

**ALTERNATIVE
CARE**
INSPECTION &
MONITORING

Alternative Care Inspection & Monitoring Service Regulatory Notice (Revised)

Title	Minimal Staffing Level & Qualifications for Registration Children's Residential Centres for the first time.
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1. Background & Statement of Intent

Children's Residential Centre (CRC) providers are responsible for the organisation and management of their workforce to ensure that staff have the required skills, experience, and competencies to respond to the needs of the children in their care.

The purpose of this regulatory notice is to confirm the **minimum requirements** that the Child & Family Agency requires to meet levels and qualification requirements¹ of staff for the purposes of the first application to register a centre pursuant to Part VIII, Section 60, Childcare Act 1991.

2. Revocation

This notice will replace the “**Minimum staffing levels & Qualification requirements Children's Residential Centres**” regulatory notice issued to the sector in June 2023.

The staffing levels and qualifications identified in this document are devised to support registered providers to meet their requirements under the following regulatory framework.

3. Legal framework

SI 397 of 1996 – Childcare (Standards in Children's Residential Centres) Regulations, Article 7: Staffing

The registered proprietor and person in charge of a centre shall satisfy the relevant health board that the number, qualifications, experience, and availability of members of the staff of the centre are adequate having regard to the number of children residing in the centre and the nature of their needs.

4. Registration Thresholds

The requirements outlined in this regulatory notice will be effective immediately for:

All applications to register a new children's residential centre for the first time.

Registered providers of CRC's are required to submit the application to register a centre for the first time in line with the minimum staffing levels and qualifications as outlined in the [Staffing Levels & Qualifications for Registration of Children's Residential Centres \(Part VIII, Child Care Act 1991\) Guidance](#).

Please note that providers that have contractual arrangements with Tusla to commission placements for children/young people may be required to meet additional requirements in excess of those set down under regulation.

New Centre Application Manager and staffing Qualifications for first registration.

¹Informed by the Childcare (Standards in Children's Residential Centres) Regulations, 1996 and the National Standards for Children's Residential Centres 2018.

Centre Manager Qualifications and Staffing Qualifications and Experience as per the [Staffing Levels & Qualifications for Registration of Children's Residential Centres \(Part VIII, Child Care Act 1991\) Guidance](#)

Table below sets down the **minimum** whole time equivalent posts required for the first registration application of a centre.

Manager	1
No. of WTE upon <u>first</u> registering a centre.	8

- Additional staff may be required if deemed appropriate (a) to meet the presenting needs of the children/young people (b) to meet the purpose and function of the centre.
- The minimal staffing requirement for registration purposes may not equate with contractual agreements which may be higher and should not be purported to do so.
- Other than in emergencies centre managers should not form part of the usual shift roster.

Renewal of Registration

Once registered for the first time the provider must continue to demonstrate that the centre's staffing cohort is sufficient to always provide double cover, is in compliance with the Working Time Act 1997 and is able to meet the requirements of the centres stated purpose and function.

5. Duties of the Provider

The content of this regulatory notice sets out the required staffing levels for the first registration of a children's residential centre Pursuant to Part VIII, of the Child Care Act 1991. The agency shall not be bound by this notice where it forms a view that the staffing cohort as presented upon registration application is considered unsuitable for the stated or proposed purpose and function of a children's residential centre.

Providers must register their centres in accordance with prescribed registration protocols (including pilot programmes) which are in operation. These are published and communicated to the sector. This regulatory notice governs the registration of any non-statutory children's residential centres other than those which were registered under existing pilot protocols². Pilot protocols can be created to introduce different criteria for different centres purpose and function depending on presenting needs in the sector or alternatively to test the viability of alternative proposals to meet their regulatory requirements

² Protocols remain in place until such time as revoked by the Child & Family Agency. The relevant applicable protocol will be advised at the time of application for registration. Those currently in place are for Supported Accommodation Settings (16–18-year-olds, Rapid Access Centres, and Separated Children seeking International Protection Centres (SCSIP).