

INFORMATION ON GARDA VETTING

What is Garda Vetting?

A Garda Vetting application authorises An Garda Síochána to provide a statement that

- States there are no convictions recorded against you in the jurisdiction of the Republic of Ireland / Northern Ireland or elsewhere as the case may be.
- Or
- States all convictions and / or prosecutions against you, successful or not, pending or completed, in these jurisdictions.

I am a Voluntary Notified Childminder do I need Garda Vetting?

While there is no specific requirement for Voluntary Notified Childminders to have Garda Vetting it is recommended as a good practice measure and to reassure parents of the integrity of your service.

I am a Childminder, notified to the HSE, do I need Garda Vetting?

Under Childcare (preschool services) (no 2) Regulations 2006 all notifiable Childminders are required to have Garda Vetting in place prior to offering a childminding service. If you are a notifiable Childminder you must ensure:

- There is a sufficient number of suitable and competent adults working directly with children
- You must designate yourself as the person in charge
- Have a named person (emergency back up person) who can deputise as required

Who else requires Garda Vetting?

- All persons (staff, students & volunteers) who have access to the children require Garda Vetting
- All staff, volunteers and students who have access to the children
- All adults (over 18yrs) living in the home who have access to the children

Do I have to renew Garda Vetting?

Garda Vetting does not have an expiry date but good practice would recommend that it be reviewed every 3 years. Garda Vetting stays with the service through which you applied. So if you received Garda Vetting as a Childminder and subsequently go and work in a childcare centre you must apply through the new childcare service to be Garda Vetted again.

Emergency Back Up Person

You must have a policy and procedure in place for the care of children in the event of your absence. This would normally involve adequate notice to parents to find alternative care or you might arrange for your emergency back up person to deputise. In any event anyone directly involved with the children will be required to have Garda Vetting as well as being a suitable, competent and trusted adult who can provide quality care for the children in your absence.

Recruiting an emergency back up person

The ideal person is someone who:

- Is of a suitable age
- Is competent, experienced and ideally qualified in childcare
- Is accessible at short notice in the event of an emergency (eg child accident / illness)
- Is familiar with your policies & procedures
- Can provide at least 2 written references from reputable sources
- Can provide Garda Vetting (The Childminder should Garda Vet the emergency back up person themselves)
- Ideally has access to transport, telephone etc

You might consider a local Voluntary Notified or Notified Childminder, member of your family etc. but remember it is your responsibility to check their suitability to the task and to introduce them to parents in advance of working directly with the children in your care.

How to acquire Garda Vetting

All Childminders (Notifiable or Voluntary Notified) should apply for Garda Vetting through Barnardos.

- Attend a Garda Vetting training course provided by Barnardos
OR
- Contact Barnardos (see contact details below) directly for the specific information pack which contains all the required forms and explanations which you will need to complete the Garda Vetting form correctly.
- All individuals involved in providing your Childminding service should complete their own forms and return their completed forms to you, as the Childminder in charge. You forward all the completed forms and other documentation required to Barnardos.
- Keep a record of all correspondence, written & oral (telephone conversations) with agencies involved in the Garda Vetting procedure. This can act as evidence of having initiated the procedure and reassure HSE inspector that the process is in progress. Garda Vetting is also recommended by Childminding Ireland as part of their membership registration process.

What do I do if I lived outside Ireland?

If you lived outside Ireland for a period of 6 months or more you need to contact the vetting service in that country for a criminal record search for that period. There may be a charge incurred and / or the procedure may differ to the one in Ireland. Barnardos can supply you with the relevant contact details for other countries.

Is there a cost involved?

No, the service is provided free of charge

What do I do with the Garda Vetting results?

All information must be kept in a safe & secure manner.

If you required another individual (eg emergency back up person) to obtain Garda Vetting inform them of the result.

Information relating to Garda Vetting must only be disclosed to another person for explicit and lawful purposes.

What do I do if I have a conviction?

Barnardos will notify the HSE in your area should a conviction applying to you, the Childminder, be disclosed to Barnardos which gives cause for concern in relation to the welfare of children.

What do I do if I receive a form showing convictions for others working in my service?

Childcare Regulations and good practice guidelines promote the use of appropriate recruitment procedures for all staff, volunteers etc working in childcare facilities. This includes reference checks and familiarisation with policies and procedures relating to employment, whether paid or unpaid. If a Garda Vetting Form is returned with a conviction relating to an employee or volunteer working in your childminding service it will be up to you, as the owner / manager, to decide if that person is suitable or not to be involved in your childminding service.

Who is entitled to see my Garda Vetting?

Barnardos, you and the HSE.

Further Information

Barnardos Vetting Service

The Bowling Green, White St, Cork

Tel 021 4547060