

Garda Vetting Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline procedures and responsibilities relating to the vetting of all Board of Management, Sub-committee members, staff (including CE, TUS, Rural Social Scheme and Internship participants), volunteers, and students working or volunteering in Listowel Family Resource Centre Ltd. and its related activities.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all Board of Management, Sub-Committee members, Staff, CE participants, TUS participants, Internships, Rural Social Scheme participants, Students*, volunteers who have been offered a job/placement or volunteering with Listowel FRC.

3. Responsibility

Garda Vetting Team

Manager (Listowel FRC Designated Garda Vetting Officer)

Staffing Sub-Committee

Garda Vetting is carried out by Listowel FRC in order to ensure that the people using the different services of the project are protected from harm and to offer reassurance to our different funders that the board and management have put in place all necessary safety procedures to comply with children first guidelines as well as ensuring best practices in all the work of the project.

4. Authorised Signatory

National Forum of FRCs,
Garda Vetting,
Ballymote Family Resource Centre,
Wolfe Tone Street,
Ballymote,
Co. Sligo

& Manager of Listowel FRC

5. Garda Vetting/Police Checks

If an applicant has lived outside of the Republic of Ireland past the age of 16 years and for more than 6 consecutive months, then a police check from this/those countries is required. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide this **prior** to commencing with Listowel FRC. Applicants can contact the relevant Embassy for advice as to how to obtain the police checks.

6. Frequency of Garda Vetting

All Board of Management and Sub- committee members, staff, volunteers will be required to undergo Garda Vetting every 3 years.

7. Involvement with Listowel FRC without Garda Clearance:

In exceptional cases it may be decided to allow an applicant to proceed with their involvement with Listowel FRC prior to the Garda Vetting procedure being complete.

In such cases the decision should be informed by the following:

- A minimum of 2 professional reference checks- validated by a Senior staff member,
- Acknowledgement from previous employer that Garda Vetting was carried out & that nothing was disclosed/reported,
- Local knowledge of the applicant, which may include a conversation between the Manager and local/relevant Garda Station,
- The ability to work under close supervision from a senior staff member,
- No unsupervised access to children and vulnerable/elderly adults.

****Students:** all students must be Garda Vetted by their education institute. The outcome must be communicated to the Manager of Listowel FRC in writing **prior** to student being accepted on placement. If a disclosure is reported then Listowel FRC will follow its risk assessment procedures as outlined below.*

8. Procedure

<p>Any person interested in applying for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the BOM and sub-committees • A staff position • A work placement • A CE/RSS/TUS/Internship position • A voluntary position <p>needs to make an application in writing to the relevant personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair, • Manager, • Community Development Co-ordinator, • Children’s Centre Leader, • Facilities Co-ordinator, • Parent Support Worker, • Administrator
<p>The request will be considered by the appropriate member of staff/management representative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment committee • Manager • Leadership Team*

<p>If the candidate is found to be suitable for the identified position or voluntary role, they will be called for an informal or formal interview. The candidate will be informed that Garda Vetting will be required if they are offered a position.</p> <p>At this point they may be asked to fill in a Garda Vetting form.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Committee • Manager • Member of Leadership Team
<p>At interview stage they will be required to provide two current references and photographic ID as well as handing in their completed garda vetting form including any out of country police vetting that will be required. If the candidate is successful at the interview stage, references will be checked, both orally and in writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Committee • Manager • Member of Leadership Team
<p>If positive references are obtained, the candidate may be offered position.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Committee • Manager • Member of Leadership Team
<p>The candidate will be given an offer letter stating the position is offered pending outcome of the Garda Vetting and checking of police clearances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Committee • Manager • Member of Leadership Team
<p>If the candidate accepts offer of a position, they will be required to complete Garda Vetting Application Form, if not previously completely and submitted.</p> <p>They will be advised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the importance of full disclosure on the Garda Vetting Application Form; • That any omissions or false statements on the Garda Vetting Application Form will be deemed a serious matter by Listowel FRC and may result in them not being offered a position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant • Manager • Member of Leadership Team
<p>Once completed the Vetting Form will be processed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager

