



St John Ambulance Ireland clg  
**Garda Vetting Policy and Procedure**

Issued 1 July 2025

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# Related documents

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Child Safeguarding Statement

Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Code of Behaviour: For personnel working with children and young people

Child Safeguarding Information & Training Strategy

Procedure for Implementation, Monitoring & Review of Child Safeguarding Procedures

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## Revision Schedule

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Revision	Date	Description
1	13/01/2025	New Procedure Document
2	01/07/2025	New Procedure Document

# Our Vision

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To come together on a volunteer basis to provide the highest professional standards of prehospital and related care and training in the community at local, regional and national level in a professionally run, volunteer-based, organisation.

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# Contents

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1. Introduction .....	5
2. Statement of Commitment.....	6
3. Purpose .....	7
4. Scope .....	8
5. Glossary of Key Terms .....	9
6. Key Roles and Responsibilities.....	12
7. Garda Vetting Procedure .....	14
8. Vetting Subjects currently residing outside the island of Ireland .....	19
9. Vetting Subjects who have resided outside of Ireland .....	20
10. Criminal Records/Specified Information existing after a Vetting Disclosure .....	22
11. Expired Vetting .....	23
12. Re-Vetting Procedure.....	24
13. Review of Vetting Disclosures and Police Certificates of Character.....	25
14. Data Protection.....	27
15. Governance and Compliance.....	28
16. Implementation and Review.....	29
Appendix 1 .....	30
Appendix 2.....	33

# 1. Introduction

St John Ambulance Ireland is a National Volunteer Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Service provider and training institute, with local Divisions currently in Dublin, Cork, Cavan, Kildare, Limerick, Louth, and Mayo. Our adult membership provides emergency care treatment and community care activities locally, regionally, and nationally. Our Cadets (members aged 10 to 17 years, inclusive) are organised in Cadet Divisions and, from time to time, assist our adult members in the provision of those services.

The services and activities we deliver to members of the public, including children and vulnerable persons, are organised and promoted by our dedicated volunteers with the support of our equally committed staff, and include:

- Provision of emergency treatment and community care services to children.
- Weekly training meetings for our Cadets in the provision of emergency care practice and community care activities, and participation in first aid competitions,
- Organising our Cadets to provide emergency care treatment at duties and community care activities alongside, and supervised by, our adult members.
- Social activities for our Cadets, including daytime outings, training days with other organisations, camping and other outdoor activities.

Some of our cadet activities (eg competitions and social outings) may entail overnight stays.

Accordingly, St John Ambulance Ireland is a relevant service as defined by the Children First Act 2015 and is required to prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement. Section 11 (3) of the Children First Act 2015 requires the Child Safeguarding Statement to specify the procedures in place for managing any identified risk to children and for the selection or recruitment of persons who are suitable to work with children. Garda Vetting is an integral element of those procedures, constituting Stage 4 of our Adult Volunteering Process.

Services provided by St John Ambulance Ireland constitute relevant work or activities as defined by the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012. It is a criminal offence to employ, contract or permit or any person to undertake such relevant work or activities without first receiving a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau.

This document provides policy, procedure, guidance and instruction on the vetting of St John Ambulance Ireland personnel.

## 2. Statement of Commitment

The safety and welfare of children, young people and other vulnerable persons is everyone's responsibility. St John Ambulance Ireland is committed to safeguarding from harm all children, young people and other vulnerable persons availing of our services and activities, and to recruiting/selecting only persons who we believe are suitable to undertake relevant work or activities with children, young people and/or vulnerable persons. We are committed to promoting the rights of all, in particular the child, including the right to participation of children, young people and other vulnerable persons in matters that affect them. It is our policy to:

- receive a Vetting Disclosure in respect of each person in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 prior to employing, contracting or permitting that person, including through volunteering, to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland.
- request a Police Certificate of Character in respect of any such person who has resided in another country for six months or more.
- Re-vet each person undertaking relevant work or activities every three years, or earlier when deemed appropriate and necessary by the Commissioner.

St John Ambulance Ireland is committed to adherence to and implementation of the Children First Act 2015, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*.

## 3. Purpose

The main purpose of this document is to specify a policy and procedure for Garda vetting our personnel as part of our commitment to select or recruit persons who are suitable to work with children and vulnerable persons, and to manage the risk of harm or abuse to children or vulnerable persons. This document provides information to St John Ambulance Ireland personnel, to parents, carers and guardians, to Tusla staff, and to members of the public, in respect of our Garda Vetting procedure.

The policy and procedure outlined in this document have been developed to comply with the requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, with requirements outlined in paragraphs (a) and (c) of section 11(3), of the Children First Act, 2015, and with instructions in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, issued by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs pursuant to section 6 of the Children First Act, 2015.

Our procedures are also designed to fulfil our Common Law ‘duty of care’ to the children and vulnerable persons availing of our services. We must ensure that the standard of care provided meets reasonable expectations, bearing in mind generally accepted good practice standards, which include the Garda vetting of persons undertaking relevant work or activities with children and/or vulnerable persons.

## 4. Scope

This policy and procedure apply to all personnel, paid staff, volunteers, contractors, or any other persons who may work on, or provide training on St John Ambulance Ireland premises or otherwise undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland.

The scope of relevant work or activities performed by SJAI personnel, as outlined in Schedule 1 of the Act of 2012 (Appendix 1 or 2), includes but is not limited to:

- Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council Order 2000 (S.I. No. 109 of 2000),
- Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (Establishment) Order 2000 (Amendment) Order 2004 (S.I. No. 575 of 2004).

