

Information Sheet

Children First Act, 2015

Commencement of Remaining Provisions

On 2nd October 2017 Minister Katherine Zappone T.D., Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, announced that the remaining provisions of the Children First Act, 2015 will commence on 11th December 2017.

The Act will impose statutory obligations on classes of people to report child protection concerns over a certain threshold to Tusla. It will require providers of relevant services to prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement and to carry out a risk assessment of any potential harm to children while availing of their services.

The Act's provisions will:

- introduce mandatory reporting of child abuse for those listed in Schedule 2 of the Act;
- place a legal obligation on organisations providing services to children to prepare and publish a Child Safeguarding Statement. Providers of relevant services who employ at least one other person will be required to publish a Child Safeguarding Statement. Services will have 3 months from 11th of December 2017 to comply with their obligations in relation to publishing a Child Safeguarding Statement.

Revised Children First Guidance

- The revised Children First Guidance has been published and it includes the provisions of the Children First Act, 2015 it will come into operation on 11th December 2017.
- The Guidance can be downloaded on the Tusla website: <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-2017/>

Key Dates

Date	Information
11th December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mandated Persons acquire new legal obligations to report child abuse. - Relevant services (where a provider employs at least one other person) are required to prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement.
11th December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised Children First Guide & other support documentation comes into operation.
11th March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing relevant services have until this date to publish their Child Safeguarding Statement.

Further information for Organisations who provide services to children –

It is planned that all Government Departments will provide information on the new legal obligations to all services and activities they provide funding to.

For Tusla Funded organisations further information and advice in relation to any of the above is available by contacting Tusla Children First Information and Advice Officers:

Sandra Claxton, Children First Information and Advice Officer, Mayo / Galway.

Mobile: 094 90 42579/0879074668

Email: sandra.claxton@tusla.ie

Organisations can familiarise themselves with the new Children First Guidance and other support documents published by Tusla as below. They include a Child Protection Reporter's guide and a Guide to developing a Child Safeguarding Statement all of which can be accessed here:
<http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-2017/>.



Universal Children First e-learning programme

Tusla have devised a universal e-learning programme on Children First 2017. This training can be accessed here:

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/children-first-2017/>