

Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers - FAQ

Version 1 – 7th May 2020

Introduction – Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers

In recognition of the fact that childcare is crucial to enable the health sector to continue to operate during this unprecedented public health emergency, the Government has asked the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to oversee the provision of childcare in the homes of essential healthcare workers.

This Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers will only be active during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will determine when this scheme ends.

The scheme will provide up to 45 hours of childcare per week for each healthcare worker's family. Normally one childcare worker will support each family.

[What is the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers?](#)

This Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers allows essential health workers to have their children cared for in their own home. It enables access for essential health workers to childcare practitioners who give safe care and who provide play and learning activities.

The Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers involves DCYA, Pobal and 30 Childcare Committees around the country coordinating and managing a list of childcare practitioners.

These staff remain under the management and supervision of their current employer and payment is through their employer.

Whilst this type of childcare is not required by law to be registered, childcare practitioners are Garda-vetted and will be working under supervision.

[Who can avail of Outreach/Homebased Provision?](#)

The scheme is for essential health workers whose childcare needs are not currently being met and who require additional childcare provision in order to work.

[The role of service providers](#)

Services approved to operate the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers will be required to meet some normal operating requirements such as:

- Have an agreement between the service and parent/guardian
- Have a child record
- Maintain employee records
- Continue supervision of their employees
- Continue payment of employees

A service outreach information pack will be available to all services, childcare practitioners, and essential health workers who take part in the scheme. It will include a sample contract and other key documents and policies to support delivery of the scheme.

The role of Childcare Practitioners in a home setting

It must be recognised that this is a new role for early learning and care and school-age childcare practitioners. Although employed by an early learning and care/school-age childcare service, this new role, will, at least in its initial phase, be exclusively in a home setting. However, the fundamental principles of the work have not changed. A childcare practitioner is a professional, offering children safe, good quality care and providing them with play and learning opportunities that contribute to their development. It is important that the childcare practitioner and service provider discuss and consider this new role together, including issues such as: working alone in a home setting, possibly working longer hours, working with older children and a mix of ages, possibly supporting children with school work and maybe having to do a bedtime routine.

It will be a requirement that the service manager or another person in charge will be available to the childcare practitioner at all times. It is important that daily contact between the service and the childcare practitioner is maintained and that any concerns are discussed early. The service will be required to provide an emergency contact if the service manager is unavailable.

Funding of the Scheme

The scheme is being managed and majority funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The Department will pay a weekly rate of €841.95 per participating family to Service Providers for a 45-hour week. There will be a co-payment for each family of €90 per week, payable directly to the service provider, as a contribution to the cost. The overall payment to the service, therefore, will be €931.95 per family per week. This sum is intended to cover all costs of provision.

It is open to services also to offer part-time childcare. Part-time places will be funded for 22.5 hours per week, and the Department will pay a weekly rate of €420.98. For part-time childcare, the co-payment for families will be €45 per week.

The Department is not the employer and so does not determine the wage paid to childcare practitioners by their employers. The total scheme payment of €931.95 per week is calculated on an assumption that employers will pay an average wage of €15 per hour, though it is recognised that the wage received by an individual childcare practitioner participating in the TCSEHW will depend on the employer's own payment policies. An overhead contribution of €135 per week per full-time childcare practitioner (or €67.50 part-time) is also included in the €931.95 payment. This overhead contribution includes payment for management and supervision of staff participating in the scheme and for managers' role in liaison with parents. The balance covers employer PRSI and accrued holiday pay.

Services that are availing of Revenue's Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS) and DCYA's Temporary Wage Subsidy Childcare Scheme (TWSCS) may also participate in the TCSEHW. However, they should not claim pay-related elements of TWSS/TWSCS for practitioners or managers who are taking part in the Scheme.

The role of CCC's

The City/County Childcare Committees will play a coordination and support role for services and families taking part in the scheme. Their role will include:

- Matching eligible essential health workers who require childcare with those services and childcare practitioners who have volunteered and have been approved to provide childcare as part of the scheme.
- Supporting and offering guidance and advice to services to assist them throughout this process and beyond, to ensure that the services can facilitate their childcare practitioners to provide home-based care as quickly and seamlessly as possible, so that our essential health workers can continue to provide care to those who need it.
- Monitoring outreach staffing capacity in each of the approved services and, if required, assisting in drawing in childcare practitioners from other services.

The role of Pobal

Pobal will provide national management of the scheme. Their role will include:

- Managing the application process for service providers.
- Managing funding and all funding queries.
- Providing a national contact centre for parents seeking childcare through the scheme.
- In collaboration with CCCs, monitoring outreach staffing capacity in each of the approved services and, if required, assisting in drawing in childcare practitioners from other services.

Other Supports that are available

- Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers information pack

FAQ for Parents		
Question		Answer
1	Who can avail of this Scheme?	The scheme is open to eligible essential health workers. If you work for a health organisation, your HR Manager will let you know if you are an eligible essential health worker who can avail of this scheme, and will provide you with a form (EEHWF 1) to complete.
2	I am an eligible essential health worker and I need to source childcare. What should I do?	You should first contact your HR Manager. If you are an eligible essential health worker, your HR Manager will sign the form EEHWF 1 and return it to you. You should then contact the Parent Support Centre on 01-9068530 who will ask you a series of a questions to check eligibility and to get key your key details to support allocation of childcare.
3	What information will I need to provide as part of the process?	You will need to provide your name, contact details, workplace information and an indication of the level of childcare required.
4	My childcare needs can vary from week to week, can this be facilitated?	Depending on local availability of childcare workers, it may be possible to facilitate this. As part of the application process, you will be required to outline the level of childcare needed. It is also important that you discuss in detail all your requirements with the appointed childcare service so that they can match the most appropriate available childcare practitioner to you.
5	My employer has determined that I am an essential health worker and my partner is an essential health worker. Can we access the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSEHW)?	Yes. If your employer has determined that you are an essential health worker and your partner is an essential health worker (working outside the home or from the home) you can access the scheme.
6	My employer has determined that I am an essential health worker and my partner is an essential worker ¹ required to work outside of the home. Can we access the TCSEHW?	Yes. If your employer has determined that you are an essential health worker and your partner is an essential worker who cannot be facilitated by their employer to work from home then you can access the scheme.

¹ Essential workers as set out by S.I. No. 121/2020 - Health Act 1947 (Section 31A -Temporary Restrictions) (Covid-19) Regulations 2020

7	My employer has determined that I am an essential health worker and my partner is an essential worker working from home. Can we access the TCSEHW?	No. If your partner is an essential worker (other than an essential health worker) and working from home you cannot access the scheme at this time.
8	My employer has determined that I am an essential health worker and my partner is not an essential worker. Can we access the TCSEHW?	No. If your partner is not an essential worker you cannot access this scheme at this time.
9	My employer has determined that I am an eligible essential health worker and I do not have a partner. Can I access the TCSEHW?	Yes.
10	Will the list of eligible essential health workers be changed in future?	The definition will be kept under review, and may be amended if required. Any updates to the eligible essential health worker definition will be published on the website of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and will be made available through Parent Support Centre and the City/County Childcare Committees.
11	How does this plan fit with the current restrictions in terms of households not interacting with one other?	The Government and the National Public Health Emergency Team has approved this model of childcare provision. By providing childcare in your home and not asking you to bring your child/children to a childcare centre, we can minimise the risk of cross infection while still helping to meet your childcare need.
12	Will I receive financial support for childcare?	If you participate in DCYA's Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers, most of the cost of your childcare will be paid by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. You will be asked to contribute €90 per week for full-time childcare (up to 45 hours) for your family, or €45 per week for part-time childcare (up to 22.5 hours). If you need more than 45 hours of childcare per week, this will be by agreement between you and the childcare service provider directly, but no subsidy will be available for additional hours.
13	How will I be allocated a childcare practitioner?	Once we have your information your local City/County Childcare Committee will seek to match your needs with available service providers in your area. Once a service has been identified for you, you will be given the service manager's contact details. You may then contact the service manager directly and they will identify a suitable childcare practitioner from their service for you and agree the start date.
14	Can I source staff directly from service I know?	This may not be possible for a variety of reasons including the voluntary nature of this scheme for childcare providers, the limited capacity that will be

