



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

13 October 2016

Circular 01/2016 Regulation

To:

DCYA, Adoption Policy Unit

AAI Board members

AAI executive staff

Tusla, CFA

Accredited Bodies under Section 4 of the Adoption Act, 2010

Approved by the Adoption Authority Board 11/10/2016

Arrangements for the monitoring and inspection of accredited bodies

1. The Adoption Authority of Ireland has examined the criteria to be applied in the context of accreditation and of ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The Authority is continuing to develop policy on these criteria in accordance with the Adoption Act, 2010 and S.I No. 524 of 2010. The Authority has received initial advices with regard to the monitoring and inspection functions of the Authority in relation to accredited bodies. In addition, the various framework and guidance documents provided by the Authority will impact on the manner in which accredited bodies carry out those activities for which they are accredited.
2. It is vital that the Authority meets its statutory obligations and ensures adherence to the law in all of the processes it oversees. A pilot inspection process was carried out during 2015 and forms the basis for ongoing inspection of adoption services. The work towards the establishment of a rigorous and robust monitoring and inspection mechanism will continue to evolve.
3. The Authority is committed to monitoring the activities of those bodies which it accredits on a regular basis and the Regional Adoption Services of Tusla and the Child and Family Agency, and advising these bodies in order to ensure that they achieve the highest standards possible in the services that they provide. As well as ensuring compliance with the regulations governing Accredited Bodies, the reports received from accredited bodies provide a platform for interaction with the Authority on an ongoing basis, in order to ensure that the Authority can provide appropriate support and that adoption services in Ireland are developed with the stakeholders, and with the best interests of children as the paramount concern of all.

4. The arrangements set out below were put in place as a precursor to a full inspection regime, and will continue until that inspection system is fully active:
 - Accredited Bodies are obliged to provide a report every six months, as set out at Appendices 'A', 'B' and 'C' below.
 - These two reports in each year provide a formal opportunity for the provision of feedback relating to current processes or guidance issued by the Authority and for feedback on customer services and information provision by the Authority.
 - Accredited Bodies should be aware that any materials submitted to the Authority in the course of their ongoing work are subject to internal inspection.
 - The Authority may also undertake periodic reviews of specific areas from time to time, such as (but not limited to) financial management, file management, placement procedures. These will be additional to the six-monthly review and will be notified to accredited bodies as they arise.
5. The Authority's executive staff shall report through the Chief Executive Officer, to the Board of the Authority as a matter of urgency on issues which are regarded as critical in nature. In addition, there will be a requirement as set out in Appendix A, for accredited bodies to report back on steps taken to address all issues raised by the Authority.
6. Alongside this reporting regime any potential serious breaches of the Act or of the Regulations S.I. 524 of 2010 coming to the attention of the Authority's executive staff will be notified to the Accredited Body's Board of Directors.
7. The Adoption Authority of Ireland retains its right under the Adoption Act 2010 Section 130, to cancel registration of the Accredited Body for any or all of the activities for which it is registered if the circumstances laid out in that Section arise.

Financial matters

- In relation to financial management, the Authority requires annual audited accounts from each Accredited Body. The Authority can requisition the assistance of external bodies to assist in periodic reviews of the audited accounts of accredited bodies.
- Where an organisation is in receipt of State funds, a statement from such funders addressed to the Authority is required. The statement should refer to the proper use of funds; financial management and probity; delivery of agreed services, where the purposes of funds is so delineated; and any other matter for consideration of the Authority as to whether the Accredited Body is 'fit' under the Adoption Act 2010 for the purposes of accreditation. Accredited bodies to which this applies should furnish the Authority with a

statement regarding any sources of State funds received by that body in the current financial year. On receipt of such statement, a pro forma letter will be issued to funders for completion and direct return to the Authority.

- Any issues arising in relation to financial matters will be considered by the Authority in the context of the bi-annual review of each Accredited Body.

Timetable for reporting, review and inspection

Report period	Report submission date	Review period, during which on-site inspections may take place	Response period to address issues raised by AAI in relation to Interim Report	Audited annual accounts to be included?
1 January – 30 June	15 August	15 September – 30 November	Responses to be provided no later than 15 December	No
1 July – 31 December	15 February	15 March – 30 May	Responses to be provided no later than 15 June	Yes Accounts may be forwarded separate to main Report no later than 31 March; auditor's report must accompany accounts

The administration of accreditation matters is dealt with by the Corporate Services section, on behalf of the Board of the Authority. All documentation should be sent to corporate@aai.gov.ie or to Corporate Services Section, Adoption Authority of Ireland, Shelbourne House, Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 D04 H6F6.

Yours sincerely,


 Patricia Carey
 Chief Executive Officer