

The logo for TúsLA, featuring the word 'TúsLA' in a stylized font. 'Tús' is in green and 'LA' is in blue. The letters are bold and sans-serif.

TúsLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

A large, stylized steering wheel graphic in shades of green and blue, centered on the page. The wheel has eight spokes and a dark blue center. The text 'STEERING Committees' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the wheel.

STEERING Committees

THIS IS A SUPPORTING GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR AFTERCARE, WHICH SHOULD BE READ
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE 'NATIONAL AFTERCARE POLICY FOR ALTERNATIVE CARE'

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Document Approved By	National Policy Oversight Committee.
Responsibility for Implementation	National Implementation Lead for Aftercare, Tusla. Area Managers, Aftercare Managers, Aftercare Workers, Social Workers - Children in Care, Child Protection and Welfare, Residential Care.
Responsibility for Review and Audit	National Policy Manager for Alternative Care, Tusla.

1.0 Introduction

Aftercare steering committees are to be established in the 17 areas within the Tusla – Child and Family Agency. The establishment of such committees is to fulfill the commitment of Tusla to provide a comprehensive aftercare service to young people and young adults in receipt of an aftercare service.

The aftercare steering committees provide a forum for planning, implementing and monitoring a comprehensive, integrative aftercare plan for young people/young adults in receipt of aftercare. The approach taken is a multidisciplinary, multi-agency approach.

The aftercare steering committee is a service available to young people in care and young adults in receipt of aftercare. The aftercare manager can determine the requirement to refer a case to the committee.

2.0 Objectives of aftercare steering committee

- To monitor the progress of all young people from 16 to 18 who are referred to the aftercare services to ensure that appropriate services and supports are in place in advance of a young person leaving care.
- To monitor the progress of young adults from 18 to 21 years/23 years and to support re-engagement with relevant services.
- A mechanism for other agencies on the committee to re-engage young adults eligible for aftercare with aftercare services.
- To identify young people who are presenting to services in need who require a coordinated response.
- To highlight gaps in service provision to communicate to relevant managers.
- To develop clear working protocols between services represented.
- To provide a forum for discussion and information exchange. To monitor policy, developments in service provision and trends and to respond appropriately.
- To monitor referrals to other services such as mental health, disabilities, social protection.
- To work to all joint working protocols between Tusla and other State departments.

2.1 Membership

The aftercare steering committee will be chaired by an aftercare manager and/or designated manager. The membership shall include members from statutory and voluntary service providers within the integrated services area who provide a service to young people/ young adult and aftercare such as:

- Disability Services representative – HSE/NGO.
- Education/Training representative – LMETB, SOLAS.
- Residential Service representative – Tusla.
- Fostering Service representative – Tusla.
- Children in Care representative – Tusla
- Primary Care representative – HSE.
- Child and Adult Mental Health Services representatives – HSE.
- Department of Social Protection representative, e.g. HEO.
- Housing Authority representative.
- Representative from any tenancy sustainment provider in the area.
- Addiction Services representative – HSE.
- Social Inclusion representative – HSE.

Membership will be agreed by management in each organisation and a commitment made to the meeting process and attendance. The members of the aftercare steering committee can invite someone who is not a member to participate for a specific period of time or task.

The aftercare steering committee will identify key workers in other relevant services which the young person/young adult is to be referred to, e.g. primary care, disability and mental health services per action 68 in the ‘Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse 2009’ (Ryan Report).

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This will promote access to mainstream generic health services with integration of additional specialist supports, interventions and monitoring as required by individual young people during the aftercare transition phase.

The committee will support the care planning/aftercare planning process, however it will not have responsibility for the care plan/aftercare plan task. It will not have a care planning role which is the sole responsibility of the aftercare workers and the allocated social worker.

2.2 Aftercare Steering Committee Terms of Reference

- To ensure that each young person/young adult who leaves care is given the support and services they require by the State for as long as they require it.
- To prevent homelessness amongst this cohort of young people/young adult.
- To develop services and identify gaps in local services.
- To make recommendations to senior management in all services representatives in regard to the development needs of young people leaving the care of Tusla.
- The frequency of meetings to be agreed by the local committee with a minimum of four per annum.

2.3 Communication

The aftercare steering committee will agree communication strategies and practices for the group whilst observing statutory data protection and confidentiality policies.

Records of the meeting will be maintained by the chair and circulated to members clearly identifying specific actions.

Gaps and blocks identified will be reported to the local children's services committees.

Please refer to: 'National Informed Consent for Aftercare, 2017'.

3.0 Referral process

Referrals will only be accepted for those who meet the eligibility criteria. Please refer to ‘The National Aftercare Policy, 2017’.

3.1 Under 18 years and in care

Referrals to the interagency steering committee must be referred by the social worker and/or the aftercare worker.

3.2 Under 18 years and not in care

Where the assessment of need, completed by the Aftercare worker, identifies a multi disciplinary approach to the development of an aftercare plan, referrals can be made in writing to the aftercare interagency steering committee by the aftercare worker.

3.3 Over 18 years

Referrals to the interagency steering committee must be referred by the aftercare worker and/or the drop in service and/or an external agency or advocate.

Consent is essential in the case of young adults. *Please refer to the ‘National Consent Document for Aftercare, 2017’.*

4.0 Aftercare steering group meetings

Frequency will be agreed by the aftercare steering committee at no less than every quarter and dates agreed in advance.

4.1 Quorum

The aftercare steering committee will agree a minimum number of representatives in attendance for a quorum.

4.2 Agenda and minutes

Members will submit their agenda items to the chairperson, aftercare coordinator prior to the meeting. The chairperson will email the agenda and minutes to all members in advance of the meeting. The agenda will include time slots for each case to allow adequate discussion and also time at the end of each meeting to discuss general aftercare issues which arise locally for group members. Members will agree on what and how the meeting will be recorded and by whom.

4.3 Decision making

Following discussion of each case, decisions taken regarding each young person/young adult will be recorded and circulated to relevant stakeholders by the chairperson. The wide range of expertise on the committee will support detailed collaborative discussion and each member will take responsibility for actions relevant to their role in the group.

Decision making will be underpinned by the development of national protocol and/or services level agreement between agencies.

4.4 Reporting

Each member will report to their line manager. Where gaps in service provision are identified by the aftercare steering committee, members will report to their respective organisation and feedback to the aftercare steering committee. The aftercare steering committee will make representation as appropriate to the children's services committee.

Each aftercare steering committee will be expected to present the work of the committee including the development of services and linkages for children leaving care.

5.0 Review of adequacy annual reports

The aftercare service manager will ensure that an annual report will be submitted to the principal social workers or designate. The report will outline progress achieved and identify inadequacies in the services as appropriate.

5.1 Data

Aftercare service managers will keep data as requested by the Tusla national office.

5.2 Advisory role

The aftercare steering committee is available to advise other professionals on aftercare issues as appropriate.