- Any work or activity which consists of treatment provided to a child or vulnerable person by a person in the course of that work or activity.
- Any work or activity which consists of care or supervision of children merely incidental to the care or supervision of persons who are not children.
- Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children unless merely incidental to the provision of such activities to persons who are not children.
- Any work or activity which is carried on by a person, a necessary and regular part of which requires the person to have access to, or contact with, children or vulnerable persons pursuant to the following enactments:
  - Medical Practitioners Act 2007,
  - Nurses Act 1985,
  - Nurses and Midwives Act 2011,

# 5. Glossary of Key Terms

Below is a glossary of some key terms used throughout this document.

## Act of 2012

The Act of 2012 refers to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

## Cadet

A Cadet is a youth member of St John Ambulance Ireland who is aged 10–17 years (inclusive).

## Child

The Act of 2012 defines a ‘child’ as a person under the age of 18 years. Any reference to ‘child’ or ‘young person’ in this document means a person under the age of 18 years.

## Commissioner

Any reference to ‘Commissioner’ in this document, unless otherwise specified, means the Commissioner of St John Ambulance Ireland.

## Criminal Record

A criminal record, as defined by the Act of 2012, means:

**(a)** a record of a person’s convictions, whether within or outside the State, for any criminal offences, together with any ancillary or consequential orders made pursuant to the convictions concerned, or

**(b)** a record of any prosecutions pending against the person, whether within or outside the State, for any criminal offence,

or both **(a)** and **(b)** above.

## Current Vetting

Current vetting means a Vetting Disclosure has been received in respect of a person in the last three years and it has not been deemed by the Commissioner to be an Expired Vetting.

## Expired Vetting

A person’s vetting becomes an Expired Vetting three years after the date the National Vetting Bureau issued the most recent Vetting Disclosure to St John Ambulance Ireland, or on an earlier date when deemed appropriate and necessary by the Commissioner.

When a person’s vetting becomes expired and a new Vetting Disclosure has not been received in respect of that person, that person is deemed to be no longer Garda vetted by St John Ambulance Ireland.

## Garda Vetting

Garda Vetting is the procedure, outlined below, through which St John Ambulance Ireland applies for and receives Vetting Disclosures in respect of our personnel from the National Vetting Bureau prior to those personnel undertaking any relevant work or activities. Any use of the terms ‘vet’, ‘vetting’, and/or ‘vetted’ is to be construed in this document as a reference to our Garda Vetting procedure.

## Liaison Person

‘Liaison Person’ is the title given by the Act of 2012 to the person(s) nominated

in writing by the Commissioner to be registered with the National Vetting Bureau for the purpose of applying for and receiving Vetting Disclosures on behalf of SJAI. The ‘Liaison Person’ is known as the Garda Vetting Officer (GVO) within SJAI. Any use of the term ‘Garda Vetting Officer’ or ‘GVO’ is to be construed as a reference to ‘Liaison Person’. There may be more than one Garda Vetting Officer.

## National Vetting Bureau (NVB)

The National Vetting Bureau is the national bureau of An Garda Síochána which provides St John Ambulance Ireland with Vetting Disclosures in respect of its personnel, following an application by SJAI pursuant to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

## Police Certificate of Character

A police certificate of character is an official document received from a police service or similar agency in a country other than Ireland that confirms whether or not an individual has a criminal record and provides details of any such criminal record.

## Re-vetting

Re-vetting is the procedure, outlined below through which St John Ambulance Ireland applies for and receives Vetting Disclosures, in respect of personnel who continue to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of SJAI and whose previous Vetting Disclosure is, or is about to become, expired. Any use of the terms ‘re-vet’, ‘re-vetting’ and/or ‘re-vetted’ is to be construed as a reference to our Re-Vetting Procedure.

## Relevant Work or Activities

Relevant work or activities means any work or activity, as described in Part 1 (Relevant Work or Activities Relating to Children), or Part 2 (Relevant Work or Activities Relating to Vulnerable Persons) of Schedule 1 of the Act of 2012. See Appendix 1 and 2.

## Specified Information

Specified Information, in relation to a person who is the subject of an application for vetting disclosure, means information concerning a finding or allegation of harm to another person that is received by the National Vetting Bureau from:

(a) the Garda Síochána pursuant to an investigation of an offence or pursuant to any other function conferred on the Garda Síochána by or under any enactment or the common law,

or

(b) certain other organisations,

in respect of the person and which is of such a nature as to reasonably give rise to a bona fide concern that the person may:

- (i) harm any child or vulnerable person,
- (ii) cause any child or vulnerable person to be harmed,
- (iii) put any child or vulnerable person at risk of harm,
- (iv) attempt to harm any child or vulnerable person, or
- (v) incite another person to harm any child or vulnerable person.

## Validation

Validation must occur when a delegated SJAI member (the Validator) receives from a Vetting Subject a Vetting Invitation Form NVB1, a Parent/Guardian Consent Form NVB3 for 16-17 year olds, and accompanying ID. The Validator then inspects the documents and makes a copy of the original identity documents produced by the Vetting Subject, validating all documents in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

## Vetting Disclosure

A Vetting Disclosure is a disclosure made by the National Vetting Bureau in respect of a person about whom an application for vetting has been made by SJAI. The Vetting Disclosure includes particulars of the criminal record (if any) relating to the person, a statement of specified information (if any) relating to the person, or a statement that there is no criminal record or specified information in relation to the person.

## Vetting Subject

The Vetting Subject is the prospective, current, or returning member of SJAI, or other person proposing to undertake relevant activities on behalf of SJAI, who is the subject of the application for Vetting Disclosure. The Vetting Subject is the person who completes and signs the Vetting Invitation Form NVB1.

