

# **SOCIAL CARE STANDARDS AUTHORITY ACT**

**(CAP. 582)**

## **Social Regulatory Standards for Office-Based Services for Children in Alternative Care Regulations, 2019**

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by Article 30 (5) of the Social Care Standards Authority Act, the Minister for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity has made the following regulations:-

### Citation

1. The Title of these regulations is the Social Regulatory Standards for Office-Based Services for Children in Alternative Care Regulations 2019.

### Scope

2. These regulations by means of the Schedule, elevate the Social Regulatory Standards for Office-Based Services for Children in Alternative Care, to the status of Subsidiary Legislation under the Social Care Standards Authority Act.

### Interpretation

3. In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Agency Responsible for the Welfare of the Child” means the national agency responsible to safeguard and protect the well-being of the children who cannot be cared for by their family;

“Alternative Care” means a formal placement where the child is looked after outside the parental home. In this set of standards alternative care is taken to include:

“Care Giver” means an adult who provides care for a child / young adult in family based care or in residential care;

“Care Plan” means a plan drawn up to promote the development and well-being of the child;

“Care Review” means the sitting wherein all matters relevant to the well-being of the child, including the care plan of such child, are reviewed, taking into account any significant changes in connection with the child;

“Child” means a person under the age of 18;

“Foster care” means a formal placement of a child under the care of a person, not being a parent of the child, and which is chosen, qualified, approved and supervised to provide care for a period and in accordance with a care plan;

“Healthcare professional” means a lead designated doctor trained in safeguarding children or a designated nurse with background training in safeguarding children;

“Healthcare assessment” means the physical, psycho-emotional, developmental and public health aspects of health. Summary reports of the health assessment should follow consultations that provide action plans that need to be followed up by the relevant professionals involved in the child’s care and which should be shared with the relevant professionals involved in the care of the looked after child;

“Leaving care process” means the process where young adults are prepared for independent living;

“Performance Indicator” means an active descriptor of what service providers need to do to ensure service outputs that support the quality indicator;

“Quality Indicator” means a statement that sets out the requirements to achieve compliance with a standard;

“Residential Community Care” means long term care in a family group environment provided to children who cannot live with their parents;

“Social Care Standards Authority” means “the Authority” or “SCSA” as established by virtue of Article 5 of the Social Care Standards Authority Act (Cap. 582);

“UNCRC” means the 1989 United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Children;

“Young adult” means children who are in their mid-teens;

“Universal Services” means the standard health care services offered by the National Health Service in Malta that are targeted to meet general needs.

## **SCHEDULE**

### **Standard 1: Necessity for alternative care**

#### **Standard Statement:**

The Agency responsible for the welfare of the child ensures that children are separated from their parents only if it is necessary for their well-being.

#### **Quality Indicators:**

1. The agency responsible for the welfare of the child should provide support to vulnerable families who are at risk of having their children removed from their care.
2. The parents whose children have been removed from their care should be provided with support with the aim to improve their situation and to reintegrate them with their children.

### **Standard 2: The right to participate**

#### **Standard Statement:**

Children have the right to participate in the decisions affecting their life.

#### **Quality Indicators:**

1. Children should be empowered and supported to express their views, feelings and concerns.
2. Children should always be consulted and listened to.
3. Children should be supported to raise concerns and complaints.

### **Standard 3: Quality of Care**

#### **Standard Statement:**

Children are provided with a stable, caring and protective environment during their time in care.

#### **Quality Indicators:**

1. The move of a child into alternative care should be done with dignity and respect.
2. The placement should match the best interest of the child.
3. Children in alternative care have the right to maintain a stable relationship with their siblings.
4. Children should be provided with a permanent placement.

### **Standard 4: Care Planning**

#### **Standard Statement:**

The care placement of the children should be guided by an individual care plan.

#### **Quality Indicators:**

1. An individual care plan should be drawn up before a child moves into care.
2. The care plan should be reviewed on a regular basis.
3. Children should participate in the development of the care plan.
4. Children should be prepared for the leaving care process.

## **Standard 5: Healthcare needs of children in alternative care**

### **Standard Statement:**

Children in care have specific healthcare needs and these should be addressed holistically by trained healthcare professionals.

### **Quality Indicators:**

1. Children in alternative care need to have individualised and comprehensive assessments of their healthcare needs, beyond what is offered by universal services for them to maximise their potential.
2. Children should receive appropriate and effective care which fulfils their health needs.

## **Standard 6: Education, Enjoyment and Achievement**

### **Standard Statement:**

Children should have access to educational services and are given the opportunity to participate in social or recreational activities of their choice.

### **Quality Indicator:**

1. Children should be empowered and supported to engage in educational programmes to maximise their potential.

## **Standard 7: Positive Relationships**

### **Standard Statement:**

The experience of safe, meaningful and stable relationships is crucial for the overall health and well-being of the child.

### **Quality Indicator:**

Children should be empowered and supported to develop meaningful relationships. Through these relationships children develop a strong sense of identity and belonging, develop their self-confidence, their self-esteem and build secure attachments.

## **Standard 8: Service Quality Management**

### **Standard Statement:**

Children are provided with the best possible care that meets their needs and improves their life outcomes.

### **Quality Indicators:**

1. Effective leadership and management arrangements should be in place to ensure that children are provided with child-centred, safe and effective care.
  2. The care givers should be recruited through a transparent recruitment plan so as to ensure that children are provided with the best care possible.
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