



**Irish Association of Community
Training Organisations
Company Limited by Guarantee**

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Re: Changes to employee handbook section 22 – Safeguarding, Child Protection and Welfare

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Dear Chairpersons, Board Members and General Managers

This correspondence is in relation to Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children first published in 1999 and reviewed and updated on a number of occasions since then, most recently in 2017. Children First relates to the recognition of child abuse and neglect, the reporting of same to Tusla - Child and Family Agency, and the best practice which organisations (and CTCs in our case) should adhere to keep children safe while availing of their services.

IACTO, as employer representative body for CTCs, has been facilitating and delivering workshops and briefings across regions to CTC Boards & GMs to support their understanding of and subsequent implementation of the required (updated) legislative changes to practices in their centres. Following these, and working with a small group of voluntary GMs from across the network, the task moved on to develop templates and updates to CTC policies and procedures to meet the new legislation in section 22 of the CTC employee handbook.

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Dr. Katherine Zappone, TD, in her foreword to the 2017 edition of 'Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children' stated that:

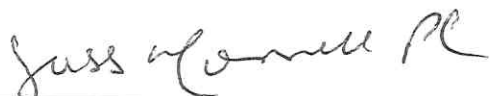
".....this revised version has been updated to include new information about the Children First Act 2015 and it includes specific information for the professionals and organisations that now have legal obligations to keep children safe. The Guidance also outlines the roles of the main statutory bodies involved in child welfare and protection: Tusla - Child and Family Agency, and An Garda Síochána. It contains details of how to report a concern about a child and what happens once the report is received by Tusla. The revised Guidance is just one of the resources available to assist with child protection. For the first time, a free, online child welfare and protection training module is now available for everyone. This e-learning module has been designed by Tusla to complement the legislation and this Guidance. This, and a number of additional child protection and safeguarding information resources, can be found on the Tusla website".

www.tusla.ie.

<http://www.tusla.ie/publications/>

IACTO encourage all CTC Boards, as employers, to facilitate all CTC employed staff access to the above training module during working hours as a matter of good practice. After this we urge you and/or your GMs to use the OHTs we have made available on our website www.iacto.ie to brief your CTC teams about the changes. Please feel free to adapt same. In addition to the above the revised wording of section 22 of the CTC employee handbook is attached for distribution in the usual manner and we request that you advise all staff of the changes effective immediately. Should you have further queries please contact the office.

Kind regards



Guss O'Connell
Chairperson IACTO