and to decide how they should be looked after for the next while. This is called a child-in-care review. Decisions made at the review are added to the care plan.

Who is invited to child-in-care reviews?

All the main people who have been involved with your child will be invited to the review. This will include you, the carers, the social worker and the principal social worker or team leader. Any other professionals who have been involved in your child's life (such as a psychologist) may also be invited. If your child is old enough, they may be invited too.

How are decisions made at a child-in-care review?

The person chairing the review will talk to all the people involved. They might meet you all separately or bring everyone together at one meeting. Decisions are made about your child when everybody's views have been taken into account.

How often do child-in-care reviews take place?

The HSE must hold the first review within two months of your child being placed in care. After that, reviews must take place every six months for the first two years. Then they must take place every year. Reviews can, however, happen more often than this.

How can I be involved in the reviews?

The social worker should give you at least two weeks' notice of when the review is to take place. They may talk to you on your own or ask you to come to a meeting with the other people involved. Before that meeting, the social worker should give you a form to write down any problems or issues you want discussed at the review and any ideas you have for your child's care. It is a good idea for you to send back the form at least a week before the meeting so that your concerns can be addressed at the meeting.

Is it important that I take part in these reviews?

Yes. If you have any problems with the way your child's care has been handled, the review gives you a chance to talk about this and ask for changes to be made. It is important to think about what you want to say at the review. You could talk to the social worker about this or the advocacy worker in your local service (see page 35 for contact details).



Decisions about my child - who makes them?

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The review is also a way for you to find out how your child is doing in care.

Can I bring anyone with me to the child-in-care review?

Yes. It's a good idea to bring someone with you, as you may be nervous and find it hard to think clearly. If you decide to do this, you must tell the social worker who it is before the review meeting.

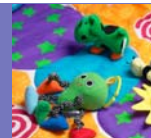
You can tell the person before the meeting what you want to say and they can remind you to say it or say it for you. However, you should only bring someone you trust. Your advocacy worker can go to a review with you.

Is it possible to get decisions changed if I am not happy with them?

Yes, if you can show that it would be in the best interests of your child to change the decision. For example, you might want to see more of your child, but the HSE says your situation must improve before this can happen. If you can show that your situation has improved, you may be able to see your child more.

Getting decisions changed

Section 9



How can I get a decision changed?

Generally, whoever made the decisions can also change it, so it is best to talk to that person first. Tell them why you think it is in the best interests of your child to have the decision changed. **Section 8** of this booklet tells you who makes what kind of decisions. Often, your social worker can help, so it is usually a good idea to talk to them first. However, you can go directly to a solicitor for advice or you can talk to your advocacy worker.

Can the social worker change decisions?

No, but the social worker can recommend to the team leader or the principal social worker that the decision be changed.

What can I do if the social worker won't recommend that a decision be changed?

If you are not happy with the social worker's reasons or feel that you can't talk to them about it, you can ask to see the team leader or the principal social worker. Your advocacy worker can help you to organise this. The advocacy worker can also go with you to a meeting to help you put across what you want to say. If the team leader or principal social worker won't change the decision, you can appeal to their manager in the HSE. The list of contacts at the end of this booklet tells you how to get in contact with these HSE managers.

What can I do if I can't meet the team leader or principal social worker?

If you can't meet the team leader or principal social worker or you just want to talk to someone else about what's going on, you can get in touch with your advocacy worker. You can also talk to a solicitor who can advise you what to do. **Section 5** of this booklet tells you how to find a solicitor.

Can I ask for a review?

If you are not happy with how things are going, you can ask for a 'special review' to be held. You must write to the principal social worker to ask for this and explain why you want the special review. Your advocacy worker can help you to write this letter. If the HSE decides not to hold a special review, it must write to you and tell you why.

If the HSE won't change a decision, can I go to court to have it changed?

Yes. As long as you are your child's legal guardian, you can go to court at any time and ask the judge to change any decision about your child and your involvement in their life. However, it is always better to sort things out without going to court if you can. Talk to your solicitor, who can advise you whether you could convince the judge that it would be in your child's interest to do what you are asking. You have to go to court to get a court order changed. **Section 3** of this booklet tells you about court orders.



Getting decisions changed

Section 9

How can I get a court order changed?

You can apply to the court at any time to have a court order changed or cancelled. There are two ways of doing this. You can apply to the local court (the District Court) or to a higher court (the Circuit Court).

When can I apply to the District Court?

If you feel that your situation has improved and that you are now better able to look after your child, you can ask the District Court to change the order. For instance, if you were sick but are now better or if you have dealt with an addiction or if you are no longer living in a violent relationship, the judge may agree that your situation has improved.

