

Policy 19.1

Treoir – Safeguarding Children Statement

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Revision Due Date	June 2019	Responsibility for review and audit	HR Subcommittee & CEO





Child Safeguarding Statement

Name of service being provided

Founded in 1976, Treoir is the national federation of services for unmarried parents and their children. Treoir, in partnership with its member agencies, has promoted the rights and best interests of unmarried parents and their children through its National Specialist Information Service and by advocating for their rights.

Treoir's Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements of the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla's '*Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*'.

Due to the nature of its services, Treoir does not work directly with children in its day-to-day activities but does engage with parents whose children maybe present as well as support parents by telephone whose children may be present.

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

Treoir works to safeguard children from harm and promote their welfare by:

- providing a National Specialist Information Service to unmarried parents, their extended families and those working with them through answering queries, information website, publications and outreach workshops;
- co-ordinating the Teen Parents Support Programme;
- promoting change at every level to achieve constitutional and legal equality for unmarried parents and their children, and to improve services and attitudes to unmarried parents;
- promoting/undertaking research to understand better the situation of unmarried parents and their children in Ireland;
- collaborating with other agencies to promote our aim through the federation of Treoir and agencies outside Treoir.



Treoir recognises the diversity of family life in Ireland and that all families, including unmarried families, have the same rights to respect, care, support and protection. In addition, Treoir supports and promotes the rights of all children as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Treoir is committed to the protection and welfare of children:

- Treoir will comply with obligations under the Children First Act 2015, and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- Treoir will co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child safeguarding;
- Treoir will respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

Treoir is committed to the safeguarding of children through the following processes:

- the safe recruitment and selection of staff;
- staff members are required to complete the Children First E-Learning Programme (Child and Family Agency);
- clearly defined and communicated standards of service provision;
- child safeguarding policy is in place, including a code of conduct between staff members and children;
- staff members have signed a declaration that they are familiar with the procedures contained within the Child Safeguarding Policy;
- staff members are briefed on any change in the Child Safeguarding Policy;
- child protection or welfare concerns will be reported to the Child and Family Agency / Gardaí in a timely manner.

Risk Assessment



Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 (CFA) mandates that providers of relevant services must prepare a risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of such services.

Section 2 of the Act defines harm as follows:

“harm” means in relation to a child

(a) Assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or

(b) Sexual abuse of the child,

whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omission or circumstances or otherwise.”

Under Section 2 of the Child Care Act 1991 a “child” means a person under the age of 18 years other than a person who is or has been married.

Treoir has carried out an assessment of potential for harm to a child while their parents or guardians are availing of its services. Treoir’s does not work directly with children in its day-to-day activities so the potential for harm is limited.

Treoir will mitigate risks to children that may present in the following scenarios:

- where allegations/suspicions of abuse are made to Treoir staff by telephone, email, letter or in person.
- where children are present in Treoir’s office for other reasons (such as the children of clients or staff members); and
- where children are at events in which Treoir staff and Board members participate.

Below is a list of the possible areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

Risk	Procedure in place to manage risk



<p>1. Lack of awareness of child protection duty and non-compliance with Child Protection Policy (e.g. delays in making necessary referrals).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members must complete the TUSLA e- learning programme. • Staff and Board members are provided with the Child Protection Policy. • Any breach of the Child Protection Policy will be reported to CEO. • A Relevant Person will be appointed to be the first point of contact regarding this Child Safeguarding Statement. • The name and contact details of the designated liaison person and deputy liaison person are made available to all staff and regularly updated. • The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed every year by the Board. • Staff members will be provided with training every 2 years, to ensure they are equipped to deal with disclosures and to make referrals if required.
<p>2. A suspicion of child abuse is determined by a member of staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and contractors know the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Liaison Person or directly to the Child and Family Agency.
<p>3. Receipt of a complaint of alleged child abuse where Treoir staff/ contractee is the alleged perpetrator.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and contractors know the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Liaison Person or directly to the Child and Family Agency. • Internal disciplinary processes are in place where the issue concerns an employee.
<p>4. Receipt of a complaint of alleged child abuse where a parent, guardian, family member, teacher or other person is the alleged perpetrator.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and contractors know the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Liaison Person or directly to the Child and Family Agency.



Procedures

In addition to the procedures listed in Treoir's risk assessment, the following procedures (outlined in our Child Protection Policy) support our intention to safeguard children while availing of our service. Treoir has in place a:

- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff, including checking references.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla or the Gardaí as appropriate – the reporting form is annexed to our policy.
- Procedure for maintaining the contact details of relevant Tusla staff and the Designated Liaison Person and making these available to staff.

Implementation

Treoir recognises that implementation of the children protection and safeguarding policy is an ongoing process. Our organisation is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while in contact with our staff and services. This Statement will be reviewed in March 2020 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: _____

Damien Peelo, CEO

Signed: _____

Ruth Barrington, Chairperson

For queries please contact:

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