## Vulnerable Person

'Vulnerable Person' means a person, other than a child who:

- (a) is suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia,
- (b) has an intellectual disability,
- (c) is suffering from a physical impairment, whether as a result of injury, illness or age, or
- (d) has a physical disability,

which is of such a nature or degree:

- (i) as to restrict a person's capacity to guard him/herself against harm by another person, or
- (ii) that the person requires assistance with the activities of daily living, including dressing, eating, walking, washing and bathing.

# 6. Key Roles and Responsibilities

## St John Ambulance Ireland

St John Ambulance Ireland, as an organisation, has a statutory responsibility to ensure that we do not employ, contract, or permit any person to undertake relevant work or activities on our behalf without first being Garda vetted. Doing so is a criminal offence under section 12 of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

## All St John Ambulance Ireland Personnel

It is the responsibility of all SJAI personnel to ensure they are currently Garda vetted and to ensure they are re-vetted before their more recent Vetting Disclosure becomes expired. St John Ambulance Ireland personnel must not undertake relevant work or activities without current Garda vetting. Each Vetting Subject is individually responsible for the full and accurate completion of their Form NVB1 and eVetting online form.

## Directors/Officers/Managers of St John Ambulance Ireland

Each director, manager and officer of St John Ambulance Ireland, has a statutory responsibility to ensure they do not employ, contract, or permit any person to undertake relevant work or activities without that person being Garda vetted. A director, manager or officer may be liable to prosecution individually, where an offence was committed under section 12 if the Act of 2012 by St John Ambulance Ireland with the consent or connivance, or through the wilful neglect of such a director, manager

or officer. Each director, manager and officer of St John Ambulance Ireland is responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure. Each director, manager and officer must ensure that each person for whom they are responsible has current Garda Vetting.

Divisional Managers are responsible for ensuring that each member of their division whose vetting has expired is informed that they may not undertake any work or activities with St John Ambulance Ireland until SJAI have received a new Vetting Disclosure in respect of that member. Each Divisional Manager must ensure that no member of the Division undertakes any work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland without current vetting.

## Divisional Manager

In addition to the roles for officers and managers outlined above, the Divisional Manager has responsibility for providing a blank Form NVB1 to a Vetting Subject with the Application or SJAI PIN included; for ensuring the Form NVB1 has been properly completed; for verifying the Vetting Subject's identification documents (ID); and for submitting the Form NVB1 and copies of the verified ID to the Garda Vetting Officer. The Divisional Manager may delegate this role to the Divisional Admin.

## Validators

The Validator is the person who receives the vetting application, ensures the Form NVB1 is fully completed, and validates the identity of the Vetting Subject by inspecting and making a copy of the original identity documents produced. All Divisional

Managers (including Cadet Divisional Managers) are deemed to be Validators. A Divisional Manager may delegate the role of Validator to another member of the Divisional Management Team, but must notify the SJAI Garda Vetting Officers (vetting@stjohn.ie) of the name of the delegated member.

The Garda Vetting Officer performs the role of validator for staff, contractors and other persons who are not joining a division of SJAI.

All Validators will receive a one-hour online training course on receiving and validating a Vetting Invitation Form NVB1 and accompanying ID. This training is mandatory for all Validators, including Divisional Managers. A record of the members who have undertaken the training will be retained by the Safeguarding Lead and the Garda Vetting Officers.

A Form NVB1 and copies of validated ID will not be accepted by a Garda Vetting Officer unless the person conducting the validation

- is either a Divisional Manager or a member delegated by the Divisional Manager in writing (by email) to the Garda Vetting Officer, and
- is recorded as having received the mandatory Garda Vetting Validator training.

## **Garda Vetting Officer**

A Garda Vetting Officer (also known as a ‘Liaison Person’) is a person who is nominated by the Commissioner to be registered with the National Vetting Bureau for the purpose of applying for and receiving Vetting Disclosures on behalf of prospective and current members of SJAI.

The Garda Vetting Officer is responsible for managing our vetting procedures; for ensuring all personal information relating to our vetting process is securely stored and remains confidential; and for compliance with Data Protection legislation and best practice.

The Garda Vetting Officer performs the role of validator for staff, contractors and other persons who are not joining a division of SJAI.

The Commissioner will appoint an appropriate number of Garda Vetting Officers, which may include volunteer member(s) of SJAI.

## **Disclosure Review Group (DRG)**

St John Ambulance Ireland has established a Disclosure Review Group (DRG) to consider the suitability of a Vetting Subject to work with children or vulnerable persons, following receipt of a Vetting Disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau, and/or a Police Certificate of Character from another country, indicating that a criminal record and/or specified information exists in relation to the Vetting Subject.

The DRG shall consist of the SJAI’s Safeguarding Lead, Garda Vetting Officers, Child Protection Team Leads, and any other person(s) appointed by the Commissioner. The quorum for a DRG meeting shall be three members of the group. The Board of St John Ambulance Ireland appoints its Safeguarding Lead as the chairperson of the DRG. In the absence of the chairperson at a meeting, the members of the DRG present shall elect an interim chairperson for that meeting. Where a vote is required to decide the suitability of a Vetting Subject, the chairperson of the group shall have a casting vote in the event of a draw.

# 7. Garda Vetting Procedure

Before any person may undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland, the organisation must first receive a Vetting Disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau.

This section should be read in conjunction with our Adult Volunteer Process Guides, AVP1 (Prospective Members), AVP2 (Cadets transferring to Adult Membership) and/or AVP3 (Returning Members) which may be found in the Document Library on Membership Connect. Any persons who have current vetting and are required to re-vet should also read section **11. Re-Vetting Procedure** below.

