

**TÚSLA**

An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

**People & Change  
Directorate**

# **Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct**

| Version | Author                            | Date       | Date for review |
|---------|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| V2.0    | TdeB, People & Change Directorate | 09/11/2023 | 09/11/2025      |

## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Joint Address: Chair and CEO</b> .....                                      | 2  |
| <b>1. Purpose and Scope</b> .....  | 3  |
| <b>2. Context: Legislation &amp; Tusla Vision, Mission &amp; Values</b> .....  | 4  |
| <b>2.1 Legislative Context</b> .....   | 4  |
| <b>2.2 Tusla Vision, Mission, Values &amp; Behaviours</b> .....                | 4  |
| <b>3: Application of the Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct</b> .....  | 5  |
| <b>4: Standards of Integrity</b> .....   | 6  |
| <b>Integrity – Ethics, including Professional Ethics</b> .....                 | 6  |
| <b>Political Activity</b> .....  | 7  |
| <b>5: Code of Conduct</b> .....  | 8  |
| <b>5.1 Code of Conduct – All Tusla Employees</b> .....                         | 8  |
| <b>5.2 Code of Conduct – Additional Duties for Regulated Professions</b> ..... | 11 |
| <b>Appendix 1</b> .....  | 12 |
| <b>Tusla Corporate Plan 2021-2023</b> .....                                    | 12 |
| <b>Professional Registration Bodies</b> .....                                  | 12 |
| <b>Tusla Legislative Requirements</b> .....                                    | 12 |

# Joint Address: Chair and CEO

On behalf of the Board and the Executive of the Child and Family Agency (Tusla), we welcome the introduction of the Agency's Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct, which reflect Tusla's Vision, Mission & Values.

Respect, Kindness, Trust, and Empowerment are at the core of what we do. These Standards of Integrity and Code of Ethics promotes these values, the standards to be upheld and lived by each Tusla employee, in their engagements with all who use our services. By adhering to these principles, we can be assured that we are undertaking our duties and responsibilities in a professional, empathetic, and ethical manner, to protect service users and colleagues, and to provide high quality, safe services.

In behaving with integrity and upholding a moral standard of conduct, both professionally and personally, we build trust with service users and the public that Tusla employees place appropriate ethical behaviour and conduct over any self-interest, respecting the rights, diversity, equality, and dignity of all individuals.

This plan is available on our website, at [www.tusla.ie/publications](http://www.tusla.ie/publications) .

**Pat Rabbitte**  
**Chairperson**

**Kate Duggan**  
**CEO**

# 1. Purpose and Scope

This Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct outlines the standards to be upheld and demonstrated by each Tusla employee in performing their functions and role within Tusla - Child and Family Agency.

This Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct:

- Applies to all employees of Tusla - Child and Family Agency. Each employee must ensure they read, understand and comply with this Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct.
- Forms part of each employee's contract of employment. Each employee is required to have regard to and be guided by the code in performing their functions and role in Tusla - Child and Family Agency.
- Describes the behaviours each employee should demonstrate in the course of their work, in their engagement with children and families and with fellow colleagues.

## Funded Agency Employees

Employees of agencies funded by the Child and Family Agency and those engaged in any capacity to provide services or advice to, or on behalf of the Child and Family Agency and its funded agencies on a consulting basis, are also expected to meet the standards set out in this Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct.

## Professional Registration Obligations

Those employed in a professional role in the Agency who require professional registration to carry out that role must also adhere to the identified code of professional conduct, ethics, and standards of performance for the relevant Registration Body e.g., CORU, ACCA, CIMA, Bord Altranais agus Cnáimhscechais na hÉireann (NMBI), (see Appendix 1)

## 2. Context: Legislation & Tusla Vision, Mission & Values

### 2.1 Legislative Context

This Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct has been developed with reference to:

- a. The Child and Family Agency Act 2013

Tusla Child and Family Agency was established on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 under the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 and provides a range of services to families and children in Ireland. The Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct for Tusla - Child and Family Agency is being updated in accordance with Part 5 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013, Section 36.

- b. The Ethics in Public Acts 1995 and 2001

- c. Domestic & international legislative obligations and statutory obligations

Tusla operates within a framework of extensive domestic and international legislative obligations and statutory obligations (Ref: [Appendix 1](#)). These pieces of legislation place comprehensive responsibilities on the Agency and directly impact the provision of Tusla services.

The Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct has been drafted in line with these legislative and statutory obligations.

### 2.2 Tusla Vision, Mission, Values & Behaviours

Tusla Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct reflect and support the Vision, Mission, Values (& associated Behaviours) of the Agency as outlined in the Tusla Corporate Plan 2021-2023.

(Ref: Tusla Corporate Plan 2021- 2023 [Appendix 1](#))

## 3: Application of the Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct

The provisions of the Tusla - Child and Family Agency Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct relate to:

- Employees directly employed, whether in a permanent or temporary capacity (as defined under Section 53 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013).
- Employees of agencies funded by the Tusla - Child and Family Agency
- Those engaged in any capacity to provide services or advice to, or on behalf of the Tusla - Child and Family Agency and its funded agencies on a consulting basis are also expected to meet the standards set out in this Code and Standard.

