

Supervised Access Ireland

Staff Policies & Procedures Handbook

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Mission Statement

Supervised Access Ireland (hereafter referred to as SAI) aims to provide a quality, tailored, ethical service at all times.

Ethos

Supervised Access Ireland (SAI) supervised access service is a child focused service. It aims to provide safe and enjoyable visits for all children who use the service. All referrals are carefully screened for appropriateness to ensure a safe and enjoyable visit for access parent and child/children. SAI reserves the right to decline or end service at any time should it be deemed necessary. SAI and its employees treat all members of the community equally, whatever their creed, colour, race or gender and aim to provide an inclusive programme which values culture, diversity and inclusion.

Statement of Purpose and Function

