

Quarterly Update

Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions

A message from Minister Foley

This is the final quarterly update of 2025, following the third update in September. I am pleased to share news of further progress with you as the year draws to a close.



Firstly, as you may recall, an expression of interest process for survivor representative positions ran from the end of the summer into the autumn. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to submit an application; your time and interest is greatly appreciated. I am pleased to let you know that this process has now completed and letters have issued to all applicants.

Secondly, in addition to the regular update on the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme, on page 5 and 6 we have highlighted some recent changes in relation to the concluding years for certain institutions.

Finally, further updates are included from the Office of the Director of Authorised Intervention in Tuam, the Special Advocate for Survivors of Institutional Abuse, as well as regular updates and useful contacts.

I hope you find this latest newsletter useful, and please do continue to contact the Department with any feedback you may have.

With warm regards and good wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Norma Foley'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Norma Foley,
Minister for Children, Equality and Disability



Oifig an Stiúrthóra um Idirghabháil Údaraithe, Tuaim Office of the Director of Authorised Intervention, Tuam



Progress continues to be made on the intervention at the site of the former Mother and Baby institution in Tuam. Forensic excavation of the site began in July and ODAIT has published regular updates on that work.

Excavation and Recovery of Remains: The published reports underline the complexity of the work, with excavations to date revealing materials from four main eras of the site's history as well as from earlier ancient and unrelated dates.

The reports have confirmed that seven sets of historic skeletal human remains, consistent with the workhouse era, have been recovered from an area of the site. While these are not remains associated with the Mother and Baby institution, it is still important that they are treated sensitively and appropriately, and ODAIT is coordinating with the National Museum on this.

The latest report, which was published on 7 November, also confirmed that seven sets of human remains have been recovered from another area of the site. Initial assessment indicates that these remains belong to infants. Pending further analysis, the Director cannot say what era these remains are from. This analysis is expected to take at least three months, and the Director will publish the results when received.

The Tuam Director is issuing his most recent technical update this morning. See link here for all technical updates: [Technical Updates - Odait](#)

Identification Programme: As part of the latest monthly update, ODAIT confirmed that it is now proceeding with the Identification programme and will be making contact with people who have notified the Office of their interest in providing a DNA sample. Anyone who believes they are related to someone buried at the Tuam site who has not yet contacted ODAIT is invited to do so. ODAIT will explain the Identification Programme and the Application Process, and will support each applicant through the process. Further information on the Identification Programme is available here [ODAIT ID Programme - Odait](#).

Contact: ODAIT website, www.odait.ie. ODAIT can be contacted by phone (+353 1 5391777), email (info@dait.ie) or post to Office of the Director of Authorised Intervention Tuam, Customs House, Flood Street, Galway, H91XV2C.

From the end of the summer into the autumn an expression of interest process ran for four survivor representative positions on the Steering Group and for ongoing opportunities on the National Museum Lived Experience Panels. That process is now complete and letters have issued to all applicants. The National Centre Steering Group is extremely grateful to everyone who took the time to submit an application.

Site investigation works are now complete and enabling works are continuing on the National Centre site on Sean MacDermott Street. These works are to make safe and stabilise the existing historic buildings to facilitate the future National Centre construction works.

Updates on the development are published on the National Centre website at www.gov.ie/nationalcentre.



There is also a dedicated mailing list for those with an interest in the National Centre project. If you would like your email address to be included to receive future updates related to the National Centre, please send an email to nationalcentre@dcde.gov.ie requesting that your details be included.

Overview

The Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme has been open since 20 March 2024. We have provided a snapshot of current progress below.

If you are planning on applying to the Scheme, or know someone that is thinking of applying, we have provided some helpful frequently asked questions [here](#).

- The Payment Scheme website can be found [here](#).
- The Portal for online applications can be found [here](#).
- Paper versions of the application form can be found here:

[Payment Scheme - English Form](#) or [Payment Scheme - Irish Form](#)

The Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme - Key Highlights (position as of 30/11/2025)



6,995 Completed applications received



58% Portal applications



42% Postal applications



6,340 Notices of Determination issued



5,109 Payments paid or being processed

91%

Notice of Determinations issued as a % of completed applications received

Changes to the Concluding Years for Certain Institutions

Each of the institutions covered by the Payment Scheme has a concluding year. The concluding year represents the last year where it is understood, based on the information available, that the institution was operating as a mother and baby or county home. Applications to the scheme are eligible if the person entered the institution they applied for on or before 31st December of the concluding year.

The legislation for the Payment Scheme provides that the Minister can amend a concluding year to a later year where information comes to light that indicates that the concluding year initially set is not accurate.