When can I apply to the Circuit Court?

You can appeal to the Circuit Court if you think that the District Court decision was unjust or that there was a mistake about the facts.

Who can help me to apply to get a court order changed?

The best person is a solicitor. A solicitor can tell you if you have a good chance of getting an order changed and can apply to the court for you. The court will then decide whether to change the order. Your advocacy worker or your social worker can also help you to think things through.

Staying involved with my child

Section 10



How can I stay in contact with my child while they are in care?

The HSE should encourage you to stay involved with your child so that your child doesn't feel cut off from their family. The level of contact will depend on what the social workers think is in the best interests of your child. They will make arrangements for contact with you and this will be written in your child's care plan.

There are many ways to keep in touch. You can write letters, send cards, phone or visit. Generally, you can write as often as you want, but phone calls and visits will usually need to be arranged. The social worker should also keep you up to date on how your child is getting on. The social worker should tell you about any medical problems your child may have and any medical treatment that they may receive. The social worker should also give you copies of school reports. If you have a lot of contact with your child's carers, they may also tell you how things are going.

Who else can keep in touch with my child?

The HSE will encourage close relatives and friends to keep in touch with your child as long as it is in your child's best interests to have this contact.

How often can I see my child?

This depends on why your child is in care, the plan for your child's future and any change in your family's circumstances. Visits should be arranged

with the social worker. If your child is in statutory care, the court can decide how often you may visit, but usually the judge leaves this decision up to the HSE. The HSE should take into account what you want and encourage you to keep in touch as much as possible - as long as it is in your child's best interests.

It may be difficult for you to accept that you cannot see your child as often as you might like, but it is important to realise that this may be the best thing for your child - at least for the moment.

The care plan should explain why your visits are organised the way they are and what you need to do to be allowed more visits. The social worker should tell you if there is any change in the number of visits you can have and explain to you why things have been changed. If you don't know how often you can visit, ask the social worker. Get the social worker to write this down for you. The social worker will also ask your child about contact with you and your child's views will be considered when the care plan is being made. It is a good idea to keep a written record of your contacts.

What can I do if I want to see my child more often?

Ask the social worker. They may ask you to improve your situation before you can have more visits. If your visits are upsetting your child, the social worker should tell you. If you are not happy with what the social worker says, ask to see the



Staying involved with my child

Section 10

team leader or the principal social worker or ask for a special meeting to discuss changes in access. If the amount of contact was decided in court, you have to apply to the court to get it changed. Section 9 of this booklet tells you how to try to have decisions changed.

Can I be involved in special events affecting my child?

Yes. You have the right to be involved in special times like birthdays, First Communion and Confirmation as long as it is in your child's best interests. It is not always easy to organise this so that it suits everyone involved. The social worker and you should plan things well in advance so that you know exactly how much time you will have and when.

Who can arrange visits?

Usually, the social worker arranges visits. They will try and arrange visits at a time and place that suits everyone - you, your child and the carers. This is not always easy and may mean that everyone has to give a little.

What about transport for visits?

The social workers will arrange transport for your child. If you are receiving social welfare payments, you may be able to get help from your Community Welfare Officer towards your own transport costs. Ask your social worker to give details of the visits to the Community Welfare Officer. In some cases,

the social worker may be able to help with your transport costs.

What about help with the costs of visits?

If you are receiving social welfare payments, you may be able to get help from your Community Welfare Officer towards the extra costs (such as food and entertainment) involved in a visit. See Section 12 of this booklet for more information about money matters.

Can I arrange visits directly with the carers?

At first, the social worker will arrange the visits. If everything goes well and the social worker agrees, it may be possible for you and the carers to arrange the visits between yourselves provided this suits everyone involved - you, your child, the carers and the social worker.

Where can I see my child?

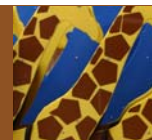
This will depend on why and where your child is in care. This will be written in the care plan. The social worker may arrange for you to see your child in your home, in the place where your child is living or in another place such as the health centre.

What is 'supervised access'?

Supervised access is when the court or the HSE decides that the social worker or someone who is working with your child should supervise your visits.

Staying involved with my child

Section 10



Will I be told if my visits are supervised?

Yes. The social worker will tell you and explain why. It should also be written in the care plan. Your visits may be supervised if the relationship between you and your child is not good or if your child is very upset by your visits. If the social worker doesn't tell you why the visits are supervised, or you are not happy with the explanation, contact the team leader or principal social worker or talk to your advocacy worker.

