



Families with Children in Care

An information guide if
your child is in care



Information Guide

An information guide if your child is 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 Tusla Child and Family Agency staff from these areas. We have produced this guide 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 guide, including parents with children in care, the staff of Silver Arch Family Resource Centre, Limerick Social Service Centre, Clarecare and Tusla: the Child and Family Agency. In particular, special thanks to Community Law and Mediation Limerick who provided legal advice. Production of this guide has been funded by Tusla Parent Participation Seed Funding.



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North Tipperary



Families with Children in Care

This guide has been put together by the projects that support parents with children in the care of Tusla: the Child and Family Agency (foster care or residential care). The advocacy projects are based in Clare, Limerick and North Tipperary.

Clare Advocacy Service

The Clarecare Advocacy Service provides support for parents whose children are in the care of Tusla: the Child and Family Agency in Co. Clare. Clarecare is a not-for-profit agency providing a broad range of support services for people in county Clare for over 50 years. For a full list and more information on all services at Clarecare see www.clarecare.ie.

Contact details:

Clarecare, Harmony Row, Ennis, Co. Clare
Tel: 065 6828178,
Email: info@clarecare.ie
Website: www.clarecare.ie

Limerick Family Advocacy Service

The Family Advocacy Service is run by Limerick Social Service Council (LSSC). LSSC is a not-for-profit organisation that has been working in communities in Limerick for over 50 years. It provides a range of services to individuals and groups throughout the city and county. For a full list and information on all services at LSSC see www.lssc.ie.

Contact details:

Limerick Social Service Centre, Henry
Street, Limerick
Tel: 061 314111
Email: info@lssc.ie
Website: www.lssc.ie

Partnership with Families Project

The Partnership with Families project is an advocacy service run by Silver Arch Family Resource Centre. The Silver Arch centre provides information, activities and personalised support to individuals and communities. The service is based in Nenagh and provide support to people in the locality and in wider parts of North Tipperary. For a full list and information on all services at Silver Arch see www.silverarchfrc.ie.

Contact details:

Silver Arch Family Resource Centre, 52
Silver Street, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 067-31800
Email: info@silverarchfrc.ie
Website: www.silverarchfrc.ie

The advocacy services in all 3 areas of North Tipperary, Limerick and Clare aim to support parents to be actively and positively involved in their children's lives while they are in care by providing:

- **One-to-one support based on identified and agreed needs.**
- **Information on the Child in Care process.**
- **Preparation for, and accompaniment to relevant meetings. The advocacy worker can accompany you to child in care reviews, child protection conferences.**
- **Facilitation of a parents' monthly group meeting (In Clare and Limerick areas).**
- **Information sessions.**
- **Links to other support services.**

This guide gives clear information to families who have children in the care of Tusla: the Child and Family Agency. 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.

For up to date information see the following websites:

www.tusla.ie

www.gov.ie

www.citizensinformation.ie

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Introduction

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



Having a child in care can be very distressing for a parent to cope with. 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 guide, 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 Tusla: the Child and Family Agency to become involved.
- Under the 1991 Child Care Act, Tusla 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 Tusla: the Child and Family Agency. Sometimes parents can find the process very difficult, especially if they are feeling vulnerable themselves.

In Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary, there is an advocacy service that can help and support you.

The advocacy service is funded by Tusla but is independent of it.

What is the Advocacy Service?

The advocacy service is for parents of children in the care of Tusla.

- 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 guide);

- accompanies you to meetings;
- 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.

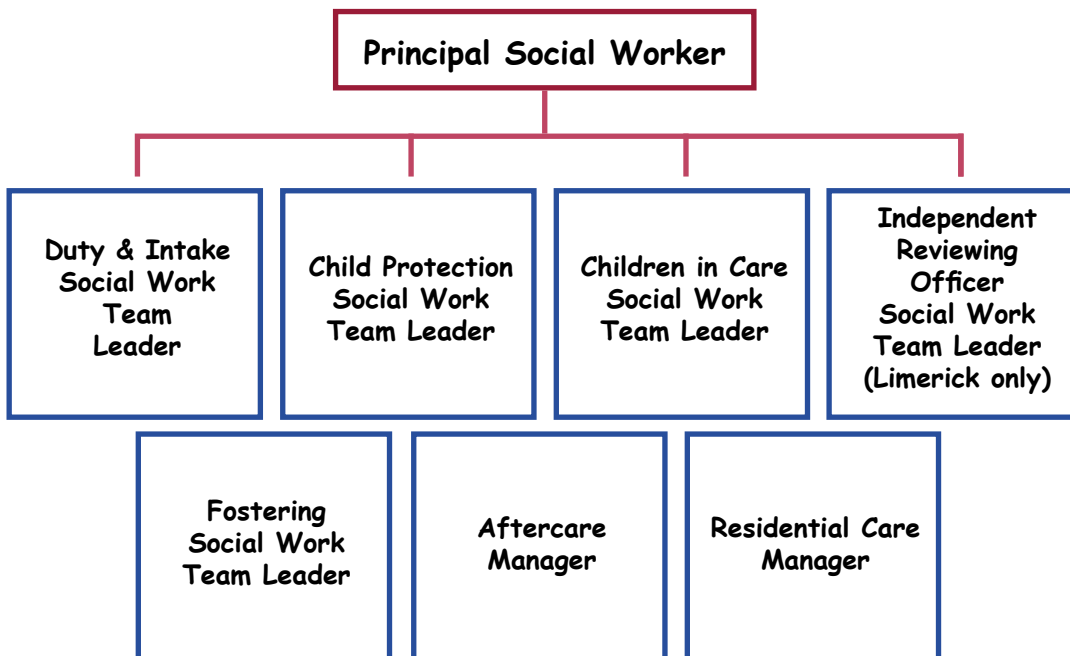
Tusla: The Child and Family Agency

The Child and Family Agency was established in 2014 and took over running child protection social work departments from the HSE. The Child and Family Agency is sometimes called 'Tusla'. Tusla and the Child and Family Agency are the same thing. If there is a concern that you are having difficulty caring for your children, Tusla will get involved. While your children are in care, you will have a lot of contact with the Tusla social workers. The diagram on the next page shows the various people within the social work department with whom you may come into contact.

Introduction



TUSLA staff you may come into contact with:



Each of these managers supervises a team, with the exception of the Independent Reviewing Officer. All of the teams could work with you at some point while your child is at home or in care.

Voluntary Care

Section 1

What is Voluntary Care?