## Vetting of Cadets aged 16 and 17 years old

As with our adult members, our Cadets undertake relevant work and activities that consist of first aid treatment that may be provided in the course of their duties to persons availing of our services and to members of the public, including children or vulnerable persons. Some of our cadets are trained in accordance with Education and Training Standards approved by the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC).

The Act of 2012 does not provide for a lower age limit in respect of persons for whom St John Ambulance Ireland must receive Vetting Disclosures, but the NVB provides Vetting Disclosures for persons aged 16 years and above. Accordingly, we are required to seek Vetting Disclosures in respect of our cadets, aged 16 years and older before permitting them to undertake relevant work and activities.

The vetting process for adults, as outlined in the following sections, should be followed by 16-17 year old cadets, but there are some differences to the vetting process for cadets as outlined below.

The completed Vetting Invitation Form NVB1 for a Vetting Subject who is 16 or 17 years of age must also be accompanied by a completed Parent/Guardian Consent Form NVB3.

The email address on the Form NVB1, which will be used to complete the e-vetting process, must be the email address of a parent/guardian of the cadet. The contact number on the Form NVB1 must also be the telephone number of a parent of the cadet.

Cadets (16-17 years) must also submit Proof of Identity and Proof of Address documents as outlined in the Acceptable Documentation Table provided by the National Vetting Bureau (Appendix 3). However, if cadets are unable to produce a Proof of Identity and/or Proof of Address document as listed in Appendix 3, they may submit

- a birth certificate (to support Proof of Identity), and/or
- a written statement by a school principal or an accredited third level institution confirming attendance, name and address (to support Proof of Address).

Cadets being vetted are not required to participate in the Children First eLearning Programme or the SJAI Safeguarding Course until they have reached the age of 18 years.

Cadets, upon reaching the age of 18 years, automatically cease to become a member of the cadet division and may automatically attend their adult divisional practice. Upon transferring to an adult division each member must complete all stages of the Adult Volunteer Process (AVP 2).

AVP 2 includes completing a new Form NVB1 (Stage 1) and undertaking the Children First eLearning Programme (Stage 2) and SJAI Safeguarding Course (Stage 3), prior to proceeding to the e-vetting process (Stage 4) outlined below. Upon successful completion of AVP 2 the member is allocated an SJ PIN and may attend duties as an adult member. Members of adult divisions must not attend duty without an (adult) SJ PIN. Members transferring from cadet to adult divisions who do not complete Stage 4 (e-vetting process) of AVP 2 within 3 months of their 18th birthday will be required to step down from all SJAI activities until such time as their e-vetting is successfully completed.

Cadets will be supported and advised by their cadet leaders as they prepare to transfer into their adult division and by the adult divisional manager following the transfer.

## **Procedure prior to the Garda eVetting Process**

Garda Vetting for those over 18 years of age constitutes Stage 4 of our Adult Volunteering Process. For prospective or returning adult members, or cadets who have reached the age of 18 years, the first three stages must be completed, as below, before an applicant can be Garda vetted. When members are being re-vetted, much of Stage 1 is not included. See the Re-Vetting Procedure below.

### **Stage 1 – Application for adult membership and completion of NVB1**

The first stage involves completion of the relevant application form (AVP1/AVP2/AVP3), interview, reference checks, and a decision by the Divisional Manager as to the applicant's suitability for membership. The Divisional Manager enters each successful member's details on Membership Connect in the New Member Application Submission (NMAS) module, which will issue an Application PIN. The Form NVB1 can now be completed by the Applicant, referred to hereinafter as Vetting Subject.

The Divisional Manager enters the SJAI or Applicant PIN on a blank Form NVB1 and gives the Form NVB1 to the Vetting Subject.

The Vetting Subject completes the Form NVB1 and gives it to the Validator (Divisional Manager or other member of the Divisional Management Team delegated by the Divisional Manager).

The Form NVB1 must be fully completed, dated and signed by the Vetting Subject and the consent box (just above the signature) must be ticked. The role must be a relevant work or activity. The default role for members, or prospective members, of divisions is “Render emergency aid to the public”.

At this stage the Vetting Subject must submit two types of original identification document (ID) to the Validator, in order that the identity of the Vetting Subject may be validated:

- Proof of Identity – Photographic ID to include name and date of birth.
- Proof of Address – dated within the previous 6 months.

The Proof of Identity and Proof of Address must be valid forms of ID as listed in the Accepted Documentation Table (Applicants Over 18) provided by the National Vetting Bureau (Appendix 3).

The Proof of Identity document must be current and not expired. The Validator must check that the name and date of birth on the Vetting Subject's Proof of Identity exactly match the name and date of birth on the Form NVB1. The photograph must be of high quality and clear, and represent a true likeness of the Vetting Subject.

Vetting Subjects with a current passport should be encouraged to submit their passports (book or card) as Proof of Identity and to enter into the evetting platform, the passport book or card number that was submitted as Proof of Identity. When the Vetting Subject proceeds to e-vetting they will be requested to input their current passport (book or card) number. The evetting system will then request the Garda Vetting Officer to verify the passport number entered on the evetting platform. This cannot be done if the passport book or card that the number refers to was not submitted as Proof of Identity with the Form NVB1. The passport book and card have different numbers. If the passport book or card number entered on the evetting platform does not correspond with the Proof of Identity submitted with the NVB1, the GVO will be required to have the Validator view the original passport (book or card) and forward a copy the document required in order that the GVO can verify the passport number on the evetting platform. This may cause a significant delay in obtaining a Vetting Disclosure. Encourage Vetting Subjects to use passports as Proof of identity.