What should I do if I need to cancel a visit?

Contact the social worker or the person who normally organises the visits as soon as possible. It is better not to cancel visits unless you really have to, as it can upset your child. In particular, it is not a good idea to cancel a visit at the last minute unless it is an emergency. Sometimes, the social worker or your child's carers may have to cancel visits. Again, it is important that there is a good reason and that they tell your child and you in good time. You can ask the social worker to arrange another visit.

Is it possible that my child won't want to see me?

Yes. There can be different reasons why your child might not want to see you - at least for a while. For instance, your child may be very upset about being taken into care and may be angry with you for allowing it. Maybe your child feels that they are being punished and wants to punish you in return. Perhaps your child is afraid because of something that happened between you or happened when you lived together.

What should I do if my child doesn't want to see me?

When your child is taken into care, you might have different feelings - relief, anger or sadness. You may feel that you have failed your child and so you feel guilty. If your child does not want to see you, it can make things even more difficult for you and you can feel rejected and very hurt. However, it is usually better to give your child time to come around and not to insist on visiting. At the same time, it is important to keep in touch so that your child knows that you still care and have not rejected them. You may wish to write or send a card at this stage. Talk to the social worker who will know why this is happening now.

Where can I get help in this situation?

If you have a good relationship with the social worker or your child's carers, you could talk to them about how you feel. You can also talk with your advocacy worker.



What happens when my child comes home?

Section 11

Can my child come home for visits?

Yes. The HSE may decide that it is in your child's best interests to come home on visits. This will depend on your situation and your relationship with your child. The HSE may agree that your child can come home on visits from the start, as your child becomes more settled or when the situation improves. The care plan should tell you whether your child can come home and how often.

What should I do if the HSE won't allow my child home on visits?

Tell the social worker that you want your child to visit. The HSE may want you to change your situation before it will allow a visit. This should be written in the care plan. It is not always easy to change your situation. The social worker might be able to support you and help you to make the changes. Your advocacy worker can also give you support.

What should I do if I feel things have changed and my child is still not allowed to visit?

If you are not happy with the social worker's decision, ask them to arrange for you to talk to the team leader or the principal social worker. You can also ask for a special meeting to discuss the situation. [Section 9](#) of this booklet tells you how to go about getting decisions changed.

Can my child return home for a trial period?

Yes. If your situation has improved and your relationship with your child is going well, the HSE may agree to let your child return home to see how things go. It is possible that your child will return home under a supervision order (see [Section 3](#) for more information about court orders). However, if things don't work out and your child is in care under a court order, the HSE can take your child back into care. It does not have to go to court to get another order.

If things go well for the trial period, can the court order be cancelled?

Yes. If things work out well, the HSE may agree to ask the court to cancel the care order. They have to go to court to get permission to do this. If the HSE doesn't agree, you can go to court and ask the judge to cancel the order. You should get a solicitor to help you with this. [Section 9](#) of this booklet tells you how to go about getting decisions changed.

If your child is coming home, it is better if arrangements are not rushed. Your child will need time to get used to the idea of going home and the social worker will need time to organise everything properly.

What happens when my child comes home?

Section 11



Do all children come home eventually?

No, but it is generally agreed that in most cases, the best place for a child to live is in their own home. For this reason, the HSE will work with you and your family to help you improve the situation so that your child can come back home. However, the HSE will only agree to let your child home if it feels that it is in your child's best interests. Once a child is 18 years of age, they are no longer in care and can decide for themselves where they want to live. Some children decide to go home and some don't.

If my child is coming home, how should I plan for it?

When your child has been in care for a number of years, the idea of them coming home may be challenging for both of you. You may feel anxious that you won't be able to cope or that you won't get on well together. You may feel that you don't know your child very well. It is important that you both have time to get to know each other before your child comes home for good. Visits for weekends and holidays can make things easier for both of you. You could talk to the social worker about how you feel and how you think things are going or talk to your advocacy worker. You can also bring it up at your child's review. See [Section 8](#) of this booklet for more information about child-in-care reviews.

Should my child stay in contact with the foster carers after she or he comes home?

If your child has a good relationship with their carers, it can be better for your child to keep in contact with them and to see them now and again. Your child may want to talk about things that they did with the carers and what they miss now. This can be hard for you and you may feel worried that your child will want to go back to the carers. It is better for your child though if you can listen. The carers have been an important part of your child's life and if your child can talk freely to you about these things, it will improve your relationship with the child. Again, talk to your social worker and ask their advice.