Voluntary care means that you ask or agree that your child be cared for by Tusla: the Child and Family Agency.

How is Voluntary Care different to Court-Ordered care?

Voluntary care is where you give permission for your child to be taken into care. Court ordered care is when Tusla apply to court for an order to place your child in care.

When might my child need to go into voluntary care?

You might have to put your child in care if you are sick 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.

What am I agreeing to when I give consent to voluntary care?

When you give consent you are giving Tusla permission to look after your child for as long as you agree. 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.

Tusla will decide where your child will live, however, they will ask you about how you would like your child to be cared for. If you have a relative or friend who you'd like your child to live with, you can suggest this. Where possible, Tusla prefer to place your child with a family in a familiar environment.

Voluntary Care

Section 1



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 find it hard to read forms, 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. You may want to ask a solicitor for advice before you sign the consent form to make sure you understand everything. Ask the social worker to give you a copy of the consent form. Make sure you keep a copy of it.

Can I change my mind if I give consent?

Yes. You can change your mind and ask for your child to come home. If it is in your child's best interest, the social worker will arrange this, but this usually takes time and doesn't happen straight away. If the social worker decides it is NOT in the child's best interest to return home to you, you must be told why that decision has been made. You

should ask for that information in writing. If you disagree with Tusla's decision to want to keep your child in care, Tusla may decide to go to court to get an order to keep your child in care.

What if I'm asked to put my child into Voluntary Care and I don't consent?

If you don't give permission for your child to be taken into care, the social worker may tell you that they are going to court to get permission to do so. If the court agrees that it is in the best interests of your child to be in care, it will grant an order to place your child in care. (See Section 2 for the different type of care orders)

If Tusla decide to apply to court for an order, you have the right to be legally represented in court. The court can only make orders if the judge hears evidence and accepts that it is in your child's best interests to be cared for by Tusla. The judge must listen to everyone before making a decision. If you are not happy with the judge's decision, you may be able to appeal the order.



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 this DOES NOT mean that your child will return to you straight away. It can take some time for the social worker to check if your situation has changed. For example they might want to arrange for a parenting assessment or other assessment so that the social worker can be confident that you are now able to care for your child safely. If the social worker does not believe it is in the best interests of your child to return home, they can apply to court to keep your child in care. (This is explained in the section below 'Can the social worker refuse to let my child home'). This is why it is so important not to sign the consent form until you fully understand what you are agreeing to.

Will my child be sent home immediately?

If your child is coming home, the social worker will plan this with you and with everyone involved with your child. It will 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?

Where your child is in voluntary care, the social worker cannot refuse to return your child. However, if they do not think it is in your child's best interests to go home, they can apply to the District Court for an order keeping your child in care. If they are doing this, they must explain to you their reasons. For example, the social worker may want to assess if your situation has changed enough so that they can be confident that you can care safely for your child. They might want to get someone independent like a psychologist or someone who knows a lot about parenting to assess your ability to care safely for your child. An assessment like this takes time to organise and to be completed.



Voluntary Care

Section 1

Tusla must satisfy the court that there are good reasons for not letting your child go home. They may tell the judge they need time to assess your ability to care safely for your child. If the court grants an order, your child will no longer be in voluntary care. They will be in court-ordered care Section 2 of this guide tells you what this means.

What can I do if the social worker does not want to agree to let my child home?

If the social worker thinks your child needs to stay in care, 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 is 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, especially if the social workers are planning to get a court order (see contact list at end of this guide).

Section 9 of this guide tells you how to go about getting this or other decisions changed.

Are there alternatives to Voluntary Care?

An alternative to voluntary care can be what is called a 'private family arrangement'. This can happen when Tusla is involved with a family, but an agreement is reached for the children to be placed in the care of a relative without a care order or a voluntary care agreement being looked for by Tusla. This family member could be an aunt or a grandparent for example. You could talk to the Tusla social worker to see if this is possible in your case.

If you have a relative or friend who would be capable of taking care of your child, it may be possible to have them appointed as a guardian or temporary guardian instead of putting your child in voluntary care. You should get legal advice about this. (See the list at the end of this guide of organisations that may be able to help you)

Court-Ordered Care

Section 2



What is court-ordered care?

Court-ordered care means that the court has ordered that your child be placed in the care of Tusla: the Child and Family Agency.

What is the difference between voluntary and court-ordered 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, or you withdraw your permission, Tusla must get permission from the court to take your child into care. Under the Child Care Act 1991, Tusla has a duty to protect children from harm or neglect. This duty gives Tusla 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 the care of Tusla. Section 3 explains the different types of court order.

It is important to know whether your child is in voluntary or court-ordered 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 guide tells you about care plans.

When can the social workers get a care order?

If Tusla believes that your child is not being cared for or protected at home, it can ask the court to grant a care order.

Can I decide who my child will live with while they are in court-ordered care?

No, that is up to Tusla 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. Tusla might decide that this would be a good arrangement. A social worker would have to meet and assess the person you suggest, before they can decide if it would be okay for your child to live with them.

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 Tusla: the Child and Family Agency permission to take your child into care. The court will only grant a court order if Tusla satisfies the judge that it would be in your child's best interests to be in care.

Judges do not tend to use the word 'Tusla' very often and usually refer to the Child and Family Agency as 'the CFA' or 'the Agency'. These all mean the same thing, so if you are in court, do not be confused by these different names.

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 Tusla 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 there is immediate danger to a child. The Garda can remove that child. This is known as a 'Section 12' of the Child Care Act 1991 and only happens when the Garda believes that there is an immediate danger for a 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 Tusla as soon as possible. Tusla 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.

Supervision Order

What is a supervision order?

A supervision order allows your child to stay living with you, but gives Tusla social workers 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 for the child, like bring them to medical appointments or other assessments. 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 Tusla to take a child from its home and put the child into a safe place. If necessary, the judge can issue 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 Tusla has applied for an emergency care order for my child?

Yes. If the case is urgent, 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 Tusla 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, counting the day on which it is made.

Court Orders

Section 3



Will I be told where my child is?

Usually, you will be told where your child is. If the Court decides that it is not in your child's best interests to tell you where they are placed, Tusla 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, Tusla is required to allow you reasonable access, 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?

Tusla should give you a copy of the order. If you don't receive a copy, You can ask for one, as you have the right to have a copy.

Interim Care Order

What is an interim care order?

An interim care order is a temporary court order to put children into care. Tusla will often 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 29 days, counting the day on which it is made, unless you agree to longer. It can be renewed by the court after 29 days.

