



An Bille fá Straitéis um Choimirciú Aosach, 2026
Adult Safeguarding Strategy Bill 2026

Mar a tionscnaíodh

As initiated



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Health Act 2007 (No. 23)

Mental Health Act 2001 (No. 25)

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (No. 47)



AN BILLE FÁ STRAITÉIS UM CHOIMIRCIÚ AOSACH, 2026
ADULT SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY BILL 2026

Bill

entitled

An Act to require the Minister for Health to prepare periodic strategic plans for the purpose of protecting certain persons who are at risk of harm, to make certain provisions in relation to the implementation and review of such strategic plans and to provide for related matters. 5

Be it enacted by the Oireachtas as follows:

Interpretation 10

1. In this Act—

“adult” means a person who has reached the age of 18 years;

“adult at risk” means an adult who, at any particular time, by reason of the person’s physical or mental condition or other particular characteristics or family or life circumstance (whether permanent or otherwise) needs support to protect against harm to that person; 15

“adult safeguarding” means measures that are, or may be, put in place to promote the health, safety and welfare of adults at risk, including measures to—

(a) minimise the risk of harm to such adults, and

(b) support such adults to protect themselves from harm; 20

“adult safeguarding strategy” shall be read in accordance with *section 2*;

“Minister” means the Minister for Health;

“public authority” means—

(a) a Minister of the Government,

(b) a board, authority or other body, other than a company under the Companies Act 2014, established by or under statute, 25

(c) a company under the Companies Act 2014 in which all the shares are held—

(i) by or on behalf of a Minister of the Government, or

(ii) by directors appointed by a Minister of the Government,

or 30

- (d) a company under the Companies Act 2014 in which all the shares are held by a board, authority or body referred to in *paragraph (b)* or by a company referred to in *paragraph (c)*.

Adult safeguarding strategy

2. (1) The Minister shall— 5
 - (a) not later than 6 months after this Act comes into operation, prepare and adopt an adult safeguarding strategy in respect of the period of 3 years commencing on the date on which the strategy is adopted, and
 - (b) within the period of 3 months before each third anniversary of the date on which an adult safeguarding strategy is adopted under *paragraph (a)*, prepare and adopt 10
an adult safeguarding strategy in respect of the period of 3 years commencing on the date of that anniversary.
- (2) An adult safeguarding strategy shall—
 - (a) specify such objectives for the period concerned as the Minister considers appropriate in respect of adult safeguarding, 15
 - (b) specify such measures to be taken during the period concerned as the Minister considers appropriate in respect of adult safeguarding,
 - (c) where relevant, specify any legislative or other regulatory measures that is proposed to be duly adopted for the purpose of achieving any objective specified in *paragraph (a)* or taking any measure under *paragraph (b)*, and 20
 - (d) specify such other matters as the Minister considers appropriate.
- (3) An objective or measure specified for the purpose of *subsection (2)* may apply—
 - (a) in respect of public authorities generally,
 - (b) in respect of a particular public authority, or
 - (c) in respect of a particular class of public authorities. 25
- (4) An adult safeguarding strategy shall, in particular, include objectives and measures in respect of each of the following:
 - (a) the duties that shall apply in respect of persons providing relevant services for the purpose of adult safeguarding, including—
 - (i) the identification of any potential for abuse or other harm that may occur to 30
an adult at risk in relation to the provision of such services, including by means of risk assessments, and
 - (ii) the adoption of appropriate policies and procedures and the taking of appropriate measures to ensure, in so far as is practicable, that an adult at risk, while availing of such services, is protected from any abuse or other 35
harm;
 - (b) ensuring appropriate oversight and regulatory enforcement of matters relating to adult safeguarding, including by the establishment of a body for the purpose of such oversight and enforcement;

- (c) providing adults at risk who use relevant services with access to independent advice and advocacy services;
 - (d) providing for appropriate judicial powers to protect adults at risk from abuse or other harm by another person, including the power to restrain contact by a particular person with a particular adult at risk. 5
- (5) In preparing an adult safeguarding strategy the Minister shall have regard to the following:
 - (a) the primary objective of the strategy, namely to protect adults at risk who use relevant services from abuse or other harm;
 - (b) the principle that, where possible, the right and autonomy of an adult at risk who uses relevant services to be independent in the making of any decision affecting that person's health, well-being or other affairs should be vindicated; 10
 - (c) the principle that an adult safeguarding strategy should promote a culture within relevant services that—
 - (i) prevents abuse or other harm to adults at risk, 15
 - (ii) promotes and facilitates cooperation with public authorities and other persons providing relevant services in respect of adult safeguarding, and
 - (iii) is otherwise responsive to any concerns that may arise in relation to the health, safety or welfare of adults at risk;
 - (d) the State's obligations and the rights of persons with disabilities as provided for under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities done at New York on 13 December 2006; 20
 - (e) such other matter as the Minister considers appropriate.
- (6) In preparing an adult safeguarding strategy the Minister shall consult with the following: 25
 - (a) the Minister for Children, Disability and Equality;
 - (b) the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission;
 - (c) such other public authorities as the Minister considers appropriate;
 - (d) such other persons, including members of the public, as the Minister considers appropriate. 30
- (7) The Minister shall, before adopting an adult safeguarding strategy for the purpose of *subsection (1)*, submit a draft of the strategy to the Government for approval.
- (8) The Government may—
 - (a) approve, or
 - (b) approve, subject to such modifications as they consider appropriate, 35
 a draft adult safeguarding strategy submitted under *subsection (7)*.
- (9) The Minister shall, as soon as practicable after adopting an adult safeguarding strategy—

