An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency
Principal Social Worker
Child Abuse Substantiation Policy (CASP) Lead for Dublin & Mid-Leinster
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Strictly private and confidential
Strictly addressee only

Thursday, 9th of March 2023

Re: Notification by Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Spiritan Fathers to Tusla

My name is John Moore and I am Principal Social Worker with the Tusla Retrospective & Child Abuse Substantiation Team for Dublin Mid-Leinster.

I am writing to you as under the Children First Act (2015) the DLP for the Spiritan Fathers is legally obliged to notify Tusla where the organisation (Holy Ghost / Spiritan fathers) have received information and they believe a child has been, or is being exposed to child abuse and/or neglect.

I am very mindful that this information is highly sensitive and this may, in fact, be the first time that you might have disclosed your experience to anyone. The DLP for the Spiritan fathers provided me with your name and contact information and the primary purpose of my communication is to signpost you towards any help or assistance that you might require, to provide you with a piece of information about what we do with that information and to inform you of some of the options that you might want to consider in the future.

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Tusla's Role

The reason that the DLP is obliged, legally, to pass information to Tusla is that he is what is referred to as a 'mandated person' so he is obliged under the Children First Act to report any concerns that a child has been [in the past] or is being at risk of abuse or neglect. We are very mindful that sometimes people make what we have come to call 'accidental disclosures' whereby they provide information in a therapeutic space without necessarily intending it to be passed to Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

This is necessary as Tusla and An Garda Síochána have a statutory basis which makes these state services responsible for protecting the welfare of children. So when Tusla receives information about alleged child abuse, we need to respond to ensure that children are kept safe. In certain circumstances, we may need to carry out a substantiation assessment if and identified person is subject of abuse allegations and there is a potential risk to other children.

In circumstances where a person subject of abuse allegations is deceased, there is still a requirement for this information to be notified to Tusla but we do not apply our Child Abuse Substantiation Procedure (CASP). In these circumstances, we endeavour to provide information to persons making disclosures so that they have opportunity to engage in therapeutic processes if they are seeking this resource. We also provide information on how to engage with An Garda Síochána and if individuals seek information on civil law or redress, how they would access information in this regard also.

I wish to emphasise that Tusla's decision not to conduct any substantiation assessment in relation to your disclosure of abuse is not to diminish your experiences or to minimise the impact it may have had on you. Unfortunately we have no legal mandate to conduct a thorough assessment as when a person is deceased, the risk attributed to that person no longer exists within the perimeters of our procedure.

We acknowledge that this position may be difficult for you. We aim to treat everyone affected by allegations of abuse with fairness, dignity and respect. I am more than happy to meet with you individually in person or if you have any questions or queries, you can contact me at john.moore1@tusla.ie or by phone at the numbers provided.

I have also attached a data protection notice for your information which outlines how information is processed by Tusla in accordance with your rights under GDPR.

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Minister-initiated Scoping Inquiry

You will be aware that Minister for Education, Ms Norma Foley, announced in recent days that there was to be a scoping inquiry that will hopefully shape the government's response to historical sexual abuse in schools run by religious orders, which is to be lead by Mary O'Toole, Senior Counsel. I would like to draw your attention to the mechanism for engagement with this forum if you choose to do so.

The remit of the scoping inquiry is to shape the government's response to revelations of historical sexual abuse in schools run by religious orders. The Lead will oversee the scoping inquiry and, at the end of the process, will submit a report to the Minister for Education, including recommendations on next steps.
Survivors of historical sexual abuse who wish to register their interest in participating in the survivor engagement process can do so by emailing, by 17 April 2023: survivorengagement@esi.gov.ie.

Survivors are asked to provide the following details:

- name
- contact details
- preferred method of contact (telephone, email, post)
- whether they would like to complete a questionnaire on what they would like to see as part of the government's response

Survivors can also call 090-6483610 to register their interest.
The main purpose of the survivor engagement process is to identify what survivors would like to see happen next. No one will be asked to provide an account of their experiences at this time.

Irrespective of your preference to engage with this forum, I have also enclosed a number of resources that can provide therapeutic assistance if that is something that may be of benefit to you or those around you in the wake of your disclosure.

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Therapeutic Services

If you want to consider accessing therapeutic services, you can contact:

HSE National Counselling Services https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/national-counselling-service/ and depending on your location in the country you can phone or email: https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/national-counselling-service/contact-us/

One-in- Four - https://www.oneinfour.ie/contact or you can phone (01)6624070

Pieta House - https://www.pieta.ie/contact/ or you can phone their crisis line on 1800 247247, text '**HELP**' to 51444, or contact 0818 111 126

I am aware that the Spiritan order are facilitating processes of response to individuals who make contact with them relating to experiences of abuse. This is a matter entirely for you should you choose to pursue this avenue.

Legal Advice & Counsel

You may wish to seek legal counsel in this regard irrespective of whether you choose to engage in therapeutic services or participate in any prospective inquiry that might be commissioned in due course. I am happy to provide you with information relating to legal firms that would have expertise in this regard.

An Garda Síochána

If you wish to make a formal complaint to An Garda Síochána, you can contact your local Garda Station and request to speak with a member of the Divisional Protective Services Unit in that area. These units are specialist investigation teams that are trained and have expertise in investigation processes. Again, it may be impossible for Gardai to pursue criminal charges in relation to specific, identified persons who are deceased but they may seek testimony in relation to any wider investigation that ensues. In the event that you are looking for additional information in this regard, you are welcome to contact me accordingly and I can signpost you in the direction of appropriate persons or contact points.

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In accordance with the Joint Working Protocol between An Garda Síochána and Tusla, all information that gives rise to a suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect, is automatically notified to An Garda Síochána. This does not automatically infer that an investigation is initiated, it is so to ensure that reports of suspected child abuse are notified between the two agents of the state responsible for child protection.

If you wish to discuss this further, or if you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at (087)2134204 or at our office at (045)839375.

Yours sincerely,



John Moore
Principal Social worker
CORU Reg: **SW001538**

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