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 Tusla: the Child and Family Agency. Tusla 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 guide tells you how to try to get a care order changed.

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

Yes. Tusla must tell you before it applies for a care order. The District Court will send you a notice of application. This will tell you the date, time and place of the court. The social worker and your solicitor should explain to you what the notice of application 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 notice of application?

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, if there is one in your area (see 'Useful Contacts' section for contact details for your local advocacy service in the mid-west region). Section 5 of this guide tells you how to get a solicitor.

Does the judge always agree with Tusla?

Not always. Tusla 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. The Tusla social worker will also have a copy of the care order and will be able to give you a copy.

Court Orders

Section 3



Can I appeal the court order?

Yes, you can appeal the court order from the District Court to the Circuit Court. The Circuit Court is a higher court than the District Court. It does not hear child care cases when they first come before the courts, but if a parent is unhappy with what happened in the District Court and thinks that there was a legal or factual error made, they can appeal the case to the Circuit Court.

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. Tusla may apply to the High Court to have your child adopted. This does not mean that they will succeed in having your child adopted. Before the High Court can make that order, it has to be satisfied that you have failed in your duties to your child for at least three years and that there is no reasonable prospect of you being able to resume caring for your child. 'Failed in your duties' is the kind of language used in the Court system, so be prepared to hear things like that said in court.

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 grow up. 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 the Tusla social worker, your advocacy worker or solicitor before the adoption takes place. They can help you decide what to do.

Can the court make an adoption order against my will?

It is important to know that an Adoption Order can only be made without your consent by the High Court. This can only happen in extreme circumstances, for example, where the Court believes that you have failed in your duty to your child for a long period of time (more than 3 years) and there is no reasonable prospect of you being able to care for your child safely.

Before this happens, the Court will also have to be satisfied that every effort has been made by Tusla to support you in your relationship with your child.

If you know that an adoption order is being applied for, you should talk to a solicitor as soon as possible, because this is a complicated issue. Your solicitor will advise you what to do.



Always talk to your solicitor about a court order.

Supervision Order

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

Emergency Care Order

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

Interim Care Order

- › Temporary order to place children in care.
- › Can only be done when Tusla gets Interim Care Order from Judge.
- › Lasts a maximum of 29 days.

Full Care Order

- › Court order to place your child in long-term care.
- › A Full Care Order can last until a child's 18th birthday.
- › Tusla is 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 Tusla agree to my request?

Tusla 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 apply to the District Court for a decision about your child's faith. Section 9 of this guide tells you how to try to go about getting decisions changed.

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

If your child is in on a full care order, most decisions will be made by Tusla. 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. If

your child is in voluntary care or in care on an emergency or interim care order, then you still have to be consulted about most significant decisions.

You also have a right to information about your child, for example, the social worker should tell you as soon as possible if your child is sick or has been taken to hospital. You can also ask for copies of school reports if your child is in school.

If there is a specific decision about your child that you disagree with Tusla about, the social workers can ask the District Court to make that decision while your child is in care. For example if you don't want to consent to your child getting a passport or being brought out of the country on holidays, Tusla can apply to the District Court who will make a decision on this.

Section 8 of this guide tells you more about decisions and how you can be involved. **Section 9** tells you how to get decisions clarified or changed.

Removal of Guardianship Rights

Unmarried fathers do not automatically become legal guardians of their children. When they DO become legal guardians, there are some situations where the District Court can remove those rights. This may be where the Court feels it is not in the best interests of the child that the father be a legal guardian.

Appointment of other guardians

In addition to this, the District Court can appoint other persons to be a guardian of a child. This can happen where a person has been the spouse or civil partner of a parent of the child for three years and has been caring for the child with the parent for two years. For example Joe and Ann have been partners for 4 years, and Joe has been helping her to care for her 2 children during this time. He can apply to be appointed as their guardian.

The District Court can also appoint a person who has been caring for a child for a year as guardian if the child has no guardian or parent available to act as guardian.

For example where a grandparent has been caring for a child for over a year, the District Court can appoint them as a guardian.

If a child has no guardian at all (usually this only arises if the child's mother has died) then the District Court can appoint another person to act as guardian. This would usually be a family member.



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;
- If the decision of Tusla is that , in the best interests of your child, your child needs to go into care;
- Tusla 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 guide.

Is there a charge to see a solicitor?

Yes, unless you have a right to 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 legal aid depends on how much money you have. If you are getting a social welfare payment, you will probably be entitled to legal aid.

You can apply for legal aid at your local legal aid board law centre. A list of law centres is available at www.legalaidboard.ie

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

If you are not entitled to legal aid and you cannot afford a solicitor, contact Tusla, who may be able to help you.

Role of Tusla: The Child and Family Agency

Section 6

If my child is not in care, can Tusla help me to take care of them?

One of Tusla's main jobs is to look after the rights of children and make sure they are properly cared for and kept safe from harm.

If Tusla believes you are having difficulty taking proper care of your child and keeping them safe from harm, it should give you support so that your child can go on living at home. Tusla 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 Tusla social worker in your local health centre. Remember, taking a child into care is seen as a serious decision by Tusla and is only done as a last resort. Tusla would prefer that your child stay at home with you and will try to offer you family supports. Tusla will explore with you if it is possible for your child to go on living at home. Don't be afraid to ask for support if you feel you need it.

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

Tusla is legally responsible for making sure that your child is cared for properly while they are in care. Tusla 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. Tusla'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 understand what you need to do to improve your situation so that your child can come home.

Remember: Tusla 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.



Role of Tusla: The Child and Family Agency

Section 6

What is the role of the Tusla 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.

Do social workers have special training?

Yes, social workers must have special training and be registered with CORU (CORU is the organisation that registers Social Workers). 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 the social worker, ask to talk to their boss (the team leader and/or the principal social worker) and see if they can help to sort things out. Your advocacy worker may be able to help you to talk things through or help you to arrange a meeting with the social worker team leader or 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 Tusla or with the social worker.

What can I do if I feel Tusla is treating me unfairly?

If you are unhappy about any decision made by Tusla, you can ask Tusla to change it. If Tusla 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 guide tells you how to try to go about getting decisions changed.

You can also make a complaint either formally or informally. You can contact the Principal Social Worker to make an informal complaint and if you want to give Tusla any feedback or to make a formal complaint, you can do so using the 'Tell Us' complaints process which you can find on www.tusla.ie You can also find more information on this website.

What does the phrase "in the best interests of the child" mean?

