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Approved by Tusla Crisis Management Team – COVID-19

Guidance for staff on transporting a young person in Children’s Residential Centre during the COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction

In general, residential staff use centre vehicles to facilitate young people to attend school, leisure and sporting activities, outings with staff and access with family. However, within the current COVID-19 restrictions, transportation of young people should only take place once risk assessed and should be in compliance with Public Health guidance and recommendations.

All driving activity takes place within the context of the centres’ Site Specific Safety Statement and the Agency’s Driving for Work Procedure (2014), which incorporates aspects such as driving safely, roles and responsibilities, legislation and risk assessment.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide residential staff with updated guidance regarding the transportation of young people during the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of evolving public health advisories.

2.0 Scope

This guidance applies to staff who work in children’s residential centres and who drive centre provided vehicles.

3.0 Procedure

3.1 In line with the Driving for Work procedure, the journey should be risk assessed to identify hazards and the risks associated with it.

- 3.2 Transporting a young person during the COVID-19 pandemic should only take place in accordance with Public Health guidance. Where staff are transporting young people over long distances, they should take regular breaks and aerate the car by opening the doors and windows, allowing fresh air to circulate.
- 3.4 Staff should have the centre mobile telephone in case of emergencies, while driving.
- 3.5 Where a centre vehicle is fitted with a safety screen protection, young people should sit in the back of the car.
- 3.6 In order to comply with public health guidance, face coverings should be worn by staff and young people while travelling in the car for the duration of the journey.
- 3.7 Where screens are fitted and one young person is being transported by one staff member, it is not necessary to wear a face covering/mask. In excess of one staff member and/or young person(s), face coverings/masks must be worn.
- 3.8 Air conditioning or ventilation in vehicles should ideally not be used during the journey or should be set to extract only and not re-circulate the air within the vehicle.
- 3.9 Once returned to the centre, where a face covering has been used, it should be disposed of as per instructions at paragraph 4.11.9
- 3.10 Where it is suspected or confirmed that a young person has tested positive for COVID-19, staff must adhere to the guidelines for using PPE in accordance with the Tusla COVID-19 PPE guidance document when transporting the young person in the car provided by the centre.
- 3.11 The vehicle should be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly after each journey. (See Appendix 1 for Car cleaning guidance checklist).
 - 3.11.1 Staff should wear appropriate PPE in accordance with Tusla COVID-19 PPE guidance document (see above link).
 - 3.11.2 The car should not be disinfected or cleaned for one hour after use to allow any particles in the air to settle.
 - 3.11.3 Staff should ensure the car is well ventilated prior to and during the cleaning and disinfecting process.
 - 3.11.4 All surfaces should firstly be cleaned using detergent and hot water and subsequently disinfected with the appropriate disinfecting product (liquid or wipe).
 - 3.11.5 Staff should clean and disinfect all regular touch point hard surfaces in the vehicle, as per Appendix 1.
 - 3.11.6 For soft (porous) surfaces such as car seats, seatbelts etc. (see Appendix 1), these should be cleaned with disinfectant spray, by rubbing the surface down. Porous surfaces should not be soaked and sufficient time should be allowed to pass for the surface to dry before reusing the car.
 - 3.11.7 When the vehicle has been cleaned and disinfected staff should wash their hands thoroughly in accordance with HSE guidance.
 - 3.11.8 Any waste from the cleaning and disinfecting process should be disposed of in accordance with paragraph 4.11.9.

- 3.11.9 PPE should be disposed of in line with Health Surveillance Protection Centre Guidance (HSPC). PPE waste must be disposed of as follows:
 - 3.11.9.1 When the staff member removes PPE it should first be placed into a bag.
 - 3.11.9.2 When all applicable waste has been placed into the bag, the last person to use it should tie it closed while wearing gloves – that is, knot the bag at the neck and place it into a second bag.
 - 3.11.9.3 The bags should not be squeezed or the contents squashed.
 - 3.11.9.4 The bags should be removed and stored in a safe location and staff advised accordingly.
 - 3.11.9.5 Disposal routes for waste:
 - 3.11.9.5.1 If it is confirmed COVID-19 is not present, the bags can be disposed of in the normal waste system.
 - 3.11.9.5.2 If it has been confirmed that COVID-19 is present, and where a clinical waste stream is not available, waste should be double bagged and left for 72 hours in a secure place and placed in the domestic waste stream.
https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/CMT-AD-18-2020_COVID-19_PPE_Guidance_Note_V1.3_2020-06-16_.pdf

4.0 Review and Audit

This document will be subject to ongoing review as new information becomes available.

5.0 References

Tusla Driving for Work Procedure (2014)

Tusla PPE Guidance (2020)

Tusla's Site Specific Safety Statement

HSE/HSPC, Current recommendations for the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the management of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 (V1.0 March 2020)

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Car cleaning checklist

Appendix 1

Car cleaning checklist

- Driver's seat
 - Steering wheel, including horn and infotainment controls
 - Control stalks
 - Ignition and power button
 - Keys
- Dashboard
 - Air vents – passenger and central
 - Gear stick
 - Infotainment/radio
 - Heating controls
- All seats
 - Seatbelts and clips
 - Seat adjust controls
 - Head rests
 - Seat pockets
- Roof and doors
 - Door handles and releases
 - Door pocket
 - Window switches
 - Interior lights
 - Grab handles
- Boot
 - Parcel shelf
 - Boot floor tab
- Other
 - Glove box and log-book
 - Central storage
 - Cup holders
 - Bonnet release lever