



To DCYA stakeholders, funded youth services and organisations

3rd April, 2020

Re: Covid 19 advice to DCYA funded youth services and organisations

Dear all,

We are writing to you today to provide some additional information in relation to the most recent escalation in public health measures, particularly as they relate to youth work services.

As you will be aware, the list of essential services which was published last weekend included the following:

Community/Voluntary Services

- *community and voluntary workers, working in a publicly commissioned service, not otherwise included on the list, deployed to assist in the delivery of essential services*
- *volunteer services operating under the local authority emergency management framework in accordance with public health guidance*

In the main, youth work services are not considered as essential services for the purposes of these measures (i.e. for the purposes of essential travel by essential workers in the current period) with the following very limited exceptions:

- Youth workers who are providing essential outreach services (often in conjunction with other health and social care services) to young people in vulnerable situations in exceptional circumstances where there is no option to provide a service remotely (by phone, online etc)
- Where a youth worker is, by agreement with their own organisation and the host organisation, working to assist another State Body in carrying out critical work covered in the list of essential services published over the weekend (e.g. working by agreement with Tusla in the provision of essential services)
- Participation in community response initiatives (e.g. food and other deliveries to persons cocooning) where this is by formal agreement with the local authority emergency management framework co-ordinating this community response.



It is expected that the requirement for individuals to travel under these headings will be extremely limited during the time of these restrictions. Our previous correspondence in relation to youth services continuing to deliver as many services (or parts thereof) remotely should remain as the primary route for reaching out to young people. Continued and ongoing innovation will be required in this area. The Department expects that the organisation and running of many activities should be able to take place remotely without the need for anyone to travel to host or deliver such services.

In all instances where travel to work is essential under the above headings, workers should at all times observe all of the public health guidance as set out at gov.ie or hse.ie. This will include any up to date guidance on the use of PPE. Workers should also observe any other task specific advice from State bodies they might be assisting.

Having regard to all of the above, any and all travel for the purposes of delivering any of these essential services should be covered to the fullest possible extent by documentation which can be produced to An Garda Síochána if required to justify this travel. This documentation should take the following form:

1. A printed copy of this circular letter, and
- 2a. A personalised letter from the relevant National Office and/or ETB sanctioning the travel as essential having regard to the provisions of recent Government announcements and this clarification,

or
- 2b. A personalised letter from any host State Agency which a youth worker might be assisting in the provision of an essential health and social care service (e.g. Tusla, HSE, An Garda Síochána)

Thank you again for your important and valued work in the interests of young people across Ireland and, above all, for helping our young people through these difficult times.

Yours sincerely,

Laura McGarrigle
Assistant Secretary General
Youth, Youth Justice, Adoption & Participation
3rd April, 2020