

Safeguarding Ireland - Response to Grace Report **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/115356>)**

Grace Report – Safeguarding Ireland calls for implementation of Law Reform Commission report on Adult Safeguarding

Safeguarding Ireland calls for

- Implementation of Law Reform Commission report on Adult Safeguarding
- Establishment of an independent National Safeguarding Authority

Responding to the findings of the Grace Report, Safeguarding Ireland has called for urgent progress on a Regulatory Framework for Adult Safeguarding and the establishment of a National Safeguarding Authority.

The umbrella body – which works with national 40 organisations across the health, social, justice and financial sectors – called for implementation of the recommendations of the Law Reform Commission (LRC) Report on a Regulatory Framework for Adult Safeguarding (<https://www.lawreform.ie/news/the-law-reform-commission-publishes-report-on-a-regulatory-framework-for-adult-safeguarding.1141.html>) (April 2024) to include:

- An interdepartmental / interagency working group to coordinate progress towards enactment of the Statutory Framework
- Introduction of safeguarding orders and warrants for access to a relevant premises including a private dwelling, removal and transfer orders, no-contact orders and the need in exercising any such powers for the least intrusive means possible to be used
- Statutory obligation and permission for information sharing between agencies both public and private where there is a safeguarding concern and publication of regulations under the Data Protection Act regarding special categories of personal data for reasons of public interest of safeguarding
- A strengthened role for State Payments providers and the Department of Social Protection in preventing and addressing financial abuse
- Additional functions for HIQA, the Mental Health Commission, the Policing and Community Safety Authority and the Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Community Safety Authority, and that health care assistants and support assistants are regulated
- Broaden the offence of Coercive Control to apply to all persons beyond intimate partner relationships, and the introduction of new criminal offences including coercive exploitation and offences of abuse, neglect, ill-treatment and serious harm.

The LRC Report also includes two draft Bills, the Adult Safeguarding Bill 2024 and the Criminal Law (Adult Safeguarding) Bill 2024, and Safeguarding Ireland specifically urged that these Bills progress.

Chairperson Patricia Rickard-Clarke said the findings of the Grace Report have shown the need for action to strengthen adult safeguarding.

“Safeguarding Ireland calls on the Government to ensure progress towards a legal Framework for Adult Safeguarding. This must include safeguarding legislation with clear reporting obligations, the taking of safeguarding action and the interventions to include access to premises, the removal and transfer of a person to a place of safety, powers of inspection and information gathering.”

“We have called since 2017 (when an Adult Safeguarding Bill was introduced in the Oireachtas) for the enactment of adult safeguarding legislation. The all-party Health Commission in 2018 stated that this legislation was an urgent matter.”

Safeguarding Ireland also urged the establishment of a new and fully independent National Safeguarding Authority equipped with legislation and proper powers.

Ms Rickard-Clarke welcomed the Central Bank’s recent revised Consumer Protection Code and Regulations which imposed accountability obligations on financial service providers to prevent abuse and identify financial exploitation. “We now need similar obligations on State Payments providers and the Department of Social Protection, particularly in relation to the oversight of agency arrangements, which arose in the Grace Report.”

More information at www.safeguardingireland.org (<http://www.safeguardingireland.org>) .

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Region

Nationwide

More information (<https://safeguardingireland.org/>)

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