		available, and the fact that the scheme will be operated by DCYA using only approved services for this scheme. However, part of the application process will allow you to name any service you have previously used and the CCC will try to accommodate your needs and preferences wherever possible. You will ultimately be offered a particular service provider and staff member identified by your local City/County Childcare Committee.
15	What qualifications/experience can I expect the childcare practitioner to have?	All childcare practitioners participating in the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers are experienced practitioners, have met regulatory requirements in relation to their role, and have been Garda Vetted.
16	Will I have the opportunity to “interview” the allocated childcare practitioner?	It will not be possible for you to interview your assigned childcare practitioner but the CCC will note your needs and preferences in terms of skills and experiences and try to accommodate them. All childcare practitioners working as part of the scheme have already gone through an interview process with their employer, are Garda vetted, and have been deemed suitable to work with children. It will be possible to discuss arrangements with the manager of your allocated service. It is important that you discuss in detail all your requirements with the service so that they can match the most appropriate available childcare practitioner to you, given your childcare needs.
17	Can I request a different childcare practitioner if I feel the allocated person is not suitable?	This is a matter between you and the service manager. The service will identify a childcare practitioner based on your needs. If you feel a childcare practitioner is not suitable then the service will try in so far as is practicable to address your concerns.
18	What support is available to children if they do not know the childcare practitioner, e.g. a settling-in period?	It is recommended that the childcare practitioner has an introductory meeting with the family. If childcare is needed quickly and this initial meeting cannot be facilitated, it is recommended that on the first day the childcare practitioner would arrive approx. ½ hour early to have time to meet everyone in the company of the parent/guardians. Some transition activities such as preparing information ‘all about me’ can be useful to both the childcare practitioner and the child/ren. The setting will provide transition support to your family.
19	Will an alternative childcare practitioner be available if the first person gets sick or is unavailable?	In the event that the childcare practitioner assigned to you becomes ill or is no longer available to work, the service manager will contact you to arrange an alternative childcare practitioner for your family. If the childcare practitioner becomes ill while caring for your child/children a relief childcare practitioner will be sent to your house as soon as possible to take over from them.

20	What is the procedure in the event that difficulties arise between a parent and a childcare practitioner and the relationship cannot be continued?	This is a matter between you and the service manager in the first instance. You should discuss all difficulties with the service manager as they arise. If difficulties persist and you feel the relationship with the childcare practitioner cannot continue then the service will try in so far as is practicable to address your concerns. If the service has no alternative childcare practitioner available you can contact your local City/County Childcare Committee to check availability of an alternative service provider.
21	If you are not satisfied with how a complaint is handled by the service provider, where can you go?	If you have a complaint you should, in the first instance, raise it with the childcare practitioner assigned to you. If you remain unhappy, you should contact the service manager. The service manager will share their complaints policy with you when the service commences and any/all complaints should be handled in line with that policy. If you are unhappy with how the complaint has been handled by the service owner you should contact your local City/County Childcare Committee. If your complaint is of a serious nature or relates to child welfare concerns, the City/County Childcare Committee may advise you to get in touch with Tusla. The City/County Childcare Committee will assist you with this process.
22	At what stage are house rules discussed with childcare practitioners (TV time/food/snacks etc.)?	It is important to discuss these with the service manager when you are first establishing childcare provision. It is also advised to discuss these issues again directly with the childcare practitioner at an introduction meeting.
23	What items do I need to provide within the home? (First Aid box, notebook for daily records, food)	You should discuss this with the service manager when arranging childcare provision. Parents will know what items are essential for their children’s needs. Additionally, a notebook might be good to assist in recording the events of the day in your absence. Key items which should be provided in the home are food, water, nappies/creams, and a notebook. If you have some items already in the home such as a First Aid Box, sanitiser, or gloves, please let the service know so that they do not have to provide them.
24	Who is responsible for the insurance to cover this arrangement?	The childcare service which is providing childcare to your family is responsible for insurance cover in relation to this arrangement.
25	Will I need to sign a contract for childcare provision?	Yes, there should be an agreement in place between the service and the parent.
26	Do I need to meet the service manager in person to sign contracts, complete other paperwork or discuss the details	It is not necessary to meet the service manager in person in order to arrange childcare. The manager will contact you by telephone and will send any forms/paperwork to you via email. Where signatures

	of the childcare arrangement? If so, how will social distancing be maintained during that process?	are required on documents, these can be printed and posted, or scanned and emailed back, or left with the childcare practitioner on their first day to forward to their manager. Any follow up contact with the service manager may be done over the telephone or by email.
27	If a partner of an eligible essential health worker is working from home or others have access to the home (relatives of the family) how is this managed?	This service is available to eligible essential health workers as defined. If the partner of an eligible essential health worker is also an eligible essential health worker and working from home then they will be accommodated through the TCSEHW. To adhere to public health guidance in limiting interactions there should be no other adults accessing the house during the outreach childcare provision, unless those adults are resident in the house.
28	I need overnight childcare. Is this available?	Overnight childcare is not available within the scheme at this stage. The Department for Children and Youth Affairs will keep the matter under review and, should a substantial need for overnight care arise, will look at options to meet that need. However, even if there is a need for such a service it may not be possible to provide one due to public health issues and/or the availability of services/staff to work those hours. All services that participate in the TCSEHW do so on a voluntary basis.
29	How do I pay the parent contribution of €90 per week?	The parent contribution (€90 per week for full-time childcare or €45 per week for part-time childcare) should be paid directly to the service provider. The service provider will discuss payment with you when they contact you to arrange childcare.
30	How long will this childcare service be available to me?	The Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers will only be active during the initial period of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will initially run for a four-week period from May 18 th and may be extended beyond this period. It will be kept under review by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA). Depending on guidance from the National Public Health Emergency Team, changes to public health aspects of the scheme may be made while the scheme is under way.
31	When the Government funded scheme ends can I retain the childcare practitioner and pay them myself?	No, the childcare practitioner is an employee of the service provider and will return to that provider's childcare centre once the scheme has ended.
32	Can the childcare practitioner also help out with cooking and cleaning in my home?	The childcare practitioner's primary role is to provide care for your children. This may include some cooking or cleaning as it relates to the care of the children. For instance, they may need to assemble and/or heat pre-prepared meals for children in their care and complete general cleaning such as before and after meals, any spillages. The practitioner should be mindful of HSE guidance in relation to infection control and prevention

		(e.g. regularly wipe down frequently touched surfaces). A discussion needs to happen between you, the service provider and the childcare practitioner about what is appropriate.
33	Will this scheme definitely commence on 18 May? What if public health advice changes?	The Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSHEW) is included in the Government’s Roadmap for Reopening Business and Society. The TCSEHW is part of Phase 1 of the Roadmap which is due to commence on 18 May. Should Government decide, based on public health advice and the principles set out in the Roadmap, that the timing of particular phases requires review, this may impact on the roll out of the TCSEHW.