### Contractual obligations

- The Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct forms part of the terms and conditions of employment of all Tusla employees.
- Employees are expected to always comply with the Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct.
- The Standard of Integrity and Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with Tusla's Employee Handbook.
- Breaches of this Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary proceedings being initiated in accordance with the agreed disciplinary procedures.

Employees can obtain clarification on any aspect of this Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct from their line manager or their HR Department.

## 4: Standards of Integrity

Standards of Integrity in Tusla refer to the practice of maintaining appropriate ethical behaviour in employee conduct, work ethic and communication practices. It is personal and professional practice which reflects strong adherence to moral and ethical principles and the values of Tusla - Child and Family Agency.

Employees who behave with professional integrity and uphold a moral standard of conduct, both professionally and personally, demonstrate commitment to Tusla's vision mission and values. This gives service users and fellow colleagues a reason to trust that our employees always place appropriate ethical behaviour and conduct over any self-interest.

### Integrity – Ethics, including Professional Ethics

As an employee of Tusla - Child and Family Agency you must always maintain a high standard of integrity and ethics and demonstrate your ethical awareness.

#### **As a Tusla employee you are obliged to:**

- Carry out your duties and responsibilities in a professional and ethical way to protect service users, the public, colleagues, and the Agency.
- Always behave with integrity and honesty.
- Ensure you read, understand, and comply with this Standards of Integrity and Code of Conduct.
- Ensure you understand this Standard of Integrity and Code of Ethics and adhere to its principles in your daily work activity. If there is a conflict between your daily work activity and this Standards and Code, your obligation is to this Standard of Integrity and Code of Ethics.
- Return the annual Ethics in Public Office statement and understand the Ethics in Public Office legislation where you hold a Grade VIII salary or above or equivalent.
- Complete the annual Controls Assurance Survey where applicable and understand the Agency's Fraud Policy.
- Ensure the efficient and effective use of resources and their appropriate allocation, whilst balancing the duty of care to service users.

#### **Additional specific obligations:**

- As an employee you may, in your role as a trade union representative, make a statement in that capacity, but must ensure that such a statement is not presented as official comment as an employee or on behalf of the Tusla - Child and Family Agency.
- Employees who are convicted of criminal offences or given the benefit of the Probation Act when tried for a criminal offence, must report that fact to Tusla - Child and Family Agency. The employee must make such a report to their line manager (who, in turn, will advise Human Resources).
- Employees who are professionally registered must adhere to the Code of Ethics of the relevant registration body.

## Political Activity

- Employees must carry out their duties in a party-political neutral manner. Public political activities should not, under any circumstances, be undertaken in paid Tusla - Child and Family Agency hours by any employee.
- Employees should ensure that views expressed by them, or actions taken related to their public political activities are presented in a manner which is clear, and which could not be mis-interpreted as official comment on behalf of Tusla - Child and Family Agency, and that they are their own or those of the political organisation they are representing. Neither should such views or actions compromise their duty as an employee to Tusla - Child and Family Agency.
- Employees cannot be a member of either House of the Oireachtas or the European Parliament or regarded pursuant to Section 19 of the European Parliament Elections Act, 1997 as having been elected to the European Parliament to fill a vacancy (Section 53, subsection 4).
- An employee who is or becomes a member of either House of the Oireachtas, the European Parliament or a local authority is not eligible for appointment as a board member or Chief Executive Officer.
- In addition, a member of either House of the Oireachtas or the European Parliament is not eligible for appointment as an employee of the Child and Family Agency (Section 53, subsection 4 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013).



## 5: Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct clearly outlines expectations around employee behaviour within Tusla - Child and Family Agency. The Code reflects the standards that employees are required to meet. The Code outlines what is expected of employees in their role & responsibility to provide high quality integrated services to the children, families and young people we serve. Each employee in Tusla must maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct in their interactions with colleagues, clients, and service users at all times.

### 5.1 Code of Conduct – All Tusla Employees

#### **Performance obligations**

To deliver high-quality, effective services, Tusla employees individually and collectively must always seek to uphold the highest standards in the performance of their role/responsibilities and their professional practice.

#### **As an employee of Tusla you must:**

- Maintain high standards of personal conduct and behaviour.
- Maintain high standards of service in all dealings with service users, staff colleagues and the public.
- Respect the rights, diversity, equality, and dignity of all individuals.
- Be impartial in the performance of your duties.
- Conduct yourself in a manner that enhances service user, colleague and public confidence in you, your profession, and the Agency.
- Respect the roles and expertise of other professionals.
- Work collaboratively and in partnership with colleagues and managers.
- Assist, advise and support colleagues and managers as required and in accordance with your job specification.
- Be aware of the duties and responsibilities as outlined in the job specification for your role.
- Obey laws, regulations, and guidelines.
- Adhere to the Agency's Managing Attendance Policy.
- Adhere to and understand all policies as relates to your employment and role e.g., operational polices, HR Policies, ICT polices, Financial Regulations, (this is not an exhaustive list).
- Maintain professional boundaries in the use of all social media and avoid any conflict of interest.
- Be respectful in your all your communications with services users and colleagues.