In September 2024, the concluding year for 4 scheduled institutions was amended by the Minister. A further comprehensive review of concluding years was undertaken this year on foot of additional information and institutional records available since the Payment Scheme opened. Following this review the concluding year for 13 scheduled institutions was amended by the Minister in October 2025. These changes are set out in the tables below:

Amendments in September 2024

Institution	Original Concluding Year	Amended to
Clare (Ennis) County Home*	1952	1958
Mayo (Castlebar) County Home	1938	1960
South Tipperary (Cashel) County Home*	1955	1960
Wexford (Enniscorthy) County Home	1936	1962

Amendments in October 2025

Institution	Original Concluding Year	Amended to
Carlow County Home	1963	1971
Clare (Ennis) County Home*	1958	1965
Cork (Middleton) County Home	1960	1968
Kerry (Killarney) County Home	1963	1974
Leitrim (Carrick on Shannon) County Home	1951	1964
Limerick (Newcastlewest) County Home	1965	1968
Longford County Home	1952	1967
Offaly (Tullamore) County Home	1956	1960
Roscommon County Home	1957	1961
North Tipperary (Thurles) County Home	1955	1974
South Tipperary (Cashel) County Home*	1960	1971
Waterford (Dungarvan) County Home	1970	1972
Westmeath (Mullingar) County Home	1955	1957

*Concluding years were amended in September 2024 and October 2025.

Contd./

Changes to the Concluding Years for Certain Institutions

What does this mean for applicants?

If you made an application to the Payment Scheme and your application or parts of your application were deemed ineligible because of a concluding year and this concluding year has now changed, the Payment Scheme Office will be in touch with you in the coming weeks.

If you spent time in a scheduled institution but did not apply to the Payment Scheme because of a concluding year which has now changed, we would invite you to make an application or call the Payment Scheme Office and we will be happy to assist you with any questions.

- ♦ For further information on how to apply to the Payment Scheme, eligibility criteria, institutions covered by the Payment Scheme, frequently asked questions and further supports please visit the Payment Scheme website here: [Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme](#)

Payment Scheme Office Christmas Arrangements

The following are the arrangements for the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme from Monday 22nd December 2025 to Friday 2nd January 2026 inclusive.

Phoneline opening hours:

Date	Opening Hours
Monday 22nd December 2025	9am-6pm
Tuesday 23rd December 2025	9am-6pm
Wednesday 24th December 2025	9am-1pm
Thursday 25th December 2025	Closed
Friday 26th December 2025	Closed
Monday 29th December 2025	9am-6pm
Tuesday 30th December 2025	9am-6pm
Wednesday 31st December 2025	9am-4pm
Thursday 1st January 2026	Closed
Friday 2nd January 2026	9am-6pm

- ♦ The Payment Scheme Office will not issue Notices of Determination to applicants after Friday 12th December 2025. We will resume sending Notices of Determination on Monday 5th January 2026. A Notice of Determination is the decision on your application, or the outcome of your review or appeal request.
- ♦ You may receive other types of correspondence from us, e.g. an acknowledgement regarding your application, or we may call you regarding your application until Friday 19th December 2025.
- ♦ If you have accepted an offer from the Payment Scheme, by returning your acceptance forms before 11th December 2025, and everything is in order, you will receive your payment by Friday 19th December 2025. Otherwise, payments will start to issue again on the week commencing 5th January 2026.
- ♦ In addition, An Post have notified the Payment Scheme Office that there will be no post on Monday 29 December 2025, this means that items posted on the 24 December may be delayed.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above arrangements or your application, please contact the Payment Scheme Office by using the “ask a question” facility on the portal or by calling us at +353 1 522 9992 (GMT).

Update on Applications Made to the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022

Thousands of people have now received their information under the Act. Since October 2022 over 17,100 applications have been made for birth and early life information. As of 01 December, over 17,000 of these applications have been completed.

464 matches of relatives have been made using through the Contact Preference Register. We encourage all adopted persons and birth parents to apply to the Register to express their preferences for contact, exchange of information, or for no contact.

Statutory Review of Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 Services

The Department of Children, Disability and Equality is doing a statutory review of Birth Information and Tracing services, as required by the Act, to look at what is working well and what can be improved.

An independent body called Quality Matters will carry out this review. Their aim is to help services work better for the people who use them.

The first step is a survey of anyone who has used these services. After that, some people who filled in the survey, and said they would like to be interviewed will be asked to be in an interview. To get the full story this will include people who had good experiences and people who did not.

If you want to hear when the survey is ready, so you can share your experiences and ideas on the birth information and tracing services, you can email the address below to register your interest.

birth-info-review@qualitymatters.ie

Your details will be kept private by the Quality Matters team and only used for this evaluation. Thanks in advance for being part of this review – it is important for ensuring that State services are as good as they can be.

17,163

**applications for birth
and early life
information**

464

**matches made from the
Contact Preference
Register**

17,121

**completed requests for
birth and early life
information**



Special Advocate

For Survivors of Institutional Abuse

Special Advocate for Survivors – Keep in Touch

We are committed to ensuring the collective voices of Survivors and Affected Persons are heard.

The Special Advocate team will endeavour to assist in any way that we can, and where possible, guide & signpost you to the information and services you are looking for.