The Childcare Act 1991 is the law that the Court uses to make decisions about the welfare of children. This Act speaks about "the welfare of the child as the first and paramount consideration". This means that, in law, what the child needs is the most important thing to consider. So the judge in the Court, Tusla and any professionals working with the child must, by law, treat the child's needs as Number One. To look after the child's "best interests" means to look after and encourage the child's happiness, security, mental health, and their emotional, physical, social and educational

development into young adulthood.

Sometimes what a parent could see as being in their child's best interests could be different than Tusla's view. For example; parents have a right to have access to their child if the child is in care, and they believe that their child needs to see them. But it can sometimes happen that the social worker or a professional who has done an assessment on the child may have a different view of what that child needs at the present time. The professional opinion may be that the child is not able to attend access at the moment, then it is not seen as in the child's best interest to have the child attend access at the present time and Tusla can stop the access visits. If a parent is not happy with that decision, they can go to court to ask the judge to decide. The judge will have to weigh up all the evidence to decide what the child needs right now, in other words what is in the best interest of the child about access visits with their parents.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says that... "in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration" (Article 3 of the UNCRC).



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. The parents in this family must do special training and must have been accepted by Tusla to look after children. Residential care means your child goes to live in a house with other children and a number of professionally trained childcare staff.

Your rights as parents or as legal guardians 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 Tusla for permission to look after children who are in care. They cannot provide foster care without the permission of Tusla.

How does Tusla 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, Tusla decides whether to accept them as foster carers. This is done through the Foster Care committee which makes the final decision to approve the family as foster carers (or not, as the case may be).

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 Tusla 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, Tusla 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 weekly allowance to help cover food, clothes and other expenses for your child.

Will I be told where my child is living?

Yes, unless Tusla and/or the District Court decides your knowing this is not in your child's best interests.

What is the role of my child's carers?

Their role is to take care of your child for as long as Tusla decides. Tusla 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 for your child lists what carers need to do to support your child while they are living with them. See Section 8 of this guide 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. If you have an advocacy worker, you could also ask them for help.



Who will look after my child?

Section 7

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

No. Tusla has legal rights and can make decisions about your child. Carers can only make decisions in co-operation with Tusla. Where a child has been with the same foster carers for over five years, foster carers can apply, if they wish, to the district court for what are called 'enhanced rights'. "Enhanced" means extra or additional to what the foster carers already can make decisions about.

This means that the district court can make an order giving foster carers some legal rights to make day-to-day decisions about the care of the child. For example, signing consent for medical treatment or medical assessment, applying for a passport, signing permission slips for school to go on school trips or attend concerts etc.

Tusla must agree in advance that the foster carers can apply to the court for these enhanced rights. If your child is in voluntary care, Tusla must look for your consent also. If your child is in care under a care order, Tusla must notify you that the foster carers are applying to the court for these enhanced rights.

The court must be satisfied that Tusla have

done this, unless the court directs that, in the interests of the child's welfare, the need for a parent's consent (for a child in voluntary care) or for a parent to be notified (for a child under a care order) does not apply in a particular case.

If you have any concerns or questions about this, you can talk to the Tusla social worker or to an advocacy worker if there is one in your area, and you can ask your solicitor for legal advice.

Taking your child into care does not, on its own, remove your guardianship rights and these exist along with the legal rights of Tusla. For more information on your guardianship rights, see section 4 'My Parental Rights'.

What can I do if I'm not happy with the care my child is getting with their foster carers?

It is important to talk with the social worker and social work team leader about this, and what you are worried about. You can ask for your child to be moved to another foster carer.

If your child is in voluntary care, you could take them home BUT if you do this the social worker may decide to ask the District Court to keep the child in care instead. If your child is in court-ordered care Tusla will decide whether to move them. If your child gets on well with the carers, Tusla may decide that it is not in your child's best interests to move them.

What can I do if Tusla 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 Tusla. A residential children's home can be run by a voluntary organisation, a religious order or Tusla. 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. Tusla 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?

Section 7

Relative's home

Can my child be placed with a relative?

Your child may be placed with relatives if Tusla agrees. Like 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 Tusla 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 Lodgings

What are supported lodgings?

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.

Aftercare Service

What is the Aftercare Service?

Any child who has spent at least 12 months in the care of the state between the ages of 13 and 18 will be eligible to use the aftercare service, if they want to do so. The aftercare service is to help the young person to prepare for leaving care and to provide support for them as a young adult from age 18 up to age 21. It can give practical help and support to help the young person link in with other services or to find suitable accommodation. If the young person is in full-time education or training, they can get an allowance during that time. This allowance can continue until they are age 23 if they are still in full-time training or education.

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?

Tusla 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. Tusla 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. If Tusla disagrees with you about a particular decision about your child, they can ask the court to make the decision. Section 3 of this guide 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 Tusla asks it to. You or Tusla 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 guide tells you how to try to go about getting decisions changed by the court.





Decisions about my child - Who makes them?

Section 8

What kind of decisions does Tusla make?

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

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 Tusla 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 Tusla make the decisions in the care plan?

There are two main ways of making these decisions:

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



Child protection conferences

What is a child protection conference?

A child protection conference (sometimes called a case conference) is a formal meeting that Tusla will hold if it has major concerns about your child while the child is in your care. 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 Tusla to make decisions about your child without your involvement. However, under the law, Tusla 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?

Tusla 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. If you have an advocacy worker, they 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 Tusla should apply to the court to take your child into court-ordered 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;
- 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. A meeting is organised to talk about these things; 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 public health nurse, teacher or psychologist for example) may also be invited. Before the meeting happens you can write down your wishes and concerns about your child. These can then be discussed at the review and this will be kept on the child's file. If your child is old enough, they will be invited too. Children are always encouraged to attend their reviews though some decide not to attend.

Your child will also have the opportunity to fill out a form for the review, even if they are not going to attend.

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: Everyone's views means your views, your child's views, Tusla's views as well as the views of any of the professionals who are working with your child.



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

Tusla 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. After 2 years of a child being in care, review meetings must take place once every year. Reviews can 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. You can write down what you feel is working well for your child; what you have concerns or worries about, 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. The review is a way for you to find out how your child is doing in care. But also, 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 if there is one in your area.



Getting decisions changed

Section 9

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 because they will need to check if it's okay for that person to come to the 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. If you have an advocacy worker, they 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 Tusla 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. The following section provides more information on this.

