

WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG**Code of Conduct for Workers Engaging with Children**

Policy Reference	WLILP37
Category	Operational Policies — Safeguarding & Child Protection
Version	2.0 (legislative framework and cross-references added)
Status	APPROVED — by the Board of Directors on 9 October 2026
Supersedes	WLILP37 - Code of Conduct for Workers Engaging with Children
Policy Owner	Board of Directors, West Limerick Independent Living CLG
Applies To	All workers and volunteers of West Limerick Independent Living CLG ("WLIL") who may interact with, or be present around, children in the course of their duties
Related Policies	WLILP3 - Child Protection and Welfare Policy; WLILP4 - Garda Vetting Policy; WLILP5 - Code of Standards and Behaviour; WLILP19 - Lone Working Policy; WLILP39 - Digital Communications & Social Media Policy
Review Cycle	Annually, or as required by changes in legislation or organisational guidelines

Introduction

WLIL is committed to ensuring the safety, welfare, and dignity of children in all interactions involving our workers. This Code of Conduct is a short, practical companion to WLILP3 - Child Protection and Welfare Policy, which sets out WLIL's full child protection and welfare framework, including recognising abuse, reporting procedures, and the role of the Designated Liaison Person. In addition to WLILP5 - Code of Standards and Behaviour, the following standards specifically apply to staff members who interact with, or may be present around, children.

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

- Children First Act 2015, and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) — see WLILP3 for the full legislative framework
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 — see WLILP4 - Garda Vetting Policy

1. Respect and Dignity

- Always treat children with respect, patience, and kindness
- Never engage in behaviour that could shame, humiliate, or degrade a child

2. Safety and Protection

- Prioritise the safety and well-being of children in your care

- Immediately report any suspicions or allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, in line with WLILP3 - Child Protection and Welfare Policy

3. Appropriate Boundaries

- Always maintain professional boundaries; avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Never be alone with a child in a closed or isolated environment without clear professional justification and prior authorisation

4. Communication

- Use clear, appropriate language suitable for the child's age and level of understanding
- Avoid any form of communication that could be interpreted as inappropriate or exploitative

5. Confidentiality

- Respect the privacy of children by safeguarding personal and sensitive information
- Share information only on a need-to-know basis, consistent with safeguarding protocols

6. Equality and Inclusion

- Provide equal opportunities for all children regardless of ability, gender, religion, ethnicity, or background
- Actively promote an inclusive environment where all children feel valued and supported

7. Digital and Social Media Interaction

- Do not engage with children through personal social media or digital platforms
- Obtain written consent from a parent or guardian before capturing or sharing images of children for organisational purposes, using the consent form in WLILP39 - Digital Communications & Social Media Policy, Appendix C

8. Children Present During Service Delivery

- WLIL provides personal assistance and home support services to service users with disabilities. Some service users are themselves parents, and children may be present in the home during service delivery. In such cases, children remain the responsibility of their parent or guardian
- Staff are not expected to supervise or provide care to children. However, all staff must adhere to this Code of Conduct when children are present, ensuring respectful, appropriate, and professional interactions at all times
- Risk assessments and care plans for the service user will consider the presence of children and any relevant safety measures

9. Conduct in Home and Centre Settings

- If children are present in a home or centre while support workers are carrying out their duties, staff are expected to adhere strictly to this Code of Conduct

- Most home support is lone working, without a supervisor present on site — see WLILP19 - Lone Working Policy. All interactions must remain professional, appropriate, and in line with safeguarding policies regardless
- The presence of children will be considered during the risk assessment and care planning process

Compliance

All workers must comply with these standards. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action, including termination, and referral to relevant authorities where appropriate.

All workers and volunteers must sign to confirm they have read, understood, and agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct. This acknowledgment is separate from any general handbook signing, and is required specifically for child protection compliance.

Review

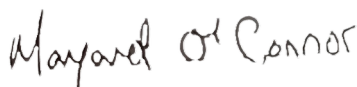
This policy will be reviewed annually, or as required by changes in legislation or organisational guidelines.

This policy reflects the Children First Act 2015 and current HSE and Tusla guidance, checked as accurate as of drafting. It is not a substitute for legal 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

Worker Acknowledgment

I, _____ (print name), hereby confirm that I have read, fully understood, and agree to adhere to WLIL's Code of Conduct for Workers Engaging with Children.

I understand my responsibilities regarding appropriate interactions, safeguarding, confidentiality, and reporting procedures when children are present during service delivery.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Role/Position: _____