<p>If an applicant self declares one of the offences listed below (Appendix 1) which automatically disbars a candidate, then the Manager will inform the applicant in writing that his/her application is refused.</p> <p>If an applicant self declares any other offences then these are reviewed against the criteria set out by the Garda Vetting Committee, if deemed necessary the Manager will consult with the Garda Vetting Committee and/or Authorised Signature.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager • Manager
<p>If the Garda Vetting Committee or the Manager deem it necessary they will set up a meeting with the candidate to discuss the offence(s) and circumstances. A Risk Assessment will be carried out. (Appendix 2) Depending on the outcome of the meeting and the Risk Assessment the Committee will either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer position to candidate – pending outcome of Garda Vetting Application • Decline application • Make recommendations for future investigations. <p>A record of the meeting will be kept. (Appendix 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garda Vetting Committee
<p>If applicant is to be offered a position with the organisation the Manager will process the Garda Vetting Application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager
<p>If an offence that automatically disbars an applicant is reported the Manager will notify the applicant and the Garda Vetting Committee.</p> <p>If an offence is identified through the Garda Vetting process that has not been disclosed by the applicant but is not deemed to automatically disbar the applicant this will be brought to the Garda Vetting Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager
<p>A meeting will be set up with the Garda Vetting Committee and the applicant to discuss the circumstances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garda Vetting Committee
<p>A risk Assessment will be carried out – depending on the outcome the applicant will either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be disciplined • Be dismissed immediately • Be allowed to continue with in their position • Be allowed to continue with their position with conditions attached. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garda Vetting Committee

<p>Once Garda Vetting Process is complete the applicant will receive a letter advising them of the outcome. A copy of this letter will also be placed in the Employee/Student/Volunteer file.</p> <p>This letter will also be shown to Pre-School Inspection Team and any other body that requires such clearances as and when requested by same.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager • Children’s Centre Leader • Manager
<p>If a staff member who has already undergone Garda vetting and is in a role with in the FRC commits an offence which may lead to a court appearance then they should inform the Manager of the project as soon as possible and appropriate precautions can be put in place to protect the worker / volunteer and the Project. Failure to inform the Manager of such information may lead to disciplinary Action been taken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager
<p>If an applicant have previously worked/volunteered in another Family Resource Centre and was Garda vetted through that centre, the Manager of Listowel FRC will contact the Authorised Signature for a copy of the outcome of same.</p> <p>If disclosures are reported the applicant may need to undergo a Risk Assessment by the Garda Vetting Committee of Listowel FRC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager • Garda Vetting committee

***Leadership Team:** Listowel FRC’s Leadership Team consists of the following senior staff:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| - Manager; | <i>Jackie Landers</i> |
| - Administrator & Deputy Manager: | <i>Claire Stack</i> |
| - Community Development Co-ordinator: | <i>Bridie Mulvihill</i> |
| - Parent Support Worker: | <i>Denis Robinson</i> |
| - Children’s Centre Leader: | <i>Jacqui Harteveld</i> |
| - Deputy Children’s Centre Leader: | <i>Patricia Lyons</i> |
| - Facilities Co-ordinator: | <i>Sylvia Hughes</i> |

This Policy has been ratified and adopted at a Board of Management meeting dated: _____

Signed: _____

Position: _____

APPENDIX 1

Categories of incidents on an applicant's record which will automatically disbar him/her for eligibility to being offered a position at Listowel FRC:

- Child abuse/child abduction
- Sexual Offence/abuse by an adult against another adult or child
- Abuse of a vulnerable adult

Examples of categories of incidents on an applicant's record which will most likely disbar him/her for eligibility to being offered a position at Listowel FRC. Each incident is considered on a case by case basis by the Garda Vetting Committee of Listowel FRC:

- Murder, manslaughter, infanticide;
- Dangerous driving causing death or serious injury
- Attacks on the elderly
- Assault causing serious harm
- Kidnapping/false imprisonment
- Syringe attack
- Stalking/harassment
- Aggravated burglary
- Current barring or restraining order.