Money matters

Section 12

Is my social welfare payment affected while my child is in care?

Yes. You cannot claim for your child when they are in care. You should tell the Department of Social and Family Affairs when your child goes into care. The HSE may also tell them.

Can I claim for my child again when they come home?

Yes. Tell the Department of Social and Family Affairs as soon as your child comes home and it will arrange for you to start getting payments for your child again.

Can I get any extra money while my child is in care?

If you don't have enough money to get by at any time, you can apply to the Community Welfare Officer. They may be able to get you some extra money. It is especially important to talk with the Community Welfare Officer if you have any extra costs while your child is in care. For instance, you may have costs like paying for transport to go to see your child, food or entertainment during the visit or the cost of presents at Christmas, birthdays, Confirmation and so on.

You should also ask your social worker to tell the Community Welfare Officer about your situation. Community Welfare Officers are based in local health centres. You will find the phone number for your local health centre in the list of contacts at the back of this booklet.

If I want to talk to someone about money, where can I go?

If you want to talk about anything to do with social welfare, go to your local Social Welfare Office, Action Centre or Citizens Information Centre. If you need help with money problems, you can talk to someone in the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS). The list of contacts at the back of this booklet will tell you how to get in touch with MABS.

Useful contacts - Clare

Section 13



Citizen's Information Centre

Clare Advocacy Service

Clarecare, Harmony Row, Ennis, Co. Clare

Tel.: 065 682 8178

087 770 7400

087 916 3108

Email: info@clarecare.ie

Citizens Information Centre

Post Office Lane, Ennis, Co. Clare

Tel.: 065 684 1221

Citizen Information Centres (CICs) provide a lot of useful information. If you cannot find the number you want in this booklet, contact your local Citizens Information Centre.

Health Service Executive

Social Work Teams

Child Protection Team

Shannon Health Centre

Tel: 061 362491

Kilrush Health Centre

Tel: 065 905 4212

Child-in-Care Team

River House, Gort Road, Ennis

Tel: 065 686 3907

Fostering

Shannon Health Centre

Tel: 061 362491

Principal Social Worker

Tel: 065 686 3914

Duty Social Worker

Tel: 065 686 3935

Eolas HSE

31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick

Tel: 061 483287



Useful contacts - Clare

Section 13

Health centres

Head office

Sandfield Centre, Ennis

Tel: 065 686 9046

Local offices

Carrigaholt	065 905 8205
Clarecastle	065 682 9488
Ennistymon	065 707 1143
Kildysart	065 683 2012
Kilkee	065 905 6381
Kilmihil	065 705 0155
Kilrush	065 905 1508/ 905 1608
Lisdoonvarna	065 707 4184
Miltown Malbay	065 708 4820
Scarriff	061 921286
Shannon	061 362491
Sixmilebridge	061 396427
Tobartaoscáin, Ennis	065 684 2546
Tulla	065 683 5264

Garda stations

Ennis	065 684 8100
Kilrush	065 905 1017
Ennistymon	065 707 1020
Shannon	061 361212
Killaloe	061 376242

Useful contacts - Clare

Section 13



Women's refuges and support services

Clare Haven Service

Tel: 065 6822435

Refuge and support for women suffering domestic abuse

Rape Crisis Centre

Freephone 1800 311511

Counselling for male or female survivors of sexual abuse

MOVE

6 St. Patrick's Terrace, Ennis

Tel: 065 6848689

Group work programmes for men overcoming violence

Community Welfare Officers (CWOs)

Community Welfare Officers can help you with various costs that are not covered by regular social welfare payments. You can contact them through the Sandfield Centre in Ennis or through your local health centre.

Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)

Harmony Row, Ennis, Co. Clare

Tel.: 065 684 1991

Shannon Health Centre, Shannon

Tel.: 061 360422

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Ozanam House, Hartstonge Street, Limerick

Tel.: 061 317327



Useful contacts - Clare

Section 13

Other information and support services

Barnardos

10 Sarsfield Street, Limerick

Tel.: 061 411313

The Samaritans

Tel.: 065 682 9777

Parentline

LoCall 1890 92 72 77

Useful contacts - North Tipperary

Section 13



Citizen's Information Centre

The Partnership with Families Project

Loreto House, Nenagh

Tel.: 067 31800

Tel.: 087 134 0356

The Citizen Information Centres (CICs) provide a lot of useful information. If you cannot find the number you want in this handbook, contact your local Citizens Information Centre.