<h2>FAQ for Service Providers</h2>	
Question	Answer
1	<p>What is the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSEHW) and how will it be paid for?</p> <p>The Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSEHW) is where a service provider assigns staff from within the service to care for children of eligible essential health workers in the essential workers’ homes. The service provider is paid a fixed rate per family for this service and will pay the childcare practitioner’s salary and meet any overhead costs from that rate. Parents will be asked to make a flat-rate contribution to the service provider.</p>
2	<p>What do I have to do if I want my service to take part in the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSEHW)?</p> <p>If you would like to take part in the TCSEHW, you will be required to complete the volunteer application form and submit it to Pobal. You are advised to raise any questions you may have with your local CCC. Pobal will then inform you whether your service has been chosen for this phase of reopening. Because of public health restrictions, at this time no service provider may provide centre-based childcare until directed by Government.</p>
3	<p>What are the criteria for my service to apply to participate in the TCSEHW?</p> <p>All Tusla-registered service providers are being invited to apply to participate.</p> <p>Roll out of the scheme may commence in phases depending on the number of essential health workers who need Childcare in different areas of the country. Therefore you may not be asked to deliver Childcare immediately. If you have volunteered to take part, Pobal will let you know when/ if your service is needed.</p>
4	<p>Is participation voluntary for services?</p> <p>Yes, participation is voluntary for services. Not all staff within a service may wish to or be able to participate in this scheme. Providers may continue to pay staff in a participating service who do not provide outreach childcare using wage supports under the TWSS/TWSCS.</p>
5	<p>How long will the TCSEHW be in operation?</p> <p>The TCSEHW will only be active during the initial period of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will initially run for a four-week period from May 18th and may be extended beyond this period. It will be kept under review by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA). Depending on guidance from the National Public Health Emergency Team, changes to</p>

		public health aspects of the scheme may be made while the scheme is under way.
6	Some of my staff wish to participate in the TCSEHW, while others do not – can I go through this process with some and not others?	It is not necessary for all of your staff to participate in the scheme. In fact, it may not be appropriate for some staff to participate at this time, for example, if they are required to self-isolate or have an underlying health condition themselves or a family member with an underlying health condition or with their own caring responsibilities. You can register some staff as childcare practitioners participating in the TCSEHW and not others.
7	What payment does my service receive for participating in the TCSEHW?	Your service will receive a full-time weekly rate per family of €931.95 (including a parent contribution of €90). The weekly rate is calculated based on a rate per hour of €20.71 over a 45-hour week and includes salary costs and an overhead payment of €135 per week per childcare practitioner for supervision, management of staff and supply of practice materials.
8	What if a parent only needs a part-time service?	You may offer a part-time service which will be paid at half the full time rate (€465.98) to cover a 22.5 hour week.
9	When will I get paid?	Once the Funding Agreement Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSEHW) has been signed and submitted to Pobal, your facility will be included in the next payment run. You will be paid based on availability initially (i.e. you do not have to wait until staff are assigned) and this will be kept under review by the Department as it assesses demand for the service. The timing of payment of the parent contribution should be discussed and agreed between the service manager and parent.
10	Will additional funding be paid to services to cover time for the operation of the process i.e. daily contact with staff etc.?	The weekly payment per childcare practitioner participating in TCSEHW includes a payment of €135 to cover overheads associated with the management of this service, supervision of staff and supply of practice materials. A minimum overhead payment of €405 per week will be paid to participating services.
11	Is there a fixed hourly pay rate for my staff who participate in the TCSEHW?	The terms and conditions of employment are a matter for the employer and the employee. The total scheme payment of €931.95 per week is calculated on an assumption that employers will pay childcare practitioners participating in the TCSEHW an average wage of €15 per hour, though it is recognised that the wage received by an individual childcare practitioner will depend on the employer’s own payment policies. (In addition to the contribution to staff wages

		[average €15/hour], the €931.95 weekly payment includes payment for employer PRSI, annual leave accrual, and an overhead payment.)
12	Will my staff be paid for travel time or have their travel costs recouped?	There is no additional payment from DCYA for travel time or the cost of travel.
13	If my staff member becomes ill do I have to pay them sick pay?	The terms and conditions of employment (including sick pay) are a matter for the employer and the employee. However, should your employee become ill with Covid19 or be instructed to self-isolate, the DCYA will continue to pay the service for that staff member for a period of two weeks. After the two week period (once clear of Covid) the staff member may resume duties or, if no longer required, revert to the TWSS/TWSCS.
14	Will I be in breach of the rules for the TWSS/TWSCS if I participate in the TCSEHW?	Participation in the TCSEHW should not affect your eligibility for TWSS/TWSCS once your revenue for Q2 2020 (including DCYA TWSCS payments, but not Revenue TWSS payments) remains below 75% of your normal revenue. Any staff whose wages are paid through the TCSEHW should not be supported through the wage-elements of TWSS/TWSCS. However, they do count towards the calculation of the overhead element of TWSCS.
15	How will I know that I am earning less than 75% of my normal revenue?	Assessment of the service’s revenue is a matter for each service provider. DCYA has set out the rates applicable to the TCSEHW and these should be used to calculate your service’s likely revenue. Your local CCC may be able to assist you with calculating this.
16	Some of my staff want to participate in the TCSEHW and some don’t or can’t. How do I know what proportion of my staff can participate in the TCSEHW without jeopardising the TWSS/TWSCS payments for those who don’t or can’t.	<p>As a general rule of thumb, it would be expected that most services will remain within the parameters of the TWSS/TWSCS if they use 50% or less of their employees for the TCSEHW.</p> <p>The size of your salary cost compared to your overall normal revenue is also a good indicator of how many staff can participate (e.g. low salary costs relative to your overall revenue may provide scope for more staff to participate in the scheme).</p> <p>You should also take into account that the 75% of revenue rule relates to the full Q2 period. As the TCSEHW is only commencing midway through that period, the impact on your revenue for the full period will be reduced.</p>

17	My staff are receiving payment under the Revenue Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme and the DCYA Temporary Wage Subsidy Childcare Scheme. Do I still need to pay them for Outreach?	While a service may continue to avail of the Revenue-operated Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS) and the DCYA-operated Temporary Wage Subsidy Childcare Scheme (TWSCS) while participating in the TCSEHW a service cannot claim pay-related elements of TWSCS for staff who are participating in the TCSEHW. Staff of the service who choose not to or cannot participate in the TCSEHW should continue to be paid from the TWSS and TWSCS. Staff who participate in the TCSEHW should no longer be included in the TWSS or TWSCS and instead should be paid by you from the payment received for the TCSEHW.
18	Should I take my staff off TWSS/TWSCS once I volunteer.	No, you should wait until Pobal confirm that your service has been selected to participate in the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers and the number of staff from your service that have been selected to participate. At that point you should move the relevant staff off TWSS/TWSCS and over to the TCSEHW. You will also need to amend your TWSS/TWSCS submission to reflect the change. Pobal will provide information on how to do this at a later date.
19	Will I continue to receive the overhead payment under the TWSCS if my service participates in the TCSEHW?	Yes, you will still receive an unchanged overhead payment under the TWSCS. This is because the overhead payments for the TWSCS and the TCSEHW cover different cost items.
20	What overhead payment will I receive if my service participates in the TCSEHW?	The weekly rate per childcare practitioner participating in the TCSEHW includes a payment of €135 to cover overheads associated with the management of this service, supervision of staff and supply of practice materials. There will be a minimum overhead payment of €405 per week for participating services.
21	How is the parent contribution paid?	Parents will be asked to make a payment of €90 per week for full-time childcare (45 hours per week) or €45 per week for part-time childcare (22.5 hours per week). Parents should make this payment directly to the service.
22	Do I have to charge the parent €90 per week?	Parents are expected to pay €90 per week for full-time childcare for the family. The timing of payment of this fee is a matter to be managed between the service provider and the parent. Should you choose to reduce or waive the parent fee, DCYA will not

