

Focus Ireland

Families which become homeless face complex challenges and need to interact with numerous agencies and professionals. Focus Ireland has been appointed as the Homeless Action Team (HAT) for families by the four local authorities in Dublin, through the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE). We also operate services across the country.

Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) coordinators and other educational welfare professionals are increasingly finding themselves helping families in crisis situations.

Following discussions with Tusla, we have prepared this information leaflet to help inform fellow professionals about the services provided by Focus Ireland and others which are available to help families in distress.

Key Focus Ireland contact numbers

- › Advice and Information 01 671 2555
- › Family HAT team (office hours) 086 417 0564
- › Focus Ireland Family HAT (emergency out of hours) 087 688 4267

This service is funded by:



In order to protect the identity of our customers, the photographs in this document are of volunteers.
Registered charity CHY 7220

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Family Homelessness

Useful information for
educational welfare professionals

Call **1850 204 205**
Visit focusireland.ie
Find us on 
CHY 7220





The Current Situation

As of November 2015, more than 800 families with 1,500 children were homeless in Ireland. This level of family homelessness is unprecedented.

When a family becomes homeless they present to the local authority for the area where they were living. When they are assessed as homeless the local authority will normally agree to provide emergency accommodation. In Dublin this is through the DRHE's Central Placement Service (CPS), unless the family are deemed to be capable of finding a hotel for themselves ('self-accommodating').

Families are then referred to the Focus Ireland HAT who make contact with the family within 24 hours to set up an initial assessment. Following this assessment and information session, they will be allocated a case worker. If child support needs are identified, a child support worker will also be available to the family. Due to the rapid increase in numbers, there may be a waiting list for case workers. Families which are waiting for a case worker can contact the team if they have particular questions or problems at 086 417 0564 (office hours).

Most of the homeless families have never experienced homelessness and virtually all of them were previously resident in the private rental sector.

At Risk of Homelessness

The best way of tackling homelessness is to prevent it happening in the first place. There are now a number of interventions available for families which are at risk of losing their homes.

For families who need advice and information

Focus Ireland operates two drop-in advice and information services in Dublin:

- › Eustace Street, Temple Bar, 01 671 2555
- › Main Street, Tallaght, 01 494 0224

We also have advice and information services across the country. Their contact details can be found on our website. These services support families who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.

For families in financial difficulty

Families struggling to make their rent or mortgage payments should contact the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS). Their website provides useful resources and MABS also provides a helpline service (0761 07 2000) and a face-to-face service in more than 65 locations across the country. MABS and the Citizens Information Board collaborate on a specialised website (www.keepingyourhome.ie) for people who may be at risk of becoming homeless.

For families struggling to maintain their tenancy

The Tenancy Protection Service is run by Threshold on behalf of the DRHE. The service provides advice and support to those living in private rented accommodation and experiencing tenancy problems which are putting their tenancy at risk. The Freephone number is 1800 454 454.

For families involved in a dispute with their landlord

The Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB) offers a landlord/tenant dispute resolution service. The family's tenancy does not need to be registered with the PRTB for them to access this mediation process. Those seeking assistance should contact the PRTB on 01 6350 600. The PRTB website (www.prtb.ie) also has helpful resources and FAQs.

Experiencing Homelessness

For families who need shelter tonight

Emergency accommodation is accessed through the family's local authority. The Dublin contact details **during officer hours** are listed below.

- › Dublin City Council's Central Placement Service 24-hour Freephone 1800 707 707.
- › Fingal County Council's Assessment and Placement Service 01 890 5090.
- › Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's Assessment and Placement Service 01 205 4700.
- › South Dublin County Council's Assessment and Placement Service 01 414 9000.

A full range of supports for homeless prevention and settlement support can be accessed through www.homelessdublin.ie.

In crisis situations **outside of office hours**, families can contact the out of hours number for the Focus Ireland Family HAT at 087 6884267.

Should a family be unable to access any other services out of hours, they can present, at their local Garda station, where the Gardai can make contact with out-of-hours social workers.

For families outside Dublin, information on who to contact can be found at www.focusireland.ie/our-services/hub.

Area-specific information

The Focus Ireland website provides regularly updated information on area-specific contacts, as well as addiction counselling services and supported and emergency accommodation. This resource can be accessed at www.focusireland.ie/our-services/hub.

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