



HSE Child Protection and Welfare Reporting Procedure

This procedure outlines the key stages and considerations in relation to reporting a child protection or welfare concern in the HSE. All stages in the reporting procedure should be considered. The key stages include:

- ◆ **Recognise** a concern.
- ◆ **Respond** to any immediate safety needs of the child.
- ◆ **Consult** with your line manager (or most senior staff member available) to determine what actions may need to be considered in relation to the concern. Where further advice is required, have an informal consultation with Tusla - Child and Family Agency.
- ◆ **Report** to Tusla, without delay, where there are reasonable grounds for concern (applicable to all staff), or where there is a legal requirement to report as a Mandated Person.
- ◆ **Inform** the family, unless there is good reason not to.
- ◆ **Record** in line with HSE Record Keeping Policy and Data Protection requirements.
- ◆ **Assist** Tusla, where requested, with their assessment of a concern.
- ◆ **Monitor**/no further action required

Report Forms

Child Protection and Welfare Report Forms (CPWRF) and Retrospective Abuse Report Forms (RARF) should be submitted to Tusla using [Tusla's online web-portal](#). This is the most secure and efficient method of forwarding confidential reports to Tusla.

Child Protection and Welfare Concerns

In circumstances where Tusla's portal is not accessible, the CPWRF should be sent by registered post or delivered in person, to the appropriate Tusla office as follows:

- ◆ Where the child is identifiable, the report should be sent to the Tusla office in the area where the child lives.
- ◆ Where the child is not identifiable, and the person subject to an allegation of abuse is identifiable, the report should be sent to the Tusla office in the area where the person subject to the allegation of abuse lives.
- ◆ Where neither the child nor the person subject to an allegation of abuse is identifiable, a consultation should be sought with Tusla.

Retrospective Abuse

The term retrospective abuse refers to abuse that an adult experienced that took place during their childhood.

Under the HSE Child Protection and Welfare Policy, all staff members, students and volunteers have an obligation to report reasonable grounds for concern to Tusla.

This includes when an adult discloses that they were abused as a child and you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child (identifiable or not), who is under 18 years at the time of the disclosure, has been or is being abused or neglected by the person subject to the allegations of abuse.

This also includes where you have concerns that a child is at risk of being abused or neglected in the future.

If a person subject of the abuse allegation is confirmed as deceased, a report to Tusla is not required unless there are broader issues of concern, in which case, consult with Tusla for example if the person subject to allegations of abuse was a member of a religious order or educational institution.

Which report form do I use for concerns in relation to Retrospective Abuse?

Depending on the information available to you, you would use one of the following Tusla report forms to report your concerns arising from a disclosure of retrospective abuse:

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form: For reporting concerns about a child where you have identifying or identifiable information about the child.

You may have the name of the child or you may have information that could help Tusla identify the child, for example, the nature of their relationship to the person subject to allegations of abuse, the name of a relative, an address, details of where they go to school, etc.

Retrospective Abuse Report Form: For reporting concerns about a child arising from a disclosure of retrospective abuse where you have no identifying or identifiable information about the child.

In circumstances where Tusla's portal is not accessible, the RARF should be sent to Tusla by registered post or delivered in person, to the most appropriate Tusla office as follows:

1. Where the person subject to an allegation of abuse is identifiable, the report should be sent to the Tusla office in the area where the person subject to the allegation of abuse lives. If the person lives abroad, the report should be sent to the Tusla office in the area where the adult disclosing the abuse lived at the time of the alleged abuse.
2. Where the person subject to an allegation of abuse is not identifiable, a consultation should be sought with Tusla, and where necessary, the report should be sent to the Tusla office in the area where the adult disclosing the abuse lived at the time of the alleged abuse.



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Staff member **recognises** a Child Protection or Welfare Concern.

Respond to any immediate safety needs.

Consult with your Line Manager or most appropriate senior staff member, where necessary, to determine if there are **reasonable grounds** to report a concern to **Tusla** (Mandated Persons should then determine if the concern meets the threshold of harm for a mandated report). An **informal consultation** may be held at any time in the reporting process with a **Tusla Social Work Contact Point**. Always **inform** your Line Manager of any concerns, reports and related actions taken.

Decision to **report**

Where there is **immediate and serious risk**, ensure the safety of the child and contact the **Tusla Social Work Contact Point** by phone. Where Tusla is unavailable, contact An Garda Síochána.

Complete the appropriate report form on Tusla's reporting portal at www.tusla.ie. Reports may be sent by registered post or in person only where online accessibility is not possible.

Tusla provide an out-of-hours service between 6pm and 6am every night, and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays, Sundays or bank holidays. This may be accessed through a restricted professional helpline number available in your service, or through An Garda Síochána. Mandated Persons only may contact the out-of-hours service on 0818 776 315.

Decision **not to report**

Both the staff member and their Line Manager should be in agreement where a concern does not meet with reasonable grounds to report to Tusla.

If there is disagreement, further consultation may be sought from Tusla and/or a report should be made reasonably and in good faith to a **Tusla Social Work Contact Point**. The Line Manager should be Informed if a report is sent to Tusla.

Wherever possible, service users/parents or guardians should be **informed** of any child protection or welfare concerns, or where a report is being made to Tusla or An Garda Síochána, unless to do so would create a risk of harm, or impair Tusla or An Garda Síochána's ability to assess or investigate a concern. Always consult your line manager in this situation.

Keep up-to-date **records** of the concern, including contact with the child, parents/guardians, any consultations, decisions and reports, and store in accordance with HSE Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

Assist Tusla where requested.

Continue to **monitor** situation / **no further action** required.