		increase the amount it pays to you to compensate for that loss. You may not charge a family any more than €90 per week for up to 45 hours of childcare under this scheme. Any hours offered beyond 45 per week would be a private arrangement to be agreed between the provider and the parent and DCYA will not make any payment to services for those additional hours. A service may not insist that a family uses more than 45 hours per week.
23	Under the terms of the TWSCS I am not allowed to charge parental fees. Should I still charge the parent contribution?	Yes, the contract for the TCSEHW notes that the parental contribution relates solely to this Scheme. It will not impact on your compliance with the terms of the TWSCS.
24	I am currently in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP). Can my service participate in the TCSEHW?	You must cease claiming the PUP if you sign up for the TCSEHW and your staff are assigned as childcare practitioners participating in the scheme. The hourly rate set for the Outreach service includes an overhead fee of €135 per week per childcare practitioner participating in the scheme, which includes the cost of a manager’s time in managing and supervising staff. A minimum overhead payment of €405 per week will be paid to each participating service.
25	My service meets the criteria and I was contacted by Pobal, what do I need to do now?	The Volunteer Application Form is available on PIP. Please complete this form and email it to Pobal – pipdocuments@pobal.ie
26	How do I complete the Volunteer Application Template and return it to Pobal?	Please see the guidance document for the Volunteer Application Template available on PIP. Once completed, please return to Pobal via email at pipdocuments@pobal.ie
27	I have returned my Volunteer Application Template, What happens next?	If your service is needed in the first phase, you will be contacted directly by Pobal. If your service is not needed immediately, it may be needed at a later date. Pobal and/or your local City/County Childcare Committee may be in contact with you in the coming weeks.
28	Why haven’t I been selected?	Your service has not been selected at this time due to limited need at present in your area or excess of supply. You should remain on standby and you will be contacted by Pobal and/or your local City/County Childcare Committee if the need locally changes.
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	How will I know if I am required to provide Outreach Childcare?	Pobal will contact you and will outline the steps you need to take. Guidance and an application form are available on PIP.
30	How often will capacity be reviewed on whether my service is required?	Pobal will monitor local supply of places very closely over coming days/weeks and if your service is required we will contact you.
31	How much notice will I get if I am required?	We will provide as much notice as possible in asking you to participate. However, in agreeing to take part in the scheme, a service should be prepared to deliver Outreach Childcare with one week's notice. Ideally staff should be available to be placed with families from the 18 th May 2020.
32	Will I continue to receive payments under the TWSCS if not selected?	For services that volunteer but are not selected (and for services that do not volunteer), the COVID Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme and the Temporary Wage Subsidy Childcare Scheme remain available along with other Government Covid-19 related supports.
33	What is a childcare practitioner participating in the TCSEHW?	A childcare practitioner participating in the TCSEHW is a childcare practitioner in your employment. They offer children safe and high quality care and provide children with play and learning opportunities in their own home. Childcare practitioners participating in the TCSEHW will provide childcare services in the homes of essential health workers for the duration of the scheme.
34	Is there a Job Description for childcare practitioners participating in the scheme?	The practitioners participating in the scheme remain early learning and care practitioners. They are just providing their service in a different environment. Each practitioner should discuss their particular role and what is expected of them with their employer.
35	What criteria does my staff have to meet to participate in the TCSEHW?	All childcare practitioners participating in the TCSEHW are experienced, will have been Garda Vetted, and meet regulatory requirements in relation to their role. Because of the public health risk, staff should not participate in the scheme if they are pregnant or have an underlying medical condition.
36	All my staff are Garda Vetted. Will they require new Garda Vetting to participate in this Scheme?	Yes. As your staff's existing Garda Vetting is based on centre-based provision of childcare (i.e. it was not envisaged that they would be working in the children's home) new vetting is required for this outreach service. DCYA will work with ECI/Barnardos and the Garda National Vetting Bureau to expedite Garda vetting and ECI/Barnardos and CCCs will assist services in this regard.

37	When do I need to apply for re-vetting for my staff?	Once you have made the decision to apply to take part in the scheme, you should immediately engage with those staff who would like to volunteer and apply for Garda vetting for them. If you are a member of ECI you should apply for your vetting through their vetting service. If not, you should contact the Barnardos vetting service.
38	Can staff begin to provide outreach childcare while waiting on the Garda vetting process to be completed?	No, all staff must be re-vetted before they are eligible to provide outreach childcare.
39	How do I confirm Garda vetting process is completed?	You should update your 'Volunteer Application Template' and re-send to pipdocuments@pobal.ie
40	Can I accept children who are not children of eligible essential health workers?	Only children of eligible essential health workers can participate in the scheme. Families will be matched with services by Pobal and the CCCs, who will ensure that only eligible families participate in the scheme.
41	How does a childcare setting choose which staff member to match with a family, in order to avoid any claims of unfair treatment from staff at a later date?	It is a matter for the service provider to determine which staff member should work with a particular family. In making this decision, a service provider may wish to consider factors such as: any existing relationship between a child and a childcare practitioner (for example a staff member in the room the child attended before service was closed on 12 March); the hours required by a family and those that a childcare practitioner can work; the geographical location of staff member and family home; and the age of the child/children and whether staff have experience dealing with children of that age/those ages.
42	Where a parent and one of my staff have already made an agreement that is in place which is in an informal/private capacity, can this continue or must they transfer to this new scheme?	All parties who wish to avail of the TCSEHW must go through the formal process of signing up for the scheme.
43	How should we charge parents for the TCSEHW?	Parents availing of full-time outreach childcare provision up to a maximum of 45 hours per week should make a co-payment of €90 per week. Parents availing of part time outreach childcare provision up to a maximum of 22.5 hours per week should make a co-payment of €45 per week.
44	What are the hours of operation?	The staff member should be prepared to meet the care needs of the family, which may vary. Where possible only one staff member should be assigned to one family; however, in some circumstances it may be necessary for 2 staff members to work with the family in shifts.
45	What if families need to access more hours than usual?	The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is providing funding for a maximum of 45 hours per family per week. You should discuss a family's needs

		with the parent/guardian and with the member of staff who is being employed as a childcare practitioner in this scheme. We would ask childcare practitioners to work flexibly with eligible essential health workers during the period of the pandemic.
46	If there is a dispute between a childcare practitioner and the Parent, who is the dispute actually with – ie must the complaint/dispute go through the childcare setting?	Yes, the service provider remains the employer of the childcare practitioner. Any dispute between the childcare practitioner and a parent should be discussed with the service manager or designated person in charge.
47	Can families contact other services if there is no availability?	No, families need to contact their local City/County Childcare Committee who will identify an alternative childcare provider.
48	What happens to my registration as a childcare provider during this time, if my setting is closed but we take part in the TCSEHW?	Providers will not be removed from the Register due to closure of their service for the period of COVID -19 unless they advise Tusla of their wish to permanently close through the usual channel of submission of a cessation form. Services will remain on the Register unless and until advised otherwise.
49	What is the adult-child ratio requirement for the TCSEHW?	There are no adult-child ratio requirements. Except in exceptional circumstances (by agreement with the local CCC), one childcare practitioner is to work with one family at any given time.
50	I have been contacted by a parent who has not previously used my service – can I offer to match one of my staff with them?	The TCSEHW is only available to families who are on a list maintained by Pobal. Once the parent has approval from Pobal and you have been contacted by your local CCC, you can match one of your staff with that family. You should inform the CCC once placement has been agreed.
51	Who do I need to advise if/when I match a staff member with a family?	You should inform the CCC (within 24 hours) once the placement has been agreed.
52	What if a parent contacts me directly for childcare without having being referred through my local CCC?	A service provider cannot accept direct requests for childcare, as all must be referred through your local CCC. In such instances, the parent should be advised to contact the Parent Support Centre
53	How many families can be cared for by a childcare practitioner?	Except in exceptional circumstances (by agreement with the local CCC), one childcare practitioner should work with one family in one home.
54	Who is responsible for support and supervision of childcare practitioners?	The childcare practitioner is still an employee of your service and all employer responsibilities in this regard must be met. It is suggested that a daily phone call to the childcare practitioner by the service Manager or other designated person in charge occurs and that weekly a scheduled video call/meeting takes place to provide adequate debrief and support.

