

The logo for Túsla, featuring the word 'Túsla' in a stylized font with a green 'T' and 'u', and 'sla' in blue. The logo is set within a white circular background.

Túsla

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

A large, stylized graphic of a ship's wheel, rendered in shades of green and blue, centered on the page. The wheel has eight spokes and a dark blue center. The title text is overlaid on the center of the wheel.

ALLOCATION OF AN AFTERCARE WORKER

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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Responsibility for Review and Audit	National Policy Manager, Alternative Care, Tusla.

1.0 Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the National Aftercare Policy 2017.

Aftercare services offer a wide range of supports which may include: drop in services, signposting services, advice, guidance, financial advice and support, allocation of a worker, advocacy with others on behalf of the young person/young adult. The participation and consent of the young person/young adult is paramount in the provision of aftercare services.

2.0 Assessment of need

A comprehensive assessment of need, when completed, will determine the level of service that will be offered to the young person/young adult who refer/are referred to the aftercare service.

The factors to be taken into consideration while completing the assessment of need should include the young person/young adult's:

- Capacity to live independently
- Placement/accommodation
- Financial resources
- Employment/education/training
- Emotional/psychological needs
- Health needs
- Support networks

It is the combined consideration of these needs that will ultimately inform the decision in relation to the level of service to be offered and provided.

Best practice is that the aftercare worker who undertakes the assessment would be allocated to the young person/adult if the assessment indicates a requirement for allocation.

3.0 Allocation of an aftercare worker

Historically, aftercare Services have tried where possible to allocate an aftercare worker to all young people leaving care at 18 years. This has shown to have been a significant support to some young people and a burden to those who wished not to engage. In order to ensure those in most need of an allocated aftercare worker receive that service, the assessment of need should consider, where possible what the benefit an allocated aftercare worker would be to the young person/young adult. Allocation of an aftercare worker to a young person prior to 18 years is to add value to the social work service provided, not to replace it. For those under 18 years who have returned home and those in care it is the responsibility of the referring social worker and aftercare worker to develop an aftercare plan in partnership with the young person and appropriate others.

Those who may not be allocated an aftercare worker may include:

- Those who require a specialist service from another service provider such as: those with a moderate, severe or profound intellectual or physical disability or moderate, severe mental health issues, which prevents the young person/young adult the ability to live independently.
- Those who refuse to engage with the service and have no identified significant need for support.
- Those who refuse to give consent to service provision.
- Those who choose a drop-in service over allocation.
- When a young person/young adult is to be held in detention for more than three months, this will be reviewed as circumstances change.
- Where a young person/young adult remains in placement and the assessed need would indicate that they do not require an allocated aftercare worker.
- Young person/young adult who is living with their parents prior to 18 years.
- Young person/young adult whom the area they are living in is not their area of origin.

(Please refer to the Case Closure Guidance, ‘National Aftercare Policy, 2017’).

4.0 Review of service provision

The level of support from the aftercare service young people/young adults required will vary from high levels of support to minimal support between the ages of 18-21 years. Each individual aftercare plan should identify the young person/young adult's needs and the support to be provided.

Each young person's aftercare plan will vary depending on their level of need. Each aftercare plan is individual to the young person/young adult and can be reviewed if their circumstances change.

Depending on the changing needs of young adults throughout the time they are eligible for service provision and the resources available to the service, allocation of an aftercare worker may be necessary to provide the additional support needed. Each young person/young adult requiring additional support may request to have their service provision reviewed through the area drop-in service between 18-21 years. Please refer to requests for review of the aftercare plan, 'The National Aftercare Policy 2017'.

It is the objective of every aftercare service to promote the independence of those eligible for an aftercare service and encourage young adults to integrate fully within their communities.

The wishes of young people/young adults who do not wish to avail of a service should be respected.

However it is important to advise these young adults that they can re-engage with the service up to 21 years.

