

**Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF) – Guidance Notes – November 2017:**

The term retrospective abuse refers to abuse that an adult experienced that took place during their childhood. In terms of retrospective abuse, a report needs to be made to Tusla where there may be a current or potential risk to children from the person against whom there is an allegation.

Retrospective abuse is also known as historic(al) abuse.

This report form is for use by:

- An adult who is disclosing childhood abuse
- Any professional, individual or group involved in services dealing with adults who are attending counselling, psychotherapy, and or any type of emotional wellbeing or support services.
- Any professional, individual or group involved in adult health or mental health or other relevant services
- Any professional, individual, service involved with caring for children and young people in the community
- Professionals and individuals involved in the provision of child protection and welfare related services in the community who have service contracts with Tusla.
- Mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015, as specified in Schedule 2 of the Act.
- Designated Liaison Persons in any organisation.

Section 4 of this Form allows for people/professionals (known as Third Party) to make a report on behalf of another person (so called ‘adult complainant’). In this section, you must indicate whether the report is a mandated report and, if so, your category of profession under "Mandated Person's Type".

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. This will assist Tusla and the Social Work Department in screening the report, assessing the level of risk and when necessary in assigning a priority status to the case. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate this by putting a line through the question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.

Tusla aims to work in partnership with adult complainants, persons subject to abuse allegations, parents and others. If you are making this report in confidence, you should note that Tusla cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality for the following reasons:

- A Court could order the information be disclosed.
- Under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003, the Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed.
- Any individual against whom allegations of abuse are made has a right to fair procedures; however at times this right may need to be secondary to the protection of children at risk. The right to fair procedure applies equally to adults, adolescents and children who have allegations made against them.

You should also note that in making a ‘bona fide report’, you are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998.

**Consideration must also be given to responsibilities under the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, which are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015 or Children First: National Guidance.**

If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the Tusla duty social worker and discuss your concerns with them (see <http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/> for local contact details).

An MSWord version of the Retrospective Abuse Report Form may be accessed at <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/>.