You can contact the Special Advocate team in different ways:

Email: info@specialadvocate.ie

Phone: +353 (0)1 511 7660

Postal Address: Special Advocate for Survivors of Institutional Abuse, First Floor, Holbrook House, Holles Street, Dublin 2, D02 EY84, Ireland

Visit the Special Advocate's Website: www.specialadvocate.ie

Follow our Facebook: www.facebook.com/specialadvocateforsurvivors

The Special Advocate team also manages a Mailing List which we use to share regular important updates and a quarterly newsletter. The link is below for anyone who might wish to sign up.

Join our Mailing List: [Special Advocate Mailing List](#)

Advisory Council update

A huge thank you to all who have expressed an interest in joining the Advisory Council supporting the work of the Special Advocate. That process is now complete and letters have issued to all applicants. We are very grateful to all who took the time to apply.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Special Advocate office would welcome any further expressions of interest from Survivors of Magdalen Laundries.

If you wish to apply for this pillar or would like more information please contact the Special Advocate office by email (advisorycouncil@specialadvocate.ie) or by phone (+353 (0)1 511 7660).

The Special Advocate for Survivors will establish **7 pillars** as part of the Advisory Council supporting her work. Each pillar will represent a specific area of institutional abuse and forced family separation.

Pillar 1: People who spent time in Industrial School and Reformatory Institutions

Pillar 2: People who spent time in Magdalene Laundries

Pillar 3: Mothers who spent time in Mother and Baby or County Home Institutions, or who experienced forced family separation

Pillar 4: People who were born in or who spent time in Mother and Baby or County Home Institutions and related institutions, or who experienced forced family separation

Pillar 5: People who were Boarded Out or Fostered

Pillar 6: People whose births were illegally registered

Pillar 7: Survivors and Affected Persons living overseas who spent time in an institution covered under the Special Advocate's remit, or who experienced forced family separation

The work of the Advisory Council and its outputs will be shared publicly, via the Special Advocate office.

Special Advocate – Global Irish Position Paper

The remit of the Special Advocate for Survivors covers Survivors living in Ireland and overseas. Recently, Patricia made a submission to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, calling for greater supports for Survivors and Affected Persons living overseas.

She also highlighted the important work and vital services being provided by Irish support organisations to Survivors overseas.

If you are interested in reading this submission please read it on the Special Advocate website: [Submission to DFA Global Irish Position Paper](#) .



**Special
Advocate**
For Survivors of
Institutional Abuse

Email info@specialadvocate.ie Phone +353 (0)1 511 7660

Address Special Advocate's Office, Holbrook House, Holles Street, Dublin 2 D02 EY84, Ireland

Mother and Baby Homes Action Plan Unit

The Department operates a dedicated telephone information line available for further information on Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions. Telephone **+353 (0)1 647 3200** from Monday to Friday 9.30am to 5.30pm or email motherandbabyhomes@dcde.gov.ie

DCDE mailing list

The Department maintains a mailing list for people with an interest in these issues. If you would like your email address to be added to this list to receive future updates, please email motherandbabyhomes@dcde.gov.ie requesting that your details be included.

Payment Scheme Office Helpline

The Payment Scheme Office operate a Helpline on **+353 (0)1 522 9992**. This Helpline is open between 9am and 6pm GMT, Monday to Friday or email info@paymentscheme.ie For more information on the Payment Scheme, please visit the website [here](#). Information on Christmas arrangements can be found on page 7 of this document.

Special Advocate for Survivors

The primary role of the Special Advocate is to amplify the voices of survivors as a central, essential input to Government deliberations on matters which affect them. To contact the Special Advocate's Office, please email:

info@specialadvocate.ie or call:

+353 (0)1 511 7660

Counselling Support

If you feel that you need to talk to a counsellor, you can contact the HSE National Counselling

Service. If you decide to call, please identify yourself as a survivor of the institutions and you will be prioritised for the next available counselling place. Information about the service and contact details can be found on the HSE website, or by calling **1800 817 517** (Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm, Saturday 9am – 5pm).

Outside of these hours, you can also contact the CONNECT free telephone counselling and support service at **1800 477 477** (6pm – 10pm Monday to Sunday).

For more support options, including phone, text or online, visit yourmentalhealth.ie or call **1800 111 888**.

The Adoption Authority of Ireland

The Adoption Authority of Ireland can be reached by phone at **+353 (0)1 230 9300**, or by post to Shelbourne House, Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, D04 H6F6. Further information is available at www.aai.gov.ie.

Tusla – The Child and Family Agency

Tusla - Child and Family Agency can be reached by phone at **+353 (0)1 771 8500**, or by post to The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Saint John's Road West, Dublin 8, D08 X01F. Further information is available at www.tusla.ie

Birth Information and Tracing Services

If you want to make an application for access to information, for tracing services or to register preferences to the contact preference register, this can be done on birthinfo.ie This website also contains more information on the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 and the services it established.