The Proof of Address document must be dated within 6 months of the consent date (the date that the Vetting Subject ticks the

consent box and signs the Form NVB1). The name and address on the Proof of Address document must match the name and address on the Form NVB1.

The Validator must ensure that the Form NVB1 is completed fully and make a clear copy of each form of ID submitted by the Vetting Subject. Copies of ID made by the Vetting Subject must not be accepted.

Validators must complete the 2nd page of the Form NVB1 by

- ticking "Yes" or "No" to each question,
- confirming they have physically seen the original and have retained a copy that they have made of the original Proof of Identity and Proof of Address documents,
- recording the type and the reference number of the Photographic ID produced (eg Driving Licence or Passport Number, etc),
- signing and dating the Form NVB1.

If the answer to any of the questions on page 2 of the Form NVB 1 is "No", the Vetting Subject has not met the criteria to continue the vetting process. In that case, the Form NVB1 and copies of ID should not be sent to the Garda Vetting Officer. The Validator should consult further with the Vetting Subject to establish whether they can meet the required criteria.

The copies of ID should be printed, signed and dated by the Validator.

The first page of the Form NVB1 – "Guidelines for completing Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1) should be printed separately to the pages 2 and 3 as it is not required to be submitted with the Form NVB1.

The Form NVB1 is designed so that pages 2 and 3 may be printed double-sided on a single sheet of paper. If the Form NVB1 is printed on two separate sheets of paper, the Validator must also sign and date the bottom of the first page.

The Validator must send the completed Form NVB1 along with a (printed, signed and dated) copy of each validated ID to the Garda Vetting Officer, St John Ambulance Ireland, National Headquarters, 29 Upper Leeson Street, Dublin 4, D04 PX94.

If the Form NVB1 received by the Garda Vetting Officer is incomplete, or any of the above instructions in respect of validating ID are not followed, the form will be returned to the Divisional Manager/Validator for rectification. The Garda Vetting Officer cannot make any amendments to the Form NVB1 or in respect of ID for a member of a division. Only the Validator who originally accepted the Form NVB1 and had responsibility for validating the person's ID may rectify such matters through consultation with the Vetting Subject.

## Stage 2 – Children First eLearning Programme

Vetting Subjects must complete the Children First eLearning Programme, which can be found at:

<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/> and, upon completion of the programme, provide the Divisional Manager with a copy of the Children First eLearning certificate.

## Stage 3 – SJAI Safeguarding Course

The Divisional Manager will forward the Children First eLearning certificate to the Safeguarding Team and book the Vetting

Subject on a SJAI Safeguarding Course at [safeguarding.training@stjohn.ie](mailto:safeguarding.training@stjohn.ie). The Safeguarding Team must upload the Children First eLearning certificate, certificate number and expiry date, along with the SJAI Safeguarding Course certificate number and expiry date to Traumasoft.

Vetting Subjects must have Stages 1 to 3 completed before the Garda Vetting Officer may start the eVetting process.

## Garda eVetting Process

### Stage 4 – Garda eVetting Process

When stages 1 to 3 are completed, the Garda Vetting Officer will then add the details on the completed Form NVB1 to the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) database. The Form NVB1 must have been fully completed, accompanied by copies of Accepted ID as outlined above, and must have been signed within the previous 6 months. The GVO will then submit an online request on behalf of the Vetting Subject to commence the NVB's e-vetting process.

The NVB will then issue an automated email to the Vetting Subject containing a link to an online eVetting form, requesting the Vetting Subject to complete the form.

When completing the online eVetting form, the Vetting Subject is required to provide further personal details, including other names used, previous addresses, passport number, place of birth, and criminal record details, if any.

When the Vetting Subject has completed the online form, our Garda Vetting Officer will be required by the NVB to verify the information provided, where possible. When the Garda Vetting Officer completes that verification, the online form will be

submitted for processing to the NVB, who will then issue a Vetting Disclosure to the Garda Vetting Officer.

One reminder is issued to the Vetting Subject 21 days after the link to the online vetting form is first emailed. The link expires after 30 days. To continue with the vetting process after a link has expired, the Vetting Subject should then request a new eVetting link through the Divisional Manager. The Divisional Manager will forward the request to the Garda Vetting Officer ([vetting@stjohn.ie](mailto:vetting@stjohn.ie)), who will ensure a new eVetting link is issued to the Vetting Subject.

## 8. Vetting Subjects currently residing outside the island of Ireland

Vetting Subjects residing outside the island of Ireland at the time of their application, must scan and email to the Garda Vetting Officer ([vetting@stjohn.ie](mailto:vetting@stjohn.ie)):

- a completed Form NVB1, and
- copies of Proof of Identity and Proof of Address as outlined in the Accepted Documentation Table (Applicants Over 18) provided by the National Vetting Bureau (Appendix 3).

The Garda Vetting Officer may use these scanned copies to commence the e-vetting process.

Prior to commencing any relevant work or activity on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland, the applicant submit in person to a Validator:

- the Original NVB1 form that was previously scanned and emailed, and
- the original identity documents that were previously scanned and emailed,

to commence the e-vetting process.

The Validator must check that the Form NVB1 is fully completed, validate the identity documents and make copies of them as if a new application was being made and send all documents to the Garda Vetting Officer. The Validator should advise the GVO that the member had been initially vetted while residing outside the island of Ireland.

