

WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG

Community and Social Activities Risk Policy

Policy Reference	WLILP34
Category	Operational Policies — Health & Safety, Community Participation
Version	2.0 (HIQA standard corrected, consent form and cross-references corrected)
Status	APPROVED — by the Board of Directors on 9 October 2026
Supersedes	WLILP34 - Community Social Activities Risk Policy (Redraft)
Policy Owner	Board of Directors, West Limerick Independent Living CLG
Applies To	All WLIL staff, volunteers, clients, and external partners involved in organising or participating in WLIL-led community and social activities
Related Policies	WLILP3 - Child Protection and Welfare Policy; WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy; WLILP8 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy; WLILP11 - Financial Procedures Policy; WLILP17 - Consent Policy; WLILP30 - Incident Management & Reporting Policy; WLILP33 - Transport and Vehicle Use Policy
Review Cycle	Annually, or following any significant incident or change in legislation

1. Purpose & Scope

This policy sets out West Limerick Independent Living's ("WLIL") approach to the safe planning, delivery, and review of community and social activities. These include group or individual outings to theatres, concerts, sporting events, cultural events, restaurants, educational sessions, and social gatherings. The purpose is to ensure all service users have equal opportunities to participate in community life in line with the principles of independent living, while safeguarding health, safety, and wellbeing. This policy applies to all WLIL staff, volunteers, clients, and external partners involved in organising or participating in WLIL-led activities.

2. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007
- Health Act 2007, and HIQA's Draft National Standards for Home Support Services (2024) — the standard applicable to WLIL's services, rather than the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare, which is HIQA's separate framework for acute hospitals
- Children First Act 2015 and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (where children are involved) — see WLILP3
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR (consent for photographs, media, or personal information) — see WLILP7A

- Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2018 (ensuring inclusion and accessibility)
- Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015, as amended by the 2022 Act (both fully commenced 26 April 2023) — relevant to consent for participation where a service user's capacity to decide is in question

3. Policy Statement

WLIL recognises that social participation and community involvement are vital for independence, personal development, and wellbeing. The organisation is committed to:

- Providing safe, inclusive, and accessible opportunities for participation
- Ensuring risks are identified, assessed, and controlled before activities take place
- Respecting clients' dignity, autonomy, and consent at all times
- Responding effectively to incidents or emergencies
- Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all WLIL-organised events

4. Procedures

4.1 Planning & Risk Assessment

- A risk assessment (Appendix A) must be completed for all outings and activities
- Accessibility, transport, dietary, and medical needs must be considered
- Consent must be sought in advance from each participant, or from their decision-support representative where applicable, using Appendix B and in line with WLILP17 - Consent Policy

4.2 Supervision & Staffing

- Adequate staff-to-client ratios must be maintained in line with assessed needs
- At least one trained first aider must be present at each group activity
- Staff must be briefed in advance on risks, roles, and emergency procedures

4.3 Transport & Accessibility

- All transport must comply with WLILP33 - Transport and Vehicle Use Policy
- Wheelchair users must be transported safely using approved restraints
- Travel plans, including pick-up and drop-off times, must be communicated to clients

4.4 Safeguarding

- Staff must follow WLILP8 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy, and WLILP3 - Child Protection and Welfare Policy where children are involved
- Any concerns of abuse or neglect identified during outings must be reported immediately

4.5 Emergency Procedures

- Emergency contacts for all participants must be available
- Staff must carry a mobile phone and first aid kit
- In the event of an incident, follow WLILP30 - Incident Management & Reporting Policy and complete its SBAR incident report, rather than a separate activity-specific form

4.6 Financial Management

- Costs must be pre-approved by managers, in line with WLILP11 - Financial Procedures Policy
- Staff may not use personal funds for activity-related expenses unless pre-authorised

5. Roles & Responsibilities

- Staff — ensure safety, respect autonomy, and follow risk assessment procedures
- Activity Organiser/Coordinator — complete risk assessments, secure consent, and plan logistics
- Managers — approve activities, ensure staffing levels, and monitor compliance
- Health & Safety Officer, or designated role — oversee risk assessments, provide safety training, and review incidents
- Board of Directors — provide governance oversight and ensure WLIL meets legal obligations

6. Training & Awareness

All staff supporting community and social activities will receive training in:

- Risk assessment and incident reporting
- Safeguarding adults and children
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion
- First aid and emergency response
- Client rights and consent procedures

7. Records Retention

Risk assessments, consent forms, and related documentation generated under this policy are retained in accordance with WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy, which is the single authoritative source for WLIL's retention periods.

8. Monitoring & Review

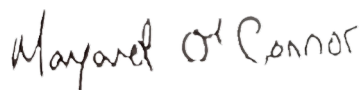
This policy will be reviewed annually and following any significant incident or change in legislation. Feedback from clients, staff, and families will inform improvements to ensure that activities are safe, inclusive, and empowering.

This policy reflects HIQA's Draft National Standards for Home Support Services (2024) and current HSE guidance, checked as accurate as of drafting. It is not a substitute for legal or health and safety advice.

Approval

Approved by the Board of West Limerick Independent Living CLG on 9 October 2026.

Signed on behalf of the Board, on its instruction, by the General Manager:



Margaret O'Brien O'Connor, General Manager

Date signed: 09-10-2026

Appendix A — Risk Assessment Template (Outings)

Activity/Event: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Identified Risks: _____

Control Measures: _____

Responsible Person: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B — Consent Form (Outings & Activities)

I consent to participation in the outing/activity organised by WLIL on the date described below. I understand that WLIL will take appropriate measures to safeguard health, safety, and wellbeing.

Activity and date: _____

Consent Given By

- ☐ The person themselves, giving their own consent
- ☐ A parent or legal guardian, on behalf of a participant who is a child
- ☐ A Decision-Making Assistant, Co-Decision-Maker, or Decision-Making Representative, appointed under the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015, on behalf of a participant who lacks capacity to give this consent themselves

Name of participant: _____

Name of person giving consent, if different: _____

Relationship or legal basis, if consenting on behalf of another person:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C — Incident Reporting

Staff should use the SBAR incident reporting form in WLILP30 - Incident Management & Reporting Policy, Appendix 3, rather than a separate activity-specific form, so that all incidents are recorded consistently in one place.

Appendix D — Staff Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the WLIL Community and Social Activities Risk Policy. I agree to comply with its requirements and understand that breaches may result in disciplinary action.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____