55	Who is responsible for the insurance to cover this arrangement?	Service providers are responsible for insurance to cover this arrangement.
56	How can we ensure our staff are insured to provide care in a parent’s home, and are we liable should there be any incident?	You need to seek approval from your insurer, through your broker, for your staff to provide care in a home-based setting. Insurers will need to note the addresses of the homes in which the care is being provided so that they can extend cover to apply to same.
57	Whose insurance covers the childcare practitioner if they have an accident or become unwell?	As the childcare practitioner’s employer, any accident or illness relating to the workplace needs to be addressed by your insurer as normal. Some insurers have confirmed that they will not provide cover for illness or injury arising from Covid 19 in the course of provision of the outreach childcare.
58	What checks will be undertaken with regard to scheme compliance?	<p>At the discretion of DCYA or Pobal acting on DCYA’s behalf the following checks will be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the provision of childcare is taking place. In this regard the provider will be required to retain the agreement with family for childcare provision and the attendance records of the childcare practitioner at the family home. • That the copayment for the 22.5/45 hours does not exceed the maximum allowable. In this regard the provider will be required to maintain the receipt of the payment and evidence of electronic transmission of same.
59	How will eligibility of essential health workers be verified?	Before contacting the Parent Support Centre, essential health workers are required to contact their employer’s HR Manager. Their employer will determine whether they are an essential health worker and will sign a form to confirm this. Essential health workers are required to retain this form for verification.
60	How will working hours or breaks be determined?	Because of the public health risks in this emergency situation, only one childcare practitioner will work with a family. Unlike childcare provision in a centre-based service, therefore, childcare practitioners participating in the TCSEHW will be required to remain with and care for the children of the family they work with throughout their shift. It should be made clear to staff when they are asked to volunteer and, again, when they are assigned to a family that their normal working hours and breaks will not apply while they participate in this temporary scheme. The

		<p>number of hours per day and per week which they are required to work should be made clear to them.</p> <p>In relation to breaks, the childcare practitioner will need to be flexible and work around the needs of the children in their care when organising their breaks. Staff should organise food and rest breaks around the children’s routine, e.g. the childcare practitioner may plan to take a rest or a food-break when a child is sleeping or is having downtime.</p>
61	If an eligible essential health worker is working long hours, is more than one childcare practitioner required to cover a shift?	For 45 hours of childcare per week, one childcare practitioner should normally be assigned to one family. In exceptional circumstances (and in agreement with the CCC) for long hours two childcare practitioners may need to be assigned to one family. The TCSEHW does not provide for overnight care of children.
62	Will overtime be paid? If so, at whose expense?	The wage, including any overtime payment, is a matter between the service provider and the childcare practitioner.
63	Is outreach provision subject to any inspection from Tusla or contact with Tusla in any way?	No, the outreach provision does not come within the scope of the Early Years Services Regulations and so is not subject to inspection by Tusla. However, services should try as much as possible to apply the service’s policies and procedures in the provision of outreach. Childcare practitioners should be advised to follow best practice in carrying out their duties and should be subject to supervision by the service manager.
64	How do we safeguard children if Regulations do not apply and there are no inspections	Services should try as much as possible to apply the service’s policies and procedures in the provision of outreach. Childcare practitioners should be advised to follow best practice in carrying out their duties and should be subject to supervision by the service manager.
65	Where do services get PPE and resources and is there any additional budget available?	Childcare practitioners should follow their service’s policy in relation to the use of gloves and/or aprons (e.g. for nappy changing). Gloves and aprons should be provided by the service provider. Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (e.g. masks) is not required for the provision of this outreach service. Childcare practitioners should observe good hand and respiratory hygiene in line with HSE guidance. The cost of gloves and/or aprons is covered within the overhead payment made for the TCSEHW.
66	Do my staff need to be tested for Covid19 before they can participate in this scheme? Will they be routinely tested while participating in the TCSEHW?	No, public health advice is that childcare practitioners do not need to be tested for Covid19 unless they are symptomatic.
67	Will symptomatic staff members be prioritised for Covid19 testing?	Current public health advice is that childcare practitioners will not be prioritised for testing.

68	How can I assure my staff member that the family they are assigned too are Covid19 free?	Staff will not be asked to provide care for children where there is a Covid case in the home of the child. Families will be advised to not participate or withdraw from the TCSEHW if a child or other family member living in the home develops Covid19. It is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of staff coming into contact with Covid19 while participating in the Outreach service; however, by following HSE guidance the risk will be minimised. It is important to remember that the National Public Health Emergency Team has approved the TCSEHW from a public health perspective, and that frontline health workers take extensive precautions to reduce the risk of infection when at work.
69	Do services provide "Play Packs" with material and equipment to childcare practitioners to use in the home as part of their work?	No, parents are expected to provide materials and equipment within the home setting. If service providers / childcare practitioners choose to bring their own additional materials, that is a matter between the service provider and the family. If materials are brought in to the house, they should be cleaned when being brought into the house and taken away, in accordance with HSE guidance.
70	What is the childcare practitioner's role in cooking/cleaning in the home?	The childcare practitioner's primary role is to provide care for the children of the family he/she is assigned to. This may include some cooking or cleaning as it relates to the care of the child/ren. For instance, childcare practitioner may be required to assemble and/or heat if necessary pre- prepared meals for children in their care and to complete general cleaning such as before and after meals, any spillages, etc. The childcare practitioner should be mindful of HSE guidance in relation to infection control and prevention (e.g. regularly wipe down frequently touched surfaces). Before beginning a placement, it is good practice for a discussion to take place between parent, service provider and childcare practitioner about what is appropriate.
71	Will the manager be expected to attend the home?	No, all engagement should be completed through phone/email.
72	Will parents need to sign a contract for childcare provision?	Yes, there should be an agreement in place between the service and the parent.
73	Do I need to meet the parent in person to sign contracts, complete other paperwork or discuss the details of the childcare arrangement? If so, how will social distancing be maintained during that process?	You should not meet the parent in person in order to arrange childcare. You should contact the parent by telephone and send any forms/paperwork via email. Where signatures are required on documents, these should be printed and posted, or scanned and emailed back, or left with the childcare practitioner on their first day to forward to you as their manager.

		Any follow up contact with the parent should be done over the telephone or by email.
74	What training or support do I need to provide to my staff?	You will need to take your staff member through the outreach pack, explain what is required of them and sign the appropriate documents in the pack. You must also keep in regular contact with the staff member over the telephone and be available to answer questions as they arise. The CCCs will be available to provide support to you if you cannot answer questions directly.
75	Will staff contracts be amended or will they contract separately for the duration of the COVID response?	This is a decision for each service provider. It is recommended that either a new contract is issued for the duration of the COVID response or that an addendum to contract outlines the particulars of the new role under the TCSEHW.
76	Will an alternative staff member be available if the childcare practitioner gets sick or is unavailable?	In the event that a childcare practitioner assigned becomes ill or is no longer available to work, you should contact the parent to arrange an alternative childcare practitioner for their family. If the childcare practitioner becomes ill while caring for a child/children, a relief staff member should be sent to the home as soon as possible to take over from them. The CCCs will have a list of staff of other services in the area who may be able to provide a staff member if you don't have a replacement staff member available.
77	Who provides the first aid box?	If there is a first aid box in the house, this should suffice. If there is no first aid box in the home then the service should provide one to the childcare practitioner.
78	Can children of my staff go with them to the home?	No, given the public health risk, this is not allowed.
79	Will the manager/staff member be alerted immediately if the parent/s or children of the family they are working with have symptoms of COVID-19?	Families participating in the programme are required to inform the service provider promptly if they have symptoms of COVID-19. In addition all individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their GP for further advice. If the doctor arranges testing for them they will be given an appointment of testing. They may also be contacted to help identify who they have been in contact with (Contact Tracing) if this is required for public health purposes. People identified as Contacts of COVID-19 are called to let them know that they are contacts.
80	What if the family member (parent or child) has the test but the test does not show COVID-19?	<u>Tests for COVID-19 are good but they are not perfect. Even if the lab test does not detect the virus people who are symptomatic should continue to self-isolate at home and their family should not participate in the childcare scheme until the period of self-isolation</u>

		advised by their doctor is over. This is to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 virus or other viral illness they may have.
81	What if the family member (parent or child) tests positive for Covid19?	<u>People who test positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate</u> at home for 14 days after their symptoms developed, the last five days of which should be fever free. People who test positive are contacted to help identify who they have been in contact with (Contact Tracing). People identified as Contacts of COVID-19 are called to let them know that they are contacts. Contacts identified should continue to restrict their movements for 14 days after they were last exposed to the case. In this instance, the family concerned should not participate in the childcare scheme for the period of self-isolation and the childcare practitioner should not provide care for other children for 14 days.
82	What do I do if my staff member tells me they have symptoms of Covid19?	If the staff member reports having symptoms of Covid19 while caring for children you should send a relief childcare practitioner to the home immediately and advise the staff member to go directly home and contact their GP.
83	What if the staff member has a test for COVID-19 but the virus is not detected?	<u>Tests for COVID-19 are good but they are not perfect. Even if the lab test does not detect the virus people who are asymptomatic people for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home and should not participate in the childcare scheme until the period of self-isolation advised by their doctor is over.</u> This is to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 virus or other viral illness they may have.
84	What if the staff member tests positive for Covid19?	<u>People who test positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate</u> at home for 14 days after their symptoms developed, the last five days of which should be fever free. People who test positive are contacted to help identify who they have been in contact with (Contact Tracing). People identified as Contacts of COVID-19 are called to let them know that they are contacts. Contacts identified should continue to restrict their movements for 14 days after they were last exposed to the case.
85	What if the person with symptoms is not referred for testing?	If the person is not referred for testing this is because their symptoms have been assessed and they do not meet the current requirements for testing. Their doctor will advise them of the current guidance on self-isolation.
86	Will a childcare practitioner participating in the TCSEHW need to self-isolate for 2 weeks after they finish this work before they can move back into centres	No, provided they are symptom free and have not been advised by Public Health that they are a close contact of someone who has Covid19 and have to self-isolate or restrict their movements.