The Garda Vetting Officer must retain:

- the Original NVB1 form that had been

previously scanned and emailed,

- copies of the original identity documents made by the Validator, and
- the scanned Form NVB1 and identity documents that had been emailed to start the e-vetting process.

# 9. Vetting Subjects who have resided outside of Ireland

When completing the e-vetting process with the National Vetting Bureau, Vetting Subjects may also be asked to confirm that they will work with children. The default answer for SJAI personnel should be “Yes”. Vetting Subjects will then be required to provide addresses at which they resided in the European Union or the United Kingdom, along with identification details for the country in which they resided (e.g. Passport Number, National ID Card Number, etc.). A check will then be made on the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS) for convictions.

It is anticipated that checks with EU states could result in an additional 10 days waiting period for receipt of a Vetting Disclosure, while checks with the UK could result in an additional waiting period of 20 days. Upon receipt of the result from the EU or UK, the National Vetting Bureau will then conduct its own checks and issue a Vetting Disclosure. Many EU countries will only provide convictions relating to child sexual abuse through the ECRIS Database.

Any Vetting Subject who has resided in any country outside of Ireland for a period of six months or more:

- before St John Ambulance Ireland receives their first Vetting Disclosure, or
- after St John Ambulance Ireland has received their most recent Vetting Disclosure,

must apply to that country for a Police Certificate of Character.

This includes the EU states and the UK, as ECRIS is likely to provide information relating only to child sexual abuse. There are many other offence types could result in an individual being refused membership, being removed from membership, or being restricted in the work or activities they may undertake with St John Ambulance Ireland.

When the Vetting Subject receives the Police Certificate of Character they should provide it to the Divisional Manager, who should in turn forward it to the Garda Vetting Officer. A person who has resided in a country outside of Ireland for a period of six months or more cannot be deemed to have current vetting until the Police Certificate of Character has been received by the Garda Vetting Officer, in addition to a Vetting Disclosure from the NVB.

A failure to disclose being resident in another country for six months or more, or to provide a valid Police Certificate of Character, may impact upon any decision to employ, contract or permit a person to undertake, or to continue to undertake, relevant work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland

## Transitional arrangements

These arrangements apply to the period between the issue of this policy and the next date of expiry of a current member's most recent Vetting Disclosure. Members who have resided in any other country, for a period of six months or more, prior to the issue of this policy should apply to that country for a Police Certificate of Character as soon as possible, but within three years

of their most recent Vetting Disclosure.

It will not be necessary for such members to discontinue service while awaiting the receipt of a Police Certificate of Character from another country, unless current vetting has expired, and a Police Certificate of Character has not been received.

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## 10. Criminal Records/Specified Information existing after a Vetting Disclosure

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Any person who has been vetted by St John Ambulance Ireland is required to inform SJAI of any new criminal conviction or pending prosecutions, whether within or outside the State, against them since the last Vetting Disclosure and/or Police Certificate of Character was issued in respect of that person.

Any person who has been vetted by St John Ambulance Ireland is required to inform SJAI where they become the subject of any Specified Information, since the last Vetting Disclosure and/or Police Certificate of Character was issued in respect of that person.

A failure to report the existence of such criminal records or specified information may impact upon any decision to employ, contract or permit a person to undertake, or to continue to undertake, relevant work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland.

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# 11. Expired Vetting

A person's vetting becomes an Expired Vetting when:

- three years have elapsed since the most recent Vetting Disclosure was issued, or
- the Commissioner has deemed the vetting to be an Expired Vetting.

The Commissioner may, immediately at any time, consider that it is appropriate and necessary for the safeguarding of children and/or vulnerable persons, to deem any person's vetting to be an Expired Vetting, where the Commissioner:

- has a reasonable concern that a criminal record or specified information may exist in respect of the person, which was not disclosed in a previous Vetting Disclosure, or,
- becomes aware that the person is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child.

The person may be required to undergo the Re-Vetting Procedure, by submitting a new Form NVB1. The Commissioner may prohibit that person from submitting a Form NVB1 until such time as any related investigation is completed.

No person may undertake any work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland when that person's most recent Vetting has expired, until St John Ambulance Ireland has received a new Vetting Disclosure in respect of that person, and the Garda Vetting Officer confirms to the Vetting Subject and the respective division that the vetting process has been completed.

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# 12. Re-Vetting Procedure

St John Ambulance Ireland will seek a new Vetting Disclosure for any person undertaking relevant work or activities on our behalf, where their most recent Vetting Disclosure is due to expire or is expired.

To ensure continuity of service, Divisional Managers should encourage members of their respective divisions to apply for re-vetting no less than three months prior to the expiry of their most recent Vetting Disclosure.

No person may undertake any work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland when that person's most recent Vetting Disclosure has expired, until St John Ambulance Ireland has received a new Vetting Disclosure in respect of that person, and the Garda Vetting Officer confirms to the Vetting Subject and the respective division that the vetting process has been completed.

There are some differences between the four stages of the initial Garda Vetting Procedure outlined above and those of the Re-Vetting Procedure. The Re-Vetting Procedure is as follows:

## Stage 1

The Vetting Subject must submit a completed Form NVB1 to the Divisional Manager and have their identity verified, as outlined in Stage 1 above. Instead of an Application PIN, the Vetting Subject's SJAI PIN must be entered on the Form NVB1.

## Stage 2 and 3

Before the eVetting process can be started, the Vetting Subject must have completed Tusla's Children First eLearning programme and the SJAI Safeguarding Course, during the calendar year on which the vetting application is made. The SJAI Safeguarding Team must have uploaded the following to Traumasoft:

- Children First eLearning certificate and expiry date
- SJAI Safeguarding certificate number and expiry date.