Examples of categories of incidents on applicant's record which could disbar him/her for eligibility to being offered a position at Listowel FRC. Permission to being offered a position may be granted, or otherwise, on a case-by-case basis depending on the severity of the offence, time since the offence and criminal record in the intervening time:

- False or misleading information on any of the required forms;
- An unexplained omission on the Garda Vetting/declaration form;
- A criminal conviction on a property related crime i.e. robbery, handling stolen property etc.
- Drug offences
- Deceit/impersonation
- Public order offences
- Failure to comply with direction of Garda
- Road traffic accidents

Please note that above examples do not constitute a definitive list of categories of incidents on an applicant's record which could result in Listowel FRC refusing an application or terminating a current position

Appendix 2

Risk Management Assessment

Listowel FRC Garda Vetting Committee may recommend that a risk assessment be carried out in relation to a particular applicant. The Vetting Committee will be responsible for carrying out the Risk Assessment or may cede that responsibility to the Project Manager or the Authorised Signatory.

Contact with the Applicant

Applicants with an offence history will be dealt with on an individual basis and each applicant will be contacted by the Manager or Authorised Signatory by telephone or in writing in order to validate information received. The applicant will be informed in writing that Listowel FRC Vetting Committee has been advised by the Authorised Signatory that a conviction/s has been recorded against them. They will be informed of the exact nature of the conviction, as stated on the Garda Vetting form and the exact information they declared on the form.

The applicant will be asked for a written comment on the recorded convictions. If the candidate is disputing the record they must do so in writing to the Manager and/or Authorised Signature within 10 days. The situation will be reviewed by the Garda Vetting team and if they deem it appropriate the person may be allowed to work under close supervision until the matter is resolved.

Applicants will be advised that failure to reply within 10 days of the telephone conversation or letter will result in their position being withdrawn.

The candidate will be informed that the Garda Vetting Committee has decided that a Risk Management Assessment is required in order to make a determination as the suitability of the candidate for a position applied for.

Risk Assessment

The risk will be assessed in terms of the individual, the offence and the work environment that an applicant may be assigned to. In carrying out this assessment the following factors, in addition to other relevant case specific concerns, should be considered and documented in support of the recommendation.

The assessment should consider the following, in addition to other relevant case specific concerns:

- The seriousness of the offence and its relevance to the safety of other employees, volunteers, students, centre users.
- The length of time since the offence occurred and the age of the applicant at the time of the offence;
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offence was committed, making re-offending less likely;
- The degree of remorse, or otherwise, expressed by the applicant and their motivation to change;

- Work/other relevant history since the offence;
- Does the work placement involve one-to-one contact with children or vulnerable adults
- What level of supervision will the individual have during their work placement
- Does the work placement involve any direct responsibility for finance, driving, items of value or tasks that may relate to the conviction / offence?
- Will the nature of the work placement present any realistic opportunity for the applicant to re-offend
- Is the post such that employing the person with this conviction would seriously undermine public confidence in Listowel FRC.

Recommendation Following Risk Assessment

Following this assessment the Garda Vetting Committee will complete a Risk Assessment form (see appendix 3). They will consider the report and decide either that the applicant may proceed to work or otherwise.

APPENDIX 3

Listowel Family Resource Centre Ltd.
RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Applicant's Name	
Position Applied For	

Information provided by the applicant and the Garda Centre Vetting Unit

Offence Date	Offence type	Court	Result

Additional Information provided by applicant in relation to the recorded convictions:

Listowel Family Resource Centre Ltd.

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM Page 2

Factors taken into account by the Garda Vetting Committee in arriving at its recommendations:

Recommendations following risk assessment:

Recommended for placement

Recommended for placement with conditions*

Not suitable for placement

*Conditions:

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____