87	Will there be online training for childcare practitioners participating in the Scheme in Covid hygiene etiquette	Specific health guidance on Covid19 and this TCSEHW is provided in the Outreach Pack. Resources are also available on the HSE website https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/?source=banner .
88	Will the service manager be expected to carry out spot checks on the home/ staff member?	No, the service manager will not be required to attend the home setting.
89	What activities/programmes are my staff expected to deliver?	<p>A programme of age-appropriate ELC and SAC activities, based on children’s interests, should be provided. The programme should be play-based. The health and well-being of the children is paramount. Where possible, children should spend time outside in their gardens and be physically active.</p> <p>Practice supports have been developed especially for this situation and are available on www.first5.gov.ie under the practitioner’s button, and activity ideas are in the outreach pack issued to all participating services.</p> <p>A range of supports is available to childcare practitioner through your local Childcare Committee including Better Start Early Years Specialists, who will be on hand by phone to support the practitioners with any particular queries.</p> <p>In addition, older children may have school work and therefore a supervision role may be necessary. It is the parent’s responsibility to check that all school work has been completed as required.</p>
90	What ages are the children?	Children may include pre-school children, school-age children, or both. Ages will vary in each family and there is an expectation of a mixed age group.
91	Can a provider choose which age group staff should work with?	It’s likely that families will have children with mixed ages but some childcare practitioners may be more experienced with particular age groups. You should try and match your staff to the needs of the family as best you can.
92	Can I advise parents on my available spaces?	A national contact line is being established for parents who are eligible essential health workers. Parents should contact Pobal to apply for the scheme. Pobal will pass the parent’s details on to the local CCC, who will have a list of services with staff available in the area and will assign parents to those services.
93	Will childcare practitioners continue to be mandated persons while in the home?	Yes, as an employee of an Early Years service, all staff remain mandated persons under Children First legislation. Under the Children First Act 2015, any childcare staff member employed by a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991 is a mandated person.

94	Can I choose who avails of these spaces?	You will be provided with the age ranges of children in the family and any particular needs they may have – you can match staff to families based on the needs of the family and the availability of the staff member.
95	Do I need to register the children attending?	The service must keep records of the children being cared for including the child record (see outreach pack)
96	Who will contact me about the places I have available on an ongoing basis?	The CCC will contact you as soon as parents come forward needing a childcare practitioner.
97	An additional staff member is available, who do I inform?	Update your ‘Volunteer Application Template’ and re-send to pipdocuments@pobal.ie
98	An allocated staff member is no longer required by a family, but is still available to provide childcare?	Contact your local CCC who will update your services’ staff availability. This will facilitate the CCC to match another family with your service if required.
99	What about sponsored/vulnerable children during this period?	This TCSEHW is specifically for the families of eligible essential health workers.
100	Will this scheme definitely commence on 18 May? What if public health advice changes?	The Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSHEW) is included in the Government’s Roadmap for Reopening Business and Society. The TCSEHW is part of Phase 1 of the Roadmap which is due to commence on 18 May. Should Government decide, based on public health advice and the principles set out in the Roadmap, that the timing of particular phases requires review, this may impact on the roll out of the TCSEHW.

FAQ for Childcare Practitioners		
1	What is a childcare practitioner participating in the Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSEHW)?	A childcare practitioner is a professional, offering children safe, good quality care and providing them with play and learning opportunities in their own home. Childcare practitioners are employees of childcare services and will provide childcare services in the homes of essential health workers for the duration of the scheme.
2	What criteria do I have to meet to participate in the TCSEHW?	You must be employed by a Tusla registered provider and meet the regulatory requirements that apply to you in relation to qualifications and training. You must be re-vetted for the purposes of this Scheme. You should have completed training in child protection. You should not participate in the scheme if you are pregnant or have an underlying medical condition.
3	But I have already been Garda vetted. Why do I need to be re-vetted now?	As your existing Garda Vetting is based on centre-based provision of childcare (i.e. it was not envisaged that you would be working in a child's home) new vetting is required for this outreach service. DCYA will work with ECI/Barnardos and the Garda National Vetting Bureau to expedite Garda vetting and ECI/Barnardos and CCCs will assist services in this regard.
4	Will any specific exclusions apply such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ staff/ staff with family members with underlying conditions ○ pregnant staff members 	It may not be appropriate for some staff to participate in the TCSEHW at this time, for example, if they are required to self-isolate or have an underlying health condition themselves or a family member with an underlying health condition or with their own caring responsibilities. You should not participate in the scheme if you are pregnant or have an underlying medical condition.
5	I have been working for other families over the last few weeks, can I still take part in this scheme?	Yes, once you are symptom-free and have not been advised by Public Health that you are a close contact of someone who has Covid19 and have to self-isolate or restrict your movements.
6	My wages have been funded through TWSCS and TWSS, am I required to take part in this scheme if my employer decides to participate?	It is voluntary for services to participate, and it is not necessary for all staff members to participate. Staff members who do not participate can continue to have their wages supported through the TWSS and TWSCS. .
7	My wages were being funded through TWSCS or TWSS – will I receive additional payment?	If you are participating in the TCSEHW your wages will no longer be funded through TWSCS or TWSS. Your employer is receiving special funding for providing the TCSEHW. The wage you receive for providing

		Outreach Childcare is a matter between you and your employer.
8	What is the rate of pay for participation in this scheme?	The terms and conditions of your employment, including your rate of pay, are a matter to be agreed between you and your employer. The payment made to the service provider is calculated on an assumption that employers will pay an average wage of €15 per hour, though it is recognised that the wage received by an individual Childcare Practitioner will depend on the employer’s own payment policies.
9	Will I be paid for travel time or have my travel costs recouped?	There is no additional payment from DCYA for travel time or the cost of travel.
10	Will an additional payment be made to childcare practitioners in relation to the risks they are taking?	The terms and conditions of your employment, including your rate of pay, are a matter to be agreed between you and your employer. The rate is calculated on an assumption that employers will pay an average wage of €15 per hour, though it is recognised that the wage received by an individual childcare practitioners will depend on the employer’s own payment policies.
11	If I become ill do I still get paid?	The terms and conditions of employment (including sick pay) are a matter for the employer and the employee. However, should you become ill with Covid19 or be instructed to self-isolate, the DCYA will continue to pay your service for a period of two weeks. After the two week period (once clear of Covid) you may resume duties or, if no longer required, revert to the TWSS/TWSCS.
12	How will working hours or breaks be determined?	<p>Because of the public health risks in this emergency situation, only one childcare practitioner will work with a family. Unlike childcare provision in a centre-based service, therefore, you will be required to remain with and care for the children of the family you work with throughout your working day. Your manager should explain to you when you are asked to volunteer and, again, when you are assigned to a family that your normal working hours and breaks will not apply while you participate in this scheme. The number of hours per day and per week which you are required to work should be made clear to you.</p> <p>In relation to breaks, you will need to be flexible and work around the needs of the family in your care when organising your breaks. You should organise food and rest breaks around the children’s routine e.g. you may plan to take a rest or a food-break when a child is sleeping or is having downtime.</p>
13	Will overtime be paid?	Payment or compensation for overtime is a matter between you and your employer.