## Stage 4

When stages 1 to 3 are completed, the Garda Vetting Officer may then start the Garda eVetting process, as outlined above in section [7. Garda Vetting Procedure](#).

# 13. Review of Vetting Disclosures and Police Certificates of Character

A Vetting Disclosure consists of the criminal record (if any), a statement of specified information (if any), or a statement that there is no criminal record or specified information in relation to the Vetting Subject. A Police Certificate of Character consists of the criminal record (if any) of the Vetting Subject, or a statement that no criminal record exists

## No Criminal Record or Specified Information

When a Vetting Disclosure, and/or Police Certificate of Character, states that there is no criminal record or specified information in relation to the Vetting Subject, prospective and returning adult members move to Stage 5 of Adult Volunteering Process – Induction.

Members being re-vetted may continue to practice and undertake relevant work or activities, except where their most recent vetting has expired and the Garda Vetting Officer has not yet confirmed to a Vetting Subject and their respective division that the re-vetting process has been completed.

## Criminal Record or Specified Information in a Vetting Disclosure

The existence of a criminal record or specified information does not automatically prevent a Vetting Subject from undertaking, or continuing to undertake, relevant work or activities. A decision will be made by the Disclosure Review Group as to the person's suitability

to do so.

When a Vetting Disclosure, and/or Police Certificate of Character, contains details of a criminal record and/or specified information, the Garda Vetting Officer will gather further information, including a report from the Vetting Subject outlining the circumstances surrounding the criminal record or specified information. The Garda Vetting Officer may seek further information from the National Vetting Bureau in respect of a Vetting Disclosure, but only after receiving the written consent of the Vetting Subject to do so.

A meeting of the Disclosure Review Group will then examine the content of the Vetting Disclosure, and/or Police Certificate of Character, and any further information gathered, to consider the Vetting Subject's suitability to undertake, or continue to undertake, relevant work or activities on behalf of St John Ambulance Ireland.

If the DRG decides that the Vetting Subject may be employed, contracted or permitted to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of SJAI, the Vetting Subject may move to Stage 5 of the Adult Volunteering process – Induction, or continue to undertake relevant work or activities, as the case may be.

If the DRG decides that the Vetting Subject is not suitable to undertake, or continue to undertake, relevant work or activities, the Garda Vetting Officer will inform the Vetting Subject in writing. The Vetting Subject will not be permitted to undertake relevant work to activities..

## **Appeal**

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The Vetting Subject may appeal the decision of the DRG by submitting the appeal by emailing the Commissioner of St John Ambulance Ireland ([commissioner@stjohn.ie](mailto:commissioner@stjohn.ie)) within 14 days of receiving the DRG's written decision, and outlining their submission as to why they feel the decision of the DRG should be set aside. The decision of the Commissioner shall be final.

## 14. Data Protection

St John Ambulance Ireland will comply with all Data Protection legislation and best practice in respect of any data processed as part of this Vetting procedure. All Vetting Disclosures and any additional information received in respect of those disclosures will be securely and confidentially stored by the Garda Vetting Officer at St John Ambulance Ireland, National Headquarters, 29 Upper Leeson Street, Dublin 4, D04 PX94.

Validators must not retain on their own devices digital copies of ID submitted to them by Vetting Subjects.

Hard copies of all documents relating to a vetting application may, after a period of six months, be scanned to a secure SJAI folder. The hard copies may then be destroyed.

When a Vetting Subject is found suitable to undertake relevant work or activities, either by the DRG (or the Commissioner on appeal), the Form NVB1, copies of ID, the Vetting Disclosure and any additional information received in respect of the disclosure will be retained until the next Vetting Disclosure is received or for a period of no longer than one year after the Vetting Subject has ceased to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of SJAI.

In order that a Vetting Subject is not required to provide an explanation regarding a Vetting Disclosure every three years, any additional information used by the Disclosure Review Group, or the Commissioner, to decide on the Vetting Subject's suitability will be retained until the related criminal record or specified information is no longer reported on a subsequent Vetting Disclosure, or for a period of no longer than one year after

Vetting Subject has ceased to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of SJAI.

When a Vetting Subject is deemed unsuitable to undertake relevant work or activities, either by the DRG, and/or the Commissioner upon appeal, a note will be included on Traumasoft to the effect that the application was declined. The Form NVB1, copies of ID, the Vetting Disclosure and any additional information received in respect of the disclosure will be retained for a period of no longer than one year after the Vetting Subject has been deemed unsuitable

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## 15. Governance and Compliance

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The Safeguarding Lead will conduct a quarterly audit of the implementation of the above procedures by SJAI Garda Vetting Officers and report to the Board of St John Ambulance Ireland on the findings of each audit.

The Safeguarding Lead will conduct annual safeguarding audits of a selection of divisions, to include their implementation of this policy and procedure and will report to the Board of St John Ambulance Ireland on the findings of each audit.

## 16. Implementation and Review

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. St John Ambulance Ireland is committed to the implementation of this Garda Vetting Policy & Procedure. A copy of this policy and procedure is made available to all personnel of St John Ambulance Ireland and will be made available upon request to parents, carers or guardians of children availing of our services, to members of the public, and to Tusla staff.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed by **30th September 2026**, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in legislation, national policy or any other matter to which the statement refers.