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 guide tells you who makes what kind of decisions and how those decisions are made. 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. If you have an advocacy worker, they 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 Tusla. The list of contacts at the end of this guide tells you how to get in contact with these Tusla 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 guide 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 Tusla decides not to hold a special review, it must write to you and tell you why.

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

Yes. 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. Also, if a decision has already been made by a court (for example a care order) the court won't change that order unless there has been some change in circumstances. Talk to your solicitor, who can advise you whether you could convince the judge that it would be in your child's best interest to do what you are asking. You have to go to court to get a court order changed. Section 3 of this guide 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. You can make this application at any time while the District Court's original care order is still in place.

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. You have to fill out an appeal form with the court office within two weeks of the District Court's decision if you want to appeal.

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 the social worker can also help you to think things through.

Staying in contact with my child

Section 10



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

Tusla 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 or send cards to your child, this is usually done through the social worker. You can have phone or video calls or have visits with your child, but phone calls and visits will usually need to be arranged by the social worker. 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?

Tusla: the Child and Family Agency need to consider close relatives and friends who want to keep in touch with your child. This can happen 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 court-ordered care, the court can decide how often you may visit, but usually the judge leaves this decision up to Tusla. Tusla 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.



Staying in contact with my child

Section 10

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 child is upset after visits with you, the social worker should tell you. If you are not happy with what the social worker says, ask to see the team leader or the principal social worker or ask for a special meeting to discuss changes in access. If this does not sort things out, you can apply to the court to get it changed. It is worth talking to a solicitor before you do, to get an idea of whether the court is likely to make the change.

Section 9 of this guide 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 to wherever visits are taking place.

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, Tusla may be able to help with your own 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 guide 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 a health centre.

Are there other ways I can have contact with my child?

Yes. Telephone calls and video calls are another way of having contact if you can't meet face to face. You can talk to the social worker to see if this would work for your child and you. For some helpful tips on preparing for a video or telephone call with your child see Clarecare's guide: *Using Technology To Create Positive Connections With Your child In Care*, available on www.clarecare.ie

What is 'supervised access'?

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



Staying in contact 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. For example, your visits may be supervised as a support to you and/or your child. 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 that this has happened. 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 - anger, sadness, shock, fear etc. 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.



Over time this can build up to phone calls and, hopefully, in time your child will be willing to see you in person again. Talk to the social worker who may know why this is happening now. During the time that you are not seeing your child, you can ask the social worker for regular updates about how your child is getting on.

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. Tusla 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. Tusla 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 Tusla won't allow my child home on visits?

Tell the social worker that you want your child to visit. Tusla 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 can advise you about where you can get help to do this. 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, or apply to the District Court. Section 9 of this guide 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, Tusla 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, in this case, if things don't work out and your child is in care under a court order, Tusla 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, Tusla may agree to ask the court to cancel the care order. They have to go to court to get permission to do this. If Tusla 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 guide 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.

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, Tusla will work with you and your family to help you improve the situation so that your child can come back home. However, Tusla 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 guide 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. But it is better for your child if you can listen. The carers have been an important part of your child's life and if your child can talk openly to you about these things, it will improve your relationship with your child. Again, talk to the 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 Employment Affairs and Social Protection when your child goes into care. Tusla may also tell them. However, you will continue to receive Child Benefit for a period of 6 months from the date your child entered care.

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

Yes. Tell the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection 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. It is not

guaranteed that you will get extra money but the Community Welfare Officer is the best person to discuss this with.

You should also ask the social worker to tell the Community Welfare Officer about your situation.

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 guide will tell you how to get in touch with MABS.



Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Advocacy service for parents of children in care	<p>Family Advocacy Service Limerick Social Service Council CLG Limerick Social Service Centre Upper Henry St Limerick V94 2W14 Tel: 061 314111 Email: info@lssc.ie Web: www.lssc.ie</p>	<p>Clare Advocacy Service Clarecare Family Support Services Harmony Row Ennis Co. Clare V95 F8CN Tel: 065 6828178 Email: info@clarecare.ie Web: www.clarecare.ie</p>	<p>Partnership with Families Project Silver Arch Family Resource Centre 52 Silver Street Nenagh E45 P624 Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 31800 Email: info@silverarchfrc.ie www.silverarchfrc.ie</p>
General	<p>Limerick Citizens Information Centre Ground Floor Riverstone House Henry Street Limerick V94 3T28 Tel: 0761 07 5780 Email: limerick@citinfo.ie Web: citizensinformation.ie</p>	<p>Ennis Citizens Information Centre Bindon Lane Bank Place Ennis Co. Clare V95 D963 Tel: 0761 07 5260 Email: ennis@citinfo.ie Web: citizensinformation.ie</p>	<p>Nenagh Citizens Information Centre 43 Pearse Street Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 0761 07 6470 Email: nenagh@citinfo.ie Web: citizensinformation.ie</p>
	<p>TREOIR Information & Advice for parents on Guardianship & Access for parents Website www.treoir.ie Information phone line 01 6700120</p>	<p>TREOIR Information & Advice for parents on Guardianship & Access for parents Website www.treoir.ie Information phone line 01 6700120</p>	<p>TREOIR Information & Advice for parents on Guardianship & Access for parents Website www.treoir.ie Information phone line 01 6700120</p>

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Employment, Education & Training	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Marshall House Dooradoyle Limerick Tel: 061 442100 Email: info@lcetb.ie Web: www.lcetb.ie	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Station Rd Clonroad More Ennis Co. Clare V95 D32F Tel: 065 6828107/6824928 Email: info@lcetb.ie Web: www.lcetb.ie	Tipperary Education and Training Board Church Road Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 31250 Email: nenagh@ tipperaryetb.ie Web: www.tipperary. etb.ie
	PAUL Partnership Unit 25a Tait Business Centre Dominic Street Limerick Co. Limerick Tel: 061 419 388 Web: www. paulpartnership.ie	Clare Local Development Company 1 Westgate Business Park Kilrush Road Ennis Co. Clare Tel: 065 686 6800 Web: www.cldc.ie	North Tipperary Development Company 2nd Floor Friars Court Nenagh South Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 56676 Web: www.ntdc.ie
Money & Finance	Social Welfare Limerick Intreo Centre Dominick Street Limerick V94 X327 Tel: 061 212200 Web: www.mywelfare.ie	Social Welfare Ennis Intreo Centre Kilrush Road Ennis Co. Clare V95 YP70 Tel: 065 6867800 Web: www.mywelfare.ie	Social Welfare Church View Nenagh Co. Tipperary E45 VR80 Tel: 067 50902 Web: www.mywelfare.ie