14	Is there a limit to the number of households I can provide childcare for	This temporary scheme provides for one childcare practitioners per family, on public health grounds. If the family you are assigned to no longer requires childcare you may be assigned to another family; however, you should only provide childcare for one family at any one time.
15	What should I be doing in relation to infection control?	It is acknowledged that childcare services have practices already in place in relation to infection control. With your service manager, you should review and update your practice in line with current HSE/HPSC advice on COVID-19. You should promote and facilitate good infection control practice within the home setting. Take common sense steps and help children and families to do the same. You must have in place a plan to follow when children become sick in your care and to protect other children from COVID-19 illness. Please read the Guidance for childcare practitioners, available in the Outreach information pack and on the First 5 website.
16	Where can I access information on COVID-19 training and infection prevention?	The Person in Charge of your setting is responsible for ensuring that all staff members have access to online information/training on COVID-19, including how the illness is spread, how to prevent its spread, symptoms, and when to seek medical assistance for sick children or staff. Check http://www.hse.ie for updated information
17	How does this plan fit with the current restrictions in terms of households not interacting with one other?	The National Public Health Emergency Team has approved this outreach model of childcare provision. By providing childcare in a home-based setting instead of a childcare centre, we can minimise the risk of cross-infection while still helping to meet the childcare needs of essential health workers.
18	What is the potential risk of the spread of Covid -19 when staff go into homes and then return to their own families?	The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) has given approval for this method of childcare provision. By providing childcare in a home-based setting instead of a childcare centre, we can minimise the risk of cross-infection while still helping to meet the childcare needs of essential health workers. Following HSE guidance on hand and respiratory hygiene will help to reduce the risk of spread of the virus.
19	What protection is available if I have underlying conditions or have isolating relatives with compromised underlying conditions/immune systems?	It may not be appropriate for some staff to participate in the TCSEHW at this time, for example, if they are required to self-isolate or have an underlying health condition themselves or a family member with an underlying health condition or with their own caring responsibilities. It is not necessary for all staff members to participate.

		If you are pregnant or have an underlying medical condition you should not participate in the scheme.
20	Where do I get PPE?	Childcare practitioners should follow their service’s policy in relation to the use of gloves and/or aprons (e.g. for nappy changing). Gloves and aprons should be provided by the service provider. Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (e.g. masks) is not required for the provision of this outreach service. Childcare practitioners should observe good hand and respiratory hygiene in line with HSE guidance.
21	Where do I get resources such as arts and crafts material?	Parents are expected to provide materials and equipment within the home setting. If there are insufficient materials please discuss this with your manager. It is optional to bring your own materials although you should check with the parent that they are happy for you to do so. If materials are brought in to the house, they should be cleaned when being brought into the house and taken away, in accordance with HSE guidance.
22	Do I have to cook/ clean?	Your primary role is to provide care for the children of the family you are assigned to. This may include some cooking or cleaning as it relates to the care of the child/ren. For instance, you may be required to assemble and/or heat if necessary pre- prepared meals for children in their care and to complete general cleaning such as before and after meals, any spillages, etc. You should be mindful of HSE guidance in relation to infection control and prevention (e.g. regularly wipe down frequently touched surfaces). Before beginning a placement, it is good practice for a discussion to take place between parent, service provider and childcare practitioner about what is appropriate.
23	Will I continue to be a mandated person while in the home?	Yes, as an employee of an Early Years’ service, all staff remain mandated persons under Children First legislation. Under the Children First Act 2015, any childcare staff member employed by a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991 is a mandated person.
24	What protection will be available to staff in terms of accusations made by the child or family?	All Early Years staff retain the protection of all entitlements under current employment legislation. All queries and complaints from the family should be directed to the service manager and the service’s complaints procedures should be followed as normal.

25	Who provides the notebook for staff to maintain the daily record of the routine?	The parent should provide a notebook for staff to maintain a daily record. If there is no notebook available this should be discussed with your manager. This notebook should not be removed from the home.
26	How do I know if I am suitable for this role given my travel distance from the home, the match between my experience and the needs of the family, if cooking skills are required etc.?	Your service manager will be able to talk you through the requirements for the role and your suitability.
27	What support is available to the children if they are not familiar with the childcare practitioner i.e. settling in period?	It is recommended that the staff member has an introduction meeting with the family. If childcare is needed quickly and this initial meeting cannot be facilitated it is recommended that on the first day the staff member would arrive approx. ½ hour early to have time to meet everyone in the company of the parent/guardians. Some transition activities such as preparing information ‘all about me’ can be useful to both the staff and the child/ren.
28	Do I need to meet the service manager in person to update and sign updated employment contracts, complete other paperwork or discuss the details of the childcare arrangement? If so, how will social distancing be maintained during that process?	It is not necessary for the staff member to meet the service manager in person in order to discuss childcare arrangements and/or sign updated employment documentation. The manager will contact you by telephone and will send any forms/paperwork to you via email. Where signatures are required on documents, these can be printed and posted, scanned and emailed back. Any follow up contact with the service manager may be done over the telephone or by email.
29	Will my contract be amended or will I have a new employment contract for the duration of the Covid-19 response?	This is a decision for each service provider. It is recommended that either a new contract is issued for the duration of the COVID response or that an addendum to contract outlines the particulars of the new role under the TCSEHW. You should discuss this with your service manager.
30	If an eligible essential health worker such as a nurse etc. who works a standard 13 hour shift plus travel time is more than one childcare practitioner required to cover this shift?	For 45 hours of childcare per week, one childcare practitioner should normally be assigned to one family. In exceptional circumstances (and in agreement with the CCC) for long hours two childcare practitioners may need to be assigned to one family. The TCSEHW does not provide for overnight care of children.
31	Will there be additional training/induction for staff participating in the TWCEHW?	An information pack has been developed for use by all participating services. Please discuss induction for the TWCEHW with your service manager. Resources are available on both www.first5.gov.ie and the Let’s Play Ireland website (https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/lets-play-ireland/). A range of supports is available to support

		staff through your local Childcare Committee including Better Start Early Years Specialists who will be on hand by phone to support practitioners with any particular queries.
32	What is the procedure in the event that difficulties arise in relation to the relationship with a parent and practitioner or if the relationship breaks down and cannot be continued?	Any difficulties arising between you and the family you are working with should be brought to your service manager. Any complaints should be managed in line with your service’s complaints policy.
33	If an eligible essential health worker is working from home or others have access to the home (relatives of the family), how is this managed?	This service is available to eligible essential health workers. If an eligible essential health worker is working from home then they may be accommodated through the TCSEHW. To adhere to public health guidance in limiting interactions there should be no other adults accessing the house during the TCSEHW, unless they are normally resident in the house.
34	Will the childcare practitioner have access to car parking	This may not always be possible. It will be necessary for the service provider to discuss this with the parent and the childcare practitioner prior to matching.
35	Are meals provided or does the childcare practitioner bring their own food from home?	Parents are not required to provide food for childcare practitioners and so you should bring your own food from home. However, this can be discussed with parents on a case by case basis and you may make a private arrangement between you and the parent.
36	Will I be alerted immediately if the parent/s or children of the family I am working with have symptoms of COVID19?	Families participating in the programme are required to inform the service provider promptly if they have symptoms of COVID-19. In addition all individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their GP for further advice. If the doctor arranges testing for them they will be given an appointment of testing. They may also be contacted to help identify who they have been in contact with (Contact Tracing) if this is required for public health purposes. People identified as Contacts of COVID-19 are called to let them know that they are contacts.
37	Will I be prioritised for Covid 19 testing?	Current public health advice is that childcare practitioners will not be prioritised for testing.
38	What if the family member (parent or child) has the test but the test does not show COVID-19?	<u>Tests for COVID-19 are good but they are not perfect. Even if the lab test does not detect the virus people who are symptomatic</u> should continue to self-isolate at home and their family should not participate in the childcare scheme until the period of self-isolation advised by their doctor is over. This is to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 virus or other viral illness they may have.
39	What if the family member (parent or child) tests positive for Covid19?	<u>People who test positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate</u> at home for 14 days after their symptoms developed, the last five days of which should be fever free. People who test positive are contacted to help