# Appendix 1

## National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

### SCHEDULE 1

#### PART 1

##### Relevant work or activities – Relating to Children

- 1) Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of of the person having access to, or contact with, children in—
  - a) an establishment which provides pre-school services within the meaning of Part VII of the Child Care Act 1991,
  - b) a school or centre of education, both within the meaning of the Education Act 1998,
  - c) any hospital or health care centre which receives, treats or otherwise provides services to children,
  - d) a designated centre within the meaning of section 2 of the Health Act 2007, in so far as it relates to an institution at which residential services are provided in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991,
  - e) a special care unit provided and maintained in accordance with section 23K of the Child Care Act 1991,
  - f) a children detention school within the meaning of section 3 of the Children Act 2001,
  - g) a reception or accommodation centre which provides residential accommodation services to applicants for asylum under contract to the Department of Justice and Equality.
- 2) Any work or activity which onsists of the provision of home tuition by a person pursuant to the Scheme administered and funded by the Department of Education and known as the Home Tuition Scheme.
- 3) Any work or activity which consists of treatment, therapy or counselling provided to a child by a person in the course of that work or activity.
- 4) Any work or activity which consists of care or supervision of children unless the care or supervision is merely incidental to the care or supervision of persons who are not children.
- 5) Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities (whether or not for commercial or any

other consideration) to children unless the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities is merely incidental to the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to persons who are not children.

- 6) Any work or activity which consists of the provision of advice, guidance or developmental services (including by means of electronic interactive communications) to children unless the provision of the advice, guidance or developmental service is merely incidental to the provision of those services to persons who are not children.
- 7) Any work or activity as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs to children unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not children.
- 8) Work as a driver of a public service vehicle which is being used only for the purpose of conveying children.
- 9) The provision by a person, whether or not for commercial or other consideration, of accommodation for a child in his or her own home.
- 10) Any research work or activities (howsoever described) carried out in a university, institute of technology or other establishment at which third level education is provided where a necessary and regular part of the research work or activity involves contact with or access to children.
- 11) Any application by a person to carry on or manage a designated centre within the meaning of section 2 of the Health Act 2007.
- 12) Any application by a person for a declaration of eligibility and suitability within the meaning of section 3 of the Adoption Act 2010.
- 13) Any assessment of a person's suitability to act as a foster carer by or under section 39 of the Child Care Act 1991.
- 14) Any assessment by or under section 41 of the Child Care Act 1991 of a person's suitability to act as a carer of a child in respect of whom he or she is a relative.
- 15) Any work or activity which is carried on by a person, a necessary and regular part of which requires the person to have access to, or contact with, children pursuant to the following enactments:
  - a) Medical Practitioners Act 2007;
  - b) Nurses Act 1985;
  - c) Nurses and Midwives Act 2011;
  - d) Dentists Act 1985;
  - e) Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005;

- f) Pharmacy Act 2007;
- g) Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council Order 2000 (S.I. No. 109 of 2000);
- h) Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (Establishment) Order 2000 (Amendment) Order 2004 (S.I. No. 575 of 2004).

16) Any work or activity by a guardian ad litem within the meaning of Part VA of the Child Care Act 1991 as such a guardian.

# Appendix 2

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

## SCHEDULE 1

### PART 2

#### Relevant work or activities – Relating to Vulnerable Persons

- 17) Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, vulnerable persons in—
  - a) a school or centre of education, both within the meaning of the Education Act 1998, unless, in the case of a centre of education, the work or activity is merely incidental to work or activities undertaken in relation to persons who are not vulnerable persons,
  - b) any hospital or care centre which receives, treats or otherwise which provides services to vulnerable persons,
  - c) a designated centre within the meaning of section 2 of the Health Act 2007, in so far as it relates to an institution at which residential services are provided to vulnerable persons,
  - d) an approved centre within the meaning of Part 5 of the Mental Health Act 2001.
- 18) Any work or activity which consists of treatment, therapy or counselling provided to a vulnerable person by a person in the course of that work or activity.
- 19) Any work or activity which consists of the care (including the provision of health and personal social services and essential domestic services) of vulnerable persons unless the care is merely incidental to the care of persons who are not vulnerable persons.
- 20) Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities (whether or not for commercial or any other consideration) to vulnerable persons unless the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities is merely incidental to the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to persons who are not vulnerable persons.
- 21) Any work or activity which consists of the provision of advice, guidance or developmental services (including by means of electronic interactive communications) to vulnerable persons unless the provision of the advice, guidance or developmental service is merely incidental to the provision of those services to persons who are not vulnerable persons.

- 22) Work as a driver of a public service vehicle which is being used only for the purpose of conveying vulnerable persons.
- 23) Any work or activity as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs to vulnerable persons unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not vulnerable persons.
- 24) The provision by a person, whether or not for commercial or other consideration, of accommodation for a vulnerable person in his or her own home.
- 25) Any research work or activities (howsoever described) carried out in a university, institute of technology or other establishment at which third level education is provided where a necessary and regular part of the research work or activity involves contact with or access to vulnerable persons.
- 26) Any assessment of a person's suitability to act as a care representative under section 21 of the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Act 2009.
- 27) Any application by a person to carry on or manage a designated centre both within the meaning of section 2 of the Health Act 2007.
- 28) Any work or activity which is carried on by a person, a necessary and regular part of which requires the person to have access to, or contact with, vulnerable persons pursuant to the following enactments:
  - a) Medical Practitioners Act 2007;
  - b) Nurses Act 1985;
  - c) Nurses and Midwives Act 2011;
  - d) Dentists Act 1985;
  - e) Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005;
  - f) Pharmacy Act 2007;
  - g) Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (Establishment) Order 2000 (S.I. No. 109 of 2000);
  - h) Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (Establishment) Order 2000 (Amendment) Order 2004 (S.I. No. 575 of 2004).

## **Typesetting and design**

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