- (a) cause a copy of the strategy to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas, and
- (b) publish a copy of the strategy on a website maintained by or on behalf of the Minister.

(10) In this section, “relevant service” means a service specified in the *Schedule*.

Duty of public authorities under Act

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3. (1) Each public authority shall perform its functions in a manner consistent with an adult safeguarding strategy.

(2) The Minister may, from time to time, give a direction to another public authority requiring it to prepare, and submit to the Minister, within such period as may be specified in the direction, a report specifying—

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(a) any measures that the public authority concerned has taken for the purpose of complying with *subsection (1)*, and

(b) the progress made by the public authority in the performance of its functions in the manner referred to in that subsection.

(3) The Minister may, from time to time, give a direction to a public authority requiring it to adopt such measures as are specified in the direction for the purpose of complying with *subsection (1)*.

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(4) A public authority to which a direction under this section is given shall comply with that direction.

Annual adult safeguarding action report

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4. (1) The Minister shall not later than 3 months after the end of each period of 12 months to which an adult safeguarding strategy relates, prepare a report (in this section referred to as an “annual adult safeguarding action report”).

(2) An annual adult safeguarding action report shall include the following information:

(a) measures taken by the Minister and other public authorities for the purpose of any objectives identified in the adult safeguarding strategy concerned for the purpose of *section 2(2)(a)*;

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(b) information relating to any measures or objectives specified in the adult safeguarding strategy concerned that have not, or have not yet, been taken or achieved, as the case may be, including—

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(i) a statement of reason as to why such measures or objectives have not been taken or achieved, and

(ii) where appropriate, the revised timeline for taking any such measure or achieving any such objective;

(c) such other information as the Minister considers relevant.

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(3) The Minister shall, as soon as practicable after preparing an annual adult safeguarding action report—

(a) cause a copy of the report to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas, and

- (b) publish a copy of the report on a website maintained by or on behalf of the Minister.

Short title

- 5.** This Act may be cited as the Adult Safeguarding Strategy Act 2026.

SCHEDULE

RELEVANT SERVICE

Section 2

1. A designated centre within the meaning of the Health Act 2007, in so far as it relates to an institution in which residential services are provided to adults with disabilities or to elderly persons. 5
2. A service that provides care to adults in private dwellings.
3. A service that provides recreational, social, leisure or rehabilitation activities to adults with disabilities or to elderly persons (in this Schedule referred to as “day services”).
4. A service that provides personal assistance to adults with disabilities. 10
5. Any hospital, hospice, health care centre or other centre which receives, treats or otherwise provides physical services to adults.
6. A service that receives, treats or provides mental health services to adults, including approved centres under the Mental Health Act 2001.
7. A reception or accommodation centre which provides residential accommodation services to adults in the international protection process managed by, or under contract to, the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. 15
8. A centre which provides refuge accommodation services for victims of domestic, sexual or gender-based violence.
9. A centre which provides residential accommodation services for the purpose of providing substance abuse services. 20
10. A centre which provides residential accommodation services to adults experiencing homelessness.
11. A service that provides treatment (including assessment which may lead to treatment), therapy or counselling to adults. 25
12. A service that provides transport that is used only for the purpose of conveying adults to day services or to respite care services.
13. An Garda Síochána, in so far as any functions of An Garda Síochána involve work or activities, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of members of An Garda Síochána having access to, or contact with, adults who may be at risk of harm or vulnerable persons within the meaning of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012. 30

BILLE

(mar a tionscnaíodh)

dá ngairtear

Acht dá cheangal ar an Aire Sláinte pleananna straitéiseacha tréimhsiúla a ullmhú chun daoine áirithe atá i mbaoil díobhála a chosaint, do dhéanamh socrúithe áirithe i ndáil le pleananna straitéiseacha den sórt sin a chur i ngníomh agus a athbhreithniú agus do dhéanamh socrú i dtaobh nithe gaolmhara.

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8 Iúil, 2026

BILL

(as initiated)

entitled

An Act to require the Minister for Health to prepare periodic strategic plans for the purpose of protecting certain persons who are at risk of harm, to make certain provisions in relation to the implementation and review of such strategic plans and to provide for related matters.

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8th July, 2026

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