		identify who they have been in contact with (Contact Tracing). People identified as Contacts of COVID-19 are called to let them know that they are contacts. Contacts identified should continue to restrict their movements for 14 days after they were last exposed to the case. In this instance, the family concerned should not participate in the childcare scheme for the period of self-isolation and the childcare practitioner should not provide care for other children for 14 days.
40	What do I do if I have symptoms of Covid19?	If you develop symptoms of Covid19 while caring for children you should contact your service manager straight away who will send a relief childcare practitioner to the home immediately. You will be advised to go directly home once you are relieved and to contact your GP.
41	What if I am tested for Covid19 but the virus is not detected?	<u>Tests for COVID-19 are good but they are not perfect. Even if the lab test does not detect the virus people who are asymptomatic people for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home and should not participate in the childcare scheme until the period of self-isolation advised by their doctor is over. This is to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 virus or other viral illness they may have.</u>
42	What if I test positive for Covid19?	<u>People who test positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home for 14 days after their symptoms developed, the last five days of which should be fever free. People who test positive are contacted to help identify who they have been in contact with (Contact Tracing). People identified as Contacts of COVID-19 are called to let them know that they are contacts. Contacts identified should continue to restrict their movements for 14 days after they were last exposed to the case.</u>
43	What if I am not referred for testing?	<u>If you are not referred for testing, this is because your symptoms have been assessed and they do not meet the current requirements for testing. Their doctor will advise them of the current guidance on self-isolation.</u>
44	If I am required to self-isolate or I become ill with Covid 19 will I continue to be paid?	If you become ill with Covid19 or be instructed to self-isolate, the DCYA will continue to pay your service for a period of two weeks. After the two week period (once clear of Covid) you may resume duties or, if no longer required, revert to the TWSS/TWSCS.
45	If a child has a medical condition or an additional need, will training be given? For example the use of an apparatus such as an EpiPen?	The approach taken to the administration of medication and to medical conditions remains the same as in centre-based provision. You should follow your service’s Policy on Administration of Medication. The information gathered by the service when accepting the care of a child will include relevant information relating to the particular care needs of

		that child. Parents will be asked to give information relating to medical conditions, additional needs, emotional well-being and medications that need to be administered.
46	Who is responsible for the correct administering of medication or a medical apparatus such as an EpiPen?	You should follow your service’s Policy on Administration of Medication. A separate permission for the administration of medication will be completed by the parent in the usual manner. Administration of medication should be kept to a minimum and if possible administered by the parent before and after the child is cared for. In cases where medicine needs to be administered during the work day, written and signed instruction should be obtained by the service from the parent. This may happen by email.
47	Who is responsible if medication is administered incorrectly?	If a child needs particular equipment or emergency medication such as an EpiPen, the parent should give the staff member appropriate training. If appropriate, the parent may choose to have video support from the GP/Nurse of the family’s GP practice.
48	What should I do if a child becomes ill while the parents are working and no other adult is available to care for the child due to Covid-19 restrictions?	If you notice that a child is feeling unwell and developing symptoms of infection such as a new cough, temperature or shortness of breath call a family member and your manager. In so far as possible while caring for the child keep a distance of 2 m from the child until a family member takes over and be particularly careful to avoid contact of your hands with your face and perform hand hygiene regularly. In an emergency, you should call the ambulance, and explain that the child is unwell with symptoms of COVID-19.
49	How will overnight work be managed?	Due to the limitations around the TCSEHW, it is not possible to provide overnight childcare at this stage. The Department will keep the matter under review and, should a substantial need for overnight care arise, will look at options to meet that need. However, even if there is a need for such a service it may not be possible to provide one due to public health issues and/or the availability of services/staff to work those hours.
50	What support will be made available to staff should they witness an incident of concern in the home?	Staff should report any incidents of concern to their line manager in their daily telephone call or initiate a call to their line manager if they need to discuss immediately. If the concern is a child protection

		concern, they should contact their service’s Designated Liaison Person (DLP).
51	When using art and play materials such as playdough, gloop, etc, how do I manage the risk of cross-infection?	As you are working with just one family, the risk of cross-infection is minimised. Washing hands before and after all activities is recommended along with regular handwashing.
52	What are the expectations and procedures for personal care of a child, e.g. bathing children, toileting etc.?	It is expected that all care needs of the children will be supported as appropriate to the age and needs of the individual child. It is expected that the childcare practitioners will provide children with appropriate assistance, e.g. in changing nappies, as would be standard practice in a centre-based setting.
53	Are there guidelines for what is considered appropriate intimate care for both young and older children?	Your setting should have a written policy and procedures for intimate/personal care. You should also discuss children’s personal care with the children’s parents/guardians before beginning the outreach placement.
54	Are childcare practitioners covered by insurance on outings with children or when partaking in outdoor play?	Any outdoor activities, e.g. walks outside the family’s house/garden, should be in line with the current HSE Covid-19 guidance and as agreed with the children’s parents. Your service is responsible for insurance to cover this arrangement. You will need to discuss outdoor activities with your service manager and report all accidents/incidents in line with your settings policies.
55	What are the procedures if a child is injured or is lost?	You should follow your setting’s policies in relation to any accident or incident that occurs.
56	Are childcare practitioners insured if a child is injured or lost while in their care?	Your service is responsible for insurance to cover the provision of childcare. You will need to report all accidents/incidents in line with your settings policies. The normal policy terms and conditions will apply in this situation i.e. as if you were minding the children in the service
57	Can childcare practitioners be held personally liable for any accident/injury while the child is in their care?	Your service is responsible for insurance to cover the provision of childcare. The normal policy terms and conditions apply and will cover the legal liability of the Childcare Service.
58	Are childcare practitioners notified if there are pets in the home, in case of allergies etc.?	Please tell your manager about any allergies or fears you may have in relation to pets. This will help your manager match you with an appropriate family.
59	What do childcare practitioners do if there is no food available in the home?	It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure there is adequate food provided in the house to meet the needs of all children. If you have any difficulties in this regard, you should contact your manager.
60	Are childcare practitioners expected to do shopping and how is this managed when children are	No, a childcare practitioner’s role is to meet the care needs of children in the family.

	advised not to accompany adults shopping?	
61	This TCSEHW accommodates care for children up to 15. There are older children/young people in the household, how is this managed?	Under this scheme the childcare practitioner is there to care for the younger child/ren up to age 15. However, in respect of older children/young people in the household there should be an agreement on certain areas of consideration such as participation, decision making, areas of responsibility, levels of freedom etc between the young person, service provider and parent agreed in advance.
62	Does the service provide materials for arts & crafts activities etc.?	Parents are expected to provide materials and equipment within the home. If there are insufficient materials please discuss this with your manager. It is optional to bring your own materials. Washing hands before and after all activities is recommended along with regular handwashing.
63	If staff are encouraged to use their personal mobile who is responsible for bill charges?	Childcare practitioners should only need to use mobile phones to communicate with the service manager or the child's parents or in an emergency situation. Payment for phone bills is a matter between the service provider and their staff.
64	At what stage are house rules discussed with childcare practitioners (TV time/food/snacks etc.)?	It is important to discuss these with the service manager and parent when first establishing childcare provision. It is also advised to discuss again directly with the parent at an introduction meeting.
65	Will this scheme definitely commence on 18 May? What if public health advice changes?	The Temporary Childcare Scheme for Essential Health Workers (TCSHEW) is included in the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Business and Society. The TCSEHW is part of Phase 1 of the Roadmap which is due to commence on 18 May. Should Government decide, based on public health advice and the principles set out in the Roadmap, that the timing of particular phases requires review, this may impact on the roll out of the TCSEHW.