Citizen's Information Centres

43 Pearse Street, Nenagh

Tel.: 067 43060

Email: nenagh.cic@comhairle.ie

Rosemary Street, Roscrea

Tel.: 0505 22676

34/35 Croke Street, Thurles

Tel.: 0504 22399

Health Service Executive

Social Work Teams

Child Protection Team

Annbrook, Nenagh

Tel.: 067 41934

St. Mary's Health Centre, Thurles

Tel.: 0504 27609

Child-in-Care Team

Civic Offices, Nenagh

Tel.: 067 46660

Fostering

Civic Offices, Nenagh

Tel.: 067 46661

Principal Social Worker

Tel.: 067 41934

Duty Social Worker

Tel.: 067 41934

Eolas

HSE, 31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick

Tel.: 061 483287



Useful contacts - North Tipperary

Section 13

Health centres

Local offices

Ballina	061 376321
Borrisoleigh	0504 51423
Nenagh	067 31212
Borrisokane	067 27369
CloghJordan	0505 42307
Newport	061 378299
Rathcabbin	0509 39043
Roscrea	0505 21498
Templemore	0504 31708
Thurles	0504 23211

Garda stations

Nenagh	067 31333
Roscrea	0505 21700
Templemore	0504 32630

Useful contacts - Limerick

Section 13



Citizen's Information Centre

Limerick Family Advocacy Service

Limerick Social Service Centre Henry Street,
Limerick

Tel.: 061 314111

086 8258818 086 8066199

Citizen's Information Centre

54 Catherine Street, Limerick

Tel.: 061 311444

The Citizen Information Centres (CICs) provide a lot of useful information. If you cannot find the number you want in this handbook, contact your local Citizens Information Centre.

Health Service Executive

Tel.: 061 316655

Social Work Teams

Principal Social Worker

Limerick West 061 483729

Limerick East 061 483728

Child Protection Team Leaders

Limerick West 061 209985
Southill

Limerick East 061 417622
Roxtown

Newcastle West 069 66653

Children in Care Team Leaders

Limerick East 061 417622
Roxtown Health Centre

Limerick East 061 206840
Parkbeg House, Ennis Road

Limerick West 069 66653
Newcastle West

Limerick West 061 209985
Southill



Useful contacts - Limerick

Section 13

Health Service Executive cont'd

Fostering Team Leader

Glenbevan House 061 328336
Upper Mayorstone, Limerick

Principal Social Workers

Limerick West 061 483729

Limerick East 061 483728

Duty Social Worker 061 483790
061 326010

Health Centres

Abbeyfeale 068 31309

Cappamore 061 381371

Foynes 068 65542

Galbally 062 57072

Kilmallock 063 98192

Bruff 061 82218

Croom 061 88206

Oola 062 57633

Glin 068 34305

Shanagolden 069 60144

Roxtown 061 417622

Southill 061 410988

Ballynanty 061 453707

Morass 061 326010

Bishop Street 061 417054

Dooradoyle 061 301111

St. Brendan's 061 482607

Askeaton 061 398233

Rathkeale 069 64072

Newcastle West 069 62155

Eolas

HSE, 31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick

Tel.: 061 483287

Useful contacts - Limerick

Section 13



Garda stations

Henry Street	061 212400
Mayorstone	061 328488
Roxboro	061 419555

Women's refuges and support services

Adapt House
Rosbrien, Limerick
Tel.: 061 412354

Services for women suffering domestic abuse

Rape Crisis Centre
11 Mallow Street, Limerick
Freephone: 1800 311 511

Counselling for male or female survivors of sexual abuse



Useful contacts - Limerick

Section 13

Other information and support services

Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)

90 O'Connell Street, Limerick
Tel.: 061 310620

Homeless Person's Unit

Cecil Street, Limerick
Tel.: 061 481212

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Ozanam House, Hartstonge Street, Limerick
Tel.: 061 317327

Barnardos

10 Sarsfield Street, Limerick
Tel.: 061 411313

The Samaritans

Tel.: 061 412111

Parentline

LoCall 1890 92 72 77

General Counselling Service

Limerick Social Service Centre
Henry Street, Limerick
Tel.: 061 314111





Notes



Clare Advocacy Service
Clarecare, Harmony Row,
Ennis, Co. Clare

T. 065 6828178
M. 087 9163108
M. 087 7707400



support for families with children in care

Family Advocacy Service
Limerick Social Services Centre
Henry Street, Limerick

T. 061 314111
M. 086 - 8258818
M. 086 - 8066199



**Partnership
with Families
Project**

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Loreto House, Nenagh,
North Tipperary

T. 067 31800
M. 087 1340356

ISBN: 978-0-9530464-0-9