

**FROM THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S
POLICY DIRECTORATE**



Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9037 8711
Email: fcpdadmin@health-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref:

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Dear Stakeholder

RE: AMENDMENTS TO SAFEGUARING VULNERABLE GROUPS (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2007

Introduction

1. This letter is to advise of forthcoming amendments to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 (SVGO). These amendments will remove the supervision exemption from the definition of regulated activity involving children and will come into effect on 1 September 2026.

Background

2. In its final report, the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) recommended that all those working closely with children should be eligible for a children's barred list check, regardless of whether they are supervised. The Crime and Policing Act 2026 gives effect to this recommendation by removing the supervision exemption from the definition of regulated activity in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
3. As a result, individuals who frequently undertake roles involving teaching, supervision, instruction or care of children, will be considered to be engaged in regulated activity,

irrespective of whether they are supervised. They will therefore be eligible for an enhanced with children's barred list check.

4. The removal of the supervision exemption will also mean that:
 - it will be an offence for a person included on the children's barred list to undertake one of these supervised roles;
 - it will be an offence for an employer or organisation to engage a barred person in one of these supervised roles;
 - where an employer dismisses or removes a person in one of these supervised roles because they have harmed a child, or pose a risk of harm to a child, the employer will have a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service; and
 - where sectors have requirements mandating enhanced checks with a children's barred list check for those undertaking regulated activity, this requirement will extend to these supervised roles, including supervised volunteers in schools.
5. The supervision exemption only applied to regulated activity with children, so it does not impact regulated activity with adults.
6. The period condition is not affected by this change; to be in regulated activity, a person will need to carry out the activity on more than three days in any 30-day period, or if they're carrying out the activity between 2am-6am and the activity gives them the opportunity for face-to-face contact with children.
7. Subject to the period condition being met, the removal of the supervision exemption will mean that individuals who would previously have been excluded from regulated activity solely because they were supervised will now fall within the scope of regulated activity. This includes supervised volunteers in specified settings, as well as supervised paid and unpaid roles involving activities that are defined as regulated activity the SVGO.

Action

8. You are asked to:
 - a. note the upcoming amendments, which take effect from 1 September and remove the supervision exemption from the definition of regulated activity under the SVG0; and
 - b. share this information with relevant colleagues across your organisation.
9. Updated guidance will be available on the Department's website in due course.

Yours sincerely

Family and Children's Policy Directorate