

The Child Protection Notification System

Information for Clinical Staff

Out of Hours

Monday - Sunday: 18:00 - 7:00

Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays: 9:00 - 17:00

What is the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)?

The CPNS is a secure database and contains a national record of all children who have reached the threshold **of being at ongoing risk of significant harm** and for whom there is an ongoing child protection concern. The children listed on the CPNS are or have been the subject of a child protection plan agreed at a child protection conference. The responsibility, maintenance and security of the database rests with Tusla.

Who can access the CPNS?

Access to the CPNS is **strictly confined to members of:**

- Designated staff from out of hours GP's (HSE funded),
- Children's hospitals,
- Maternity hospitals and
- Emergency Departments in Acute Hospitals
- An Garda Síochána

It is made available in line with procedures in:

1. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children
2. Child Protection Conference and the Child Protection Notification System - National Guidelines for Child and Family Agency Area Managers, Conference Chairpersons, Conference Administrators, Social Work Managers and Practitioners

Who should I contact when I have a concern about a child?

During office hours, normal procedures should apply and the local Tusla duty social work office should be contacted. Outside of office hours, **and in addition to following your agency's existing policies and protocols**, a search of the CPNS can be requested when you have an immediate concern about a child.

What information do I need to request a search?

In order to request a search you need to know the child's surname, gender and date of birth or age range. Further details about an address are beneficial.

How do I request a search of the CPNS out of hours?

Telephone the CPNS Tusla service directly and request a search. You will be asked for your name, position held and place of work.

How will I get the result of the search?

The Tusla staff member will conduct the search and phone back to the **predesignated** (no calls to mobiles) number for your place of work and speak directly to the person requesting the search or their nominated contact with the results.

How long does it take to search the CPNS?

Less than 10 minutes.

What information will I be given?

A search of the CPNS system will deliver one of three outcomes:

- Child is listed as Active - This means that the child has been assessed at a child protection conference as **currently** being at ongoing risk of significant harm attributable to Parents and is currently the subject of a child protection plan. The child remains at home subject to an intensive level of support from statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Child is listed as Inactive/De-listed - This means that the child was previously assessed at a child protection conference as being at risk of significant harm attributable to parents and was the subject of a child protection plan. The risk issues, at the time, have been resolved. You will be told when the child was listed as inactive.
- No match found - The information entered in to the search request has not produced a match.

If I request a search will that search be recorded on the CPNS?

Yes, all search requests will be recorded on the CPNS. The database will record the name and details of the individual who requested the search.

Do I still need to contact the local social work department the next day?

Yes. Where a medical / clinical professional has made an enquiry and ascertained that the child is or has been listed, they should contact the child's social worker at the earliest opportunity irrespective of the action they have taken. The social work service will automatically be notified that a search has been conducted about a child listed in their area.

What information will I be told if the search confirms that a child is listed as either active or inactive/delisted?

Where a child is listed the following information will be given to you:

1. Child's name, date of birth and address;
2. Parent/s' names;
3. Date of listing on CPNS and the primary category of abuse at time of listing (*physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect*);
4. Date of any reviews;
5. Name of allocated social worker and their contact details;
6. Functional area.

It is important to acknowledge that the fact that a child is listed on the CPNS is not of itself evidence that the child is at immediate risk in the circumstances in which the person making the enquiry has encountered them. Conversely the fact that a child is not listed cannot be taken as evidence that the child is not at risk. In each case professional judgement, in accordance with professional or agency child protection guidelines, should determine the appropriate course of action.