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Money & Finance	<p>St. Vincent de Paul Ozanam House Hartstonge Street Limerick Tel: 061 317327 Email: info.midwest@svp.ie Web: www.svp.ie</p>	<p>St. Vincent de Paul Ozanam House Hartstonge Street Limerick Tel: 061 317327 Email: info.midwest@svp.ie Web: www.svp.ie</p>	<p>St. Vincent de Paul Ozanam House Hartstonge Street Limerick Tel: 061 317327 Email: info.midwest@svp.ie Web: www.svp.ie</p>
	<p>Limerick MABS Floor 1 Riverstone House 23-27 Henry St Limerick Tel: 0818 072210 Helpline: 0818 07 2000 Mon- Fri 9am-8pm Email: limerick@mabs.ie Web: www.mabs.ie</p>	<p>Clare MABS 7 The Mall Clare Road Ennis Co. Clare Tel: 0818 072430 Helpline: 0818 07 2000 Mon- Fri 9am-8pm Email: ennis@mabs.ie Web: www.mabs.ie</p>	<p>Tipperary MABS (North) 31 Pearse Street Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 0818 072760 Helpline: 0818 07 2000 Mon- Fri 9am-8pm Email: nenagh@mabs.ie Web: www.mabs.ie</p>
Mental Health	<p>Samaritans 20 Barrington Street Limerick V94 AC60 Freephone: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.ie Web: www.samaritans.org</p>	<p>Samaritans Sunville Kilrush Road Ennis Co. Clare Freephone: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.ie Web: www.samaritans.org</p>	<p>Samaritans 20 Barrington Street Limerick V94 AC60 Freephone: 116 123 Email :jo@samaritans.ie Web: www.samaritans.org</p>

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Mental Health	<p>Pieta Midwest Ard Aulin Skehacreggaun Mungret Co Limerick V94 T258 Freephone: 1800 247 247 Text Help to 51444 Web: www.pieta.ie</p>	<p>Pieta Midwest Ard Aulin Skehacreggaun Mungret Co Limerick V94 T258 Freephone: 1800 247 247 Text Help to 51444 Web: www.pieta.ie</p>	<p>Pieta House Roscrea Primary care centre, Cre House Grange, Roscrea Co Tipperary Tel: 0818 111 126 Freephone: 1800 247 247 Text Help to 51444 Web: www.pieta.ie</p>
	<p>GROW Mid-Western Region 33 Henry St. Limerick Tel: 061 318813 Email: midwesternregion@grow.ie Web: www.grow.ie</p>	<p>GROW Mid-Western Region 33 Henry St. Limerick Tel: 061 318813 Email: midwesternregion@grow.ie Web: www.grow.ie</p>	<p>GROW Mid-Western Region 33 Henry St. Limerick Tel: 061 318813 Email: midwesternregion@grow.ie Web: www.grow.ie</p>
	<p>AWARE Freephone: 1800 80 48 48 Email: supportmail@aware.ie Web: www.aware.ie</p>	<p>AWARE Freephone: 1800 80 48 48 Email: supportmail@aware.ie Web: www.aware.ie</p>	<p>AWARE Freephone: 1800 80 48 48 Email: supportmail@aware.ie Web: www.aware.ie</p>
	<p>Crisis Intervention Nurse Mon - Sun: after hours service from 4.30pm Tel: 087 6472354 For further information on mental health services see www.hse.ie</p>	<p>Crisis Intervention Nurse Mon - Sun: after hours service from 4.30pm Tel: 065 6863708 Tel: 087 7999857 For further information on mental health services see www.hse.ie</p>	<p>Crisis Intervention Nurse Mon - Sun: after hours service from 4.30pm Tel: 086 8306663 For further information on mental health services see www.hse.ie</p>

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Addiction	HSE Mid-West Limerick Drug & Alcohol Service, PO Box 486, Corporate House, Mungret Street, Limerick Tel: 061 318633 Web: www.hse.ie	HSE Mid-West Clare Drug and Alcohol Service Museum House Francis Street Ennis Clare Tel: 065 6865852 Web: www.hse.ie	HSE Mid-West North Tipperary Drug & Alcohol Service Kenyon Street Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 46512 Web: www.hse.ie
	Community Substance Misuse Team 2nd Floor, Arthurs Quay House Limerick V94 XVR0 Tel: 061-318904 Mobile 087 6472354 Web: www.csmt.ie	Community Substance Misuse Team 2nd Floor, Arthurs Quay House Limerick V94 XVR0 Tel: 061-318904 Mobile 087 6472354 Web: www.csmt.ie	Community Substance Misuse Team 2nd Floor, Arthurs Quay House Limerick V94 XVR0 Tel: 061-318904 Mobile 087 6472354 Web: www.csmt.ie
	HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline Phone helpline: 1800 459 459 Email: helpline@hse.ie Web: www.hse.ie/ drugshivhelpline	HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline Phone helpline: 1800 459 459 Email: helpline@hse.ie Web: www.hse.ie/ drugshivhelpline	HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline Phone helpline: 1800 459 459 Email: helpline@hse.ie Web: www.hse.ie/ drugshivhelpline

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Addiction	Coolmine Midwest (Drug & Alcohol Treatment) Mahon House Upper William Street Limerick Tel: 086 0832550	Coolmine Midwest (Drug & Alcohol Treatment) Mahon House Upper William Street Limerick Tel: 086-0832550	Coolmine Midwest (Drug & Alcohol Treatment) Mahon House Upper William Street Limerick Tel: 086 0832550
	Saoirse Addiction Treatment Centre 18B Davis Street Limerick Tel: 085-8184590 Email: saoirsetc@gmail.com		
	Ana Liffey Drug Project Midwest Unit 1, Steamboat Quay Dock Road Limerick Tel: 086-1559158 Email: info@aldp.ie	Ana Liffey Drug Project Midwest Unit 1, Steamboat Quay Dock Road Limerick Tel: 086-1559158 Email: info@aldp.ie	Ana Liffey Drug Project Midwest Unit 1, Steamboat Quay Dock Road Limerick Tel: 086-1559158 Email: info@aldp.ie
Housing	Mid West Simon Speakers Corner Lower Carey's Road Limerick Tel: 061 608980 Email: info@midwestsimon.ie Web: www.midwestsimon.ie	Mid West Simon Speakers Corner Lower Carey's Road Limerick Tel: 061 608980 Email: info@midwestsimon.ie Web: www.midwestsimon.ie	Mid West Simon Speakers Corner Lower Carey's Road Limerick Tel: 061 608980 Email: info@midwestsimon.ie Web: www.midwestsimon.ie

