

Mr. Jim Gibson  
Chief Operations Officer  
The Child and Family Agency  
Floors 2-5  
Brunel Building  
Heuston South Quarter  
Dublin 8

20 February 2020

HIQA Ref: 20200220\_AR\_JG\_TA\_0010285

**Re: Voluntary Consent for Admission to Care**

Dear Mr Gibson,

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2019, Eva Boyle, wrote to you in relation to significant concerns arising regarding Voluntary Consent for the placement of children in the care of Tusla. A comprehensive response was received from Linda Creamer, acting COO, on the 25 September 2019, please see response and memo received attached for your convenience.

This response clearly outlined actions to be taken by all 17 service areas in order to address the concerns highlighted, including an immediate review of all voluntary consent forms, including that any voluntary consent forms that had elapsed are immediately updated before 30 September 2019. The memo also gave clear guidance in relation to their review.

The response also indicated that Tusla had commenced a national oversight review in each area of voluntary care arrangements with a view to ensuring that all children in the voluntary care of the Child and Family Agency have had their voluntary care status reviewed in line with the Practice Guidance issued on 7 July 2017. It was anticipated that this review would be completed by 31 October 2019.

□ **Head Office:**  
Unit 1301, City Gate, Mahon,  
Cork, Ireland.  
Tel: +353 (0) 21 240 9300  
Fax: +353 (0) 21 240 9600

□ **Dublin Regional Office:**  
George's Court, George's Lane,  
Dublin 7, Ireland  
Tel: +353 (0) 1 814 7400  
Fax: +353 (0) 1 814 7499

[REDACTED]

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Given that this issue was also highlighted in the Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary service area, in the same region, it is concerning that this urgent issue has still not been addressed in the South Region. Despite escalation of this issue to your office in 2019, the matter has not been addressed.

Please confirm that all other 16 service areas have completed a review of voluntary consent forms as requested in Tusla's Directive dated 25 September 2019, and any necessary action taken to rectify the findings of the review, if necessary. If there are still areas that have not yet completed this review, please outline which areas are still outstanding, and indicate the date by which they will be completed.

Please also outline the findings of the national oversight review that was to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019, and whether an implementation plan has been developed, and if so, please provide a copy with your response.

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Please provide a response by close of business on Thursday 05 of March 2020.

Yours sincerely,



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Ann Ryan, Head of Programme, Children's

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