### **As an employee of Tusla you must not:**

- Harm abuse or neglect service users or colleagues.
- Use your professional position for a relationship of a sexual, inappropriate emotional or exploitative nature with any person.
- Use exploit or discriminate against service users, colleagues in the workplace, or condone discrimination by others.
- Behave in a way that could call into question your suitability to work in your role and profession.
- Work while under the influence of any substance which may impair your fitness to work or practise.
- Use social media in a way that would breach any of the obligations under this Standard and Code.
- Discuss or comment on service users on social media platforms.

## **Personal Wellbeing Obligations**

### **As an employee you must ensure:**

- You look after your physical, emotional, and psychological health and consult with an appropriate professional if your judgement or performance is or may be adversely affected by illness, addiction, emotional distress, or medication. You must follow their advice to avoid harm to service users, yourself, and colleagues.
- You must limit your practice or stop practicing if your performance or health could have a negative effect on your work or service users. If any illness is affecting the performance of your duties, you should access Tusla Employee Health and Well-being Supports and advise your line manager, who will provide support to you through appropriate channels.

## **Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Obligations**

### **As an employee you must ensure you:**

- Follow risk assessment policies and procedures to assess potential risks in the workplace and the area of practice, and take any steps needed to minimise reduce or eliminate risks identified.
- Inform colleagues and any relevant person(s) about the outcomes and implications of risk assessments.
- Read, understand, and comply with the Agency's safety statement.
- Where in your professional judgement a service user poses a risk to their own safety, your safety, or the safety of others you must take appropriate measures to protect yourself. This may require you to make a decision whether or not to proceed with the planned appointment, intervention, treatment or service at that time.

## Legislation

### **As an employee you must ensure:**

- You know and work within the law, regulations and guidelines governing your role and keep up to date with any changes in legislation, regulation, or guidelines.

## Confidentiality & Data Protection Obligations and Rights

### **As an employee you must ensure the following:**

- You owe a duty of confidentiality to Tusla as set out in your contract of employment.
- You do not improperly collect, process, or disclose, during or following termination of employment, information gained in the course of their work, beyond what is expressly permitted within your normal duty.
- Your duty of confidentiality does not end when you leave the workplace; employees will continue to respect the confidentiality of information even after their departure. These requirements in relation to confidentiality will also apply upon retirement/resignation. This does not preclude the rights of employees under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.
- Read, understand and comply with The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 (the Acts) and all statutory instruments issued pursuant to the Acts, the Data Sharing and Governance Act 2018 (together ‘the Rules’), which gives individuals about whom we process personal data (to include special categories of personal data), including, but not limited to, our Service Recipients and Employees, specific legal rights relating to how we process that data. These Rules place responsibility on Tusla to collect and process only the personal data needed to perform its functions, to keep personal data safe and secure, to maintain accurate and up-to-date records relating to personal data, and to give people access to, and where required control over, their personal data.
- Comply with Tusla’s Data Protection Policy and the relevant requirements (including the requirements relating to mandatory training) referred to in the Tusla Employee Handbook and the contract of employment. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary procedures being initiated in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Keep clear, accurate and up-to-date records in line with the established policies and legislation, including Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

## 5.2 Code of Conduct – Additional Duties for Regulated Professions

**As a professionally regulated employee you must ensure that you:**

- Understand and comply with the Code of Ethics as pertains to your own regulated profession.
- Are registered with the relevant professional registration body as part of your role in the Agency, must comply with obligations regarding annual registration.
- Provide confirmation of annual Professional Registration to the Agency e.g., Annual CORU Registration.
- Ensure your knowledge, skills and performance are of a high standard, up to date and relevant to your role and practice.
- Participate in and maintain your Continuous Professional Development (CPD) relating to your role and profession.
- Participate in the support and guidance provided by your professional Registration Board regarding CPD.
- Retain a record of the CPD activities completed.

# Appendix 1

## Tusla Corporate Plan 2021-2023

Tusla Corporate Plan 2021 – 2023: <https://www.tusla.ie/publications/corporate-plan-2021-2023/>

## Professional Registration Bodies

CORU - Regulating Health & Social Care Professionals: <https://www.coru.ie/>

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA):  
<https://www.accaglobal.com/ie/en.html>

Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA): <https://www.cimaglobal.com/>

Bord Altranais agus Cnáimhscechais na hÉireann (NMBI):  
<https://www.nmbi.ie/Home.aspx>

Psychologists Registration Board: <https://www.coru.ie/>

Physiotherapists Registration Board: <https://www.coru.ie/>

## Tusla Legislative Requirements

[The Child Care Act 1991](#)

[The Children's First Act 2015](#)

[The Education \(Welfare\) Act 2000](#)

[The Child and Family Agency Act 2013](#)

[Adoption Act 2010](#)

[Adoption \(Amendment\) Act 2017](#)

[Aftercare Legislation](#)

[Domestic Violence Legislation](#)

[UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

# TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

[www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)