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Housing	Limerick City & County Council Dooradoyle Road Dooradoyle Limerick Tel: 061 556000 Email: customerservices@limerick.ie Web: www.limerick.ie	Clare County Council New Road Ennis Co. Clare Tel: 065 6821616 Email: customerservices@clarecoco.ie Web: www.clarecoco.ie	Tipperary County Council Civic Offices Nenagh Co. Tipperary 0761 065000 Email: customerservices@tipperarycoco.ie Web: www.tipperarycoco.ie
	Novas 87, O'Connell St Limerick Tel: 061 370325 Out of hours service: 1800 606060 Email: info@novas.ie Web: www.novas.ie		Novas Prospect House Tyone Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 34535 Web: www.novas.ie
	Focus Ireland Catherine Place Limerick 061 405300 help@focusireland.ie www.focusireland.ie	Focus Ireland Catherine Place Limerick 061 405300 help@focusireland.ie www.focusireland.ie	Focus Ireland Catherine Place Limerick 061 405300 help@focusireland.ie www.focusireland.ie
	Peter McVerry Trust (Limerick & Clare) 50 O'Connell St. Limerick Tel: 061 214882 Email: info@pmvtrust.ie Web: www.pmvtrust.ie	Peter McVerry Trust (Limerick & Clare) 50 O'Connell St. Limerick Tel: 061 214882 Email: info@pmvtrust.ie Web: www.pmvtrust.ie	

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Housing	<p>Threshold Limerick Outreach Clinic North Munster Information Service CLG, Unit 2, Ground Floor, Riverstone House, 23/27 Henry Street, Limerick Tel: 1800 454 454 National Helpline Mon-Fri 9am-9pm 1800 454 454 Email: advice@threshold.ie</p>	<p>Threshold Co. Clare Outreach Clinic Ennis Citizens Information Bindon Lane Ennis Co. Clare Tel: 076 1075260 National Helpline Mon-Fri 9am-9pm 1800 454 454 Email: advice@threshold.ie</p>	<p>Threshold National Helpline Mon-Fri 9am-9pm 1800 454 454 Email: advice@threshold.ie</p>
Parenting Support	<p>Information on parenting and support services on the following websites: Parenting24seven www.tusla.ie/parenting-24-seven</p>	<p>Information on parenting and support services on the following websites: Parenting24seven www.tusla.ie/parenting-24-seven</p>	<p>Information on parenting and support services on the following websites: Parenting24seven www.tusla.ie/parenting-24-seven</p>
	www.loveparenting.ie	www.loveparenting.ie	www.loveparenting.ie
	<p>Family Resource centres provide a variety of support and services to families. You can find the centre nearest to you on www.familyresource.ie</p>	<p>Family Resource centres provide a variety of support and services to families. You can find the centre nearest to you on www.familyresource.ie</p>	<p>Family Resource centres provide a variety of support and services to families. You can find the centre nearest to you on www.familyresource.ie</p>

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Parenting Support	<p>Child & Family Service Limerick Social Service Centre V94 2W14 Tel: 061 314111 Email: info@lssc.ie Web: www.lssc.ie</p>	<p>Clarecare Family Support Services Clarecare V95 F8CN Tel: 065 6828178 Email: info@clarecare.ie Web: www.clarecare.ie Clarecare Parent support line Tel:065 6828178</p>	<p>Services for child & Family Silver Arch Family Resource centre E45 P624 Tel: 067 31800 Email: info@silverarchfrc. ie Web: www.silverarchfrc.ie</p>
	<p>Barnardos Limerick Regional Office Islandgate Project St Mary's National Girls School Bishops St. Limerick Tel: 061 430313 Web: www.barnardos.ie</p>		<p>Barnardos Mall House Slievenamon Road Thurles Co. Tipperary Tel: 0504 20018 Email: info@thurles. barnardos.ie Web: www.barnardos.ie</p>
	<p>Bedford Row Family Project Lower Bedford Row Limerick Tel: 061 315332 Email: info@ bedfordrow.ie Web: www.bedfordrow.ie</p>		

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Health Centres	Abbeyfeale Health Centre, Tel: 068 31309	Carrigaholt Health Centre, Tel: 065 905 8205	Ballina Health Centre, Tel: 061 376 321
	Adare Health Centre, Tel: 061 396 442	Clarecastle Health Centre, Tel: 065 682 9488	Borrisokane Health Centre, Tel: 067 27106
	Annacotty Health Centre, Tel: 061 331 710	Ennis Health Centre, Tel: 065 682 8525	Borrisoleigh Health Centre, Tel: 0504 51423 / 51974
	Askeaton Health Centre Tel: 061 398 233	Ennistymon Health Centre, Tel: 065 707 1143	Cappamore Health Centre, Tel: 061 381371
	Barrack View Primary Care Centre Tel: 061461800	Kildysart Health Centre, Tel: 065 683 2012	Cloughjordan Health Centre, Tel: 0505 42307
	Ballylanders Health Centre Tel: 062 46849	Kilkee Health Centre, Tel: 065 905 6381	Galbally Health Centre, Tel: 062 37072
	Ballynanty Health Centre Tel: 061 457 100	Kilmihil Health Centre, Tel: 065 905 0155	Littleton Health Centre, Tel: 0504 44727
	Ballycummin Health Centre Tel: 061 464 432	Kilrush Health Centre, Tel: 065 905 4200	Moyne Village Health Centre Tel: 0504 34852
	Bruff Health Centre Tel: 061 382 218	Lisdoonvarna Health Centre, Tel: 065 707 4194	Newport Health Centre, Tel: 061 378 299
	Bishop Street Health Centre Tel: 061 417 054		

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Health Centres	Caherconlish Health Centre Tel: 061 351 899	Scariff Health Centre, Tel: 061 921 286	Portroe Health Centre, Tel: 067 23466
	Cappamore Health Centre Tel: 061 381 371	Shannon Health Centre, Tel: 061 718 400	Rathcabbin Health Centre, Tel: 0509 39043
	Castleconnell Health Centre Tel: 061 377 656	Sixmilebridge Health Centre, Tel: 061 369 427	Rearcross Health Centre, Tel: 062 79152
	Croom Health Centre Tel: 061 397 206	Tulla Health Centre, Tel: 065 683 5264	Roscrea Health Centre, Tel: 0505 21498
	Doon Health Centre Tel: 061 380 031	Kilmaley Health Centre, Tel: 065 683 9747	Templemore Health Centre, Tel: 0504 31561
	Dooradoyle Health Centre Tel: 061 482 600	Westbury Health Centre, Tel: 061 656 555	Thurles Health Centre, Tel: 0504 27600
	Dromcollogher Health Centre Tel: 063 83 404		Toomevara Health Centre, Tel: 067 26212
	Foynes Health Centre Tel: 069 65500 / 65542		Tyone Health Centre, Nenagh Tel: 067 46400
	Galbally Health Centre Tel: 062 370 72		
	Glin Health Centre Tel: 068 34305		

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Health Centres	Hospital Health Centre Tel: 061 383 031		
	Kilmallock Health Centre Tel: 063 98192		
	Kings Island Primary Care Tel: 061 483 020		
	Milford Castletroy Health Tel: 061 338071		
	Moyross Health Centre Tel: 061 326 010		
	Murroe Health Centre Tel: 061 386 299		
	Newcastle West Health Centre Tel: 069 62155		
	Oola Health Centre Tel: 062 47845		
	Rathkeale Health Centre Tel: 069 64308		
	Roxtown Health Centre Tel: 061 417 622		
Southill Health Centre Tel: 061 410 988			

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Domestic Abuse	<p>ADAPT Services Adapt House Rosbrien Limerick Tel: 061 412354 Helpline 1800 200 504 Email: info@adaptservices.ie Web: www.adaptservices.ie</p>	<p>Clare Haven Abbey Lodge Limerick Road Ennis, Co. Clare Tel: 065 6822435 065 6842646 24 hour Helpline 065 6822435 Email: clientcare@clarehaven.ie Web: www.clarehaven.ie</p>	<p>Ascend Domestic Abuse Service New Line Roscrea Co. Tipperary Helpline Tel : 0505 23999 Email: ascend@ntdc.ie Web: www.ntdc.ie</p>
	<p>MOVE Ireland (Men Overcoming Violence) Mid-West Co-ordinator Tel: 086 4149613 Email: move@moveireland.ie www.moveireland.ie</p>	<p>MOVE Ireland (Men Overcoming Violence) Mid-West Co-ordinator Tel: 086 4149613 Email: move@moveireland.ie www.moveireland.ie</p>	<p>MOVE Ireland (Men Overcoming Violence) Mid-West Co-ordinator Tel: 086 4149613 Email: move@moveireland.ie www.moveireland.ie</p>
	<p>Rape Crisis Mid-West Phoenix House Punches Close Rosbrien Limerick Tel: 061 311511 180031511 Email: info@rapecrisis.ie Web: www.rapecrisis.ie</p>	<p>Rape Crisis Mid-West Phoenix House Punches Close Rosbrien Limerick Tel: 061 311511 180031511 Email: info@rapecrisis.ie Web: www.rapecrisis.ie</p>	<p>Rape Crisis Mid-West Phoenix House Punches Close Rosbrien Limerick Tel: 061 311511 180031511 Email: info@rapecrisis.ie Web: www.rapecrisis.ie</p>

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
HSE: Health Service Executive	<p>HSE Ballycummin Avenue Raheen Business Park Limerick Tel: 061 483719 Web: www.hse.ie</p>	<p>HSE St. Joseph's Hospital Ennis Co. Clare Tel: 065 6863555 Web: www.hse.ie</p>	<p>HSE Tyone Health Centre Tyone Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 46400 Web: www.hse.ie</p>
Child & Family Agency (TUSLA)	<p>TUSLA Building, St Joseph's Campus, Mulgrave Street Limerick Tel: 061 607100</p>	<p>TUSLA Building, River House, Gort Road , Ennis, Co Clare V95 YD28 Tel: 065 6863902</p>	<p>TUSLA office, Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary E45 AO99 Tel: 067 46656</p>
Legal Services	<p>Limerick Law and Family Mediation centre First Floor Riverpoint Lower Mallow St Limerick V94 WC6A Tel: 061 314599 Mobile: 087 2479675 Email: lawcentrelimerick@ legalaidboard.ie Web: www.legalaidboard.ie</p>	<p>Legal Aid Board Ennis Law Centre Station Road Ennis Co Clare V95 FN79 Tel: 065 682 1929 Email: lawcentreennis@ legalaidboard.ie Web: www.legalaidboard.ie</p>	<p>Legal Aid Board Nenagh Law Centre Friars Court Abbey Street Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 34181 Mobile: 087 1823653 Email: lawcentrenenagh@ legalaidboard.ie Web: www.legalaidboard.ie</p>

Useful Contacts

SERVICE AREA	LIMERICK	CLARE	NORTH TIPPERARY
Legal Services	<p>Family Mediation Service 3rd Floor, Riverpoint, Lower Mallow Street, Limerick V94 WC6A Email: limerickfamily mediation@ legalaidboard.ie Phone: 061 214310 Web: www.legalaidboard.ie</p>	<p>Family Mediation Service Ennis District Court Lifford Road, Ennis, Co Clare Email: ennisfamilymediation@ legalaidboard.ie Web: www.legalaidboard.ie</p>	<p>Family Mediation Service Nenagh District Court Nenagh Co. Tipperary Tel: 061 214310 Web: www.legalaidboard.ie</p>
	<p>Community Law and Mediation Limerick Social Service Centre Henry St Limerick Tel: 061 536 100 Email: limerick@ communitylawand mediation.ie Web: www.communitylawand mediation.ie</p>		
An Garda Síochana	<p>Henry Street Garda Station Henry Street Limerick City V94 VY64 Tel: 061 212400 Web: www.garda.ie</p>	<p>Ennis Garda Station Abbey Street Ennis Co. Clare V95 TR83 Tel: 065 6848100 Web: www.garda.ie</p>	<p>Nenagh Garda Station Kickham Street Nenagh Co. Tipperary E45 NX49 Tel: 067 50450 Web: www.garda.ie</p>



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Advocacy Services for Parents of Children in Care

Mid-West Region



Clare Advocacy
Service
Clarecare
Harmony Row
Ennis, Co Clare
V95 F8CN

www.clarecare.ie
T. 065 6828178



Family Advocacy
Service
Limerick Social
Service Centre
Henry St, Limerick
V94 2W14

www.lssc.ie
T. 061 314111



The Partnership with
Families Project
Silver Arch Family Resource
Centre Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
E45 P624

www.silverarchfrc.ie
T. 067 31800

For other areas



Tusla - Child and Family Agency
National Office 01 771 8500
www.tusla.ie