

FAR training and the Covid-19 restrictions

Dear Colleagues,

We have received the following update from Tusla regarding FAR training:

The First Aid Responder (FAR) Education and Training Standard established by the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) is recognised by Tusla as the first aid course for children that meets the regulatory requirement. In an early years setting the number of people required to be trained in first aid for children (FAR) and that are available for first aid response is based on the service's risk assessments, including the size of the service and the hazards identified.

Currently where a service provides evidence that a person(s) is trained in First Aid for children and is available to children at all times the regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met by the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate. Prior to the COVID -19 pandemic this was to continue to be acceptable until the 31st May 2020. The regulatory requirement was due to change from the 1st of June 2020. The change required is that at least one person(s) is to have had undertaken the FAR (First Aid Response) course delivered by a trainer approved by PHECC to be available to children at all times in a service.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, Tusla and Dept of Children and Youth Affairs have agreed to extend the timeframe to meet this regulatory requirement to the end of February 2021.

In addition, for those staff that already have FAR certification which has now expired or is due to expire – their certificates will remain valid until courses are up and running again.

The DCYA had committed to providing a subsidy for the training of one staff member, per childcare service. This was supposed to have finished by the original deadline of 1 June 2020. In light of Tusla's statement, the DCYA are extending the subsidy eligibility to the end of 2020.

Online training:

Owing to the current Covid-19 restrictions, PHECC have agreed that the theory part of the FAR training course can be delivered as an online component. PHECC have stipulated that the online theory training will be:

- For the short term only and will be limited to the duration of the current Covid-19 situation.
- Does not replace the whole course, is for FAR theory only.
- Full certification cannot come from this part of the training.
- Practicals and assessment should be on hold until the current Covid-19 situation is over.
- The online session must be live and the trainer must ensure that they can document that participants engaged fully.
- There will be a limit of participants to 8 as in the face-to-face course

Such a significant departure from normal standards shall be limited to the duration of the current Covid-19 crisis.

Things to consider

Before undertaking online FAR theory training Childcare Providers should ensure the following:

- That the training is being offered by a PHECC Approved Training Institution listed [here](#).
- That the company offering the online training can provide an interim certificate/letter as proof of completion of online theory training

- That the company you choose to do the online training with will also be able to offer the practical part of the course as well as the assessment in a place and at a time that will suit you

There is **no obligation** to undertake online training, services can opt to wait until the face-to-face courses are being offered and undertake the training in the normal way. However, the subsidy will only be available until the end of 2020 (see payment schedule on application form).

Claiming the partial subsidy:

On completion of the online theory training, services can apply for a maximum of €150 which represents 2/3 of the total subsidy or 2/3 of what you paid for the course, whichever is the lesser by completing the attached application form and submitting along with a receipt and a certificate/letter confirming that the participant has undertaken the full online theory course. On completion of the practical part of the course, the provider can apply for the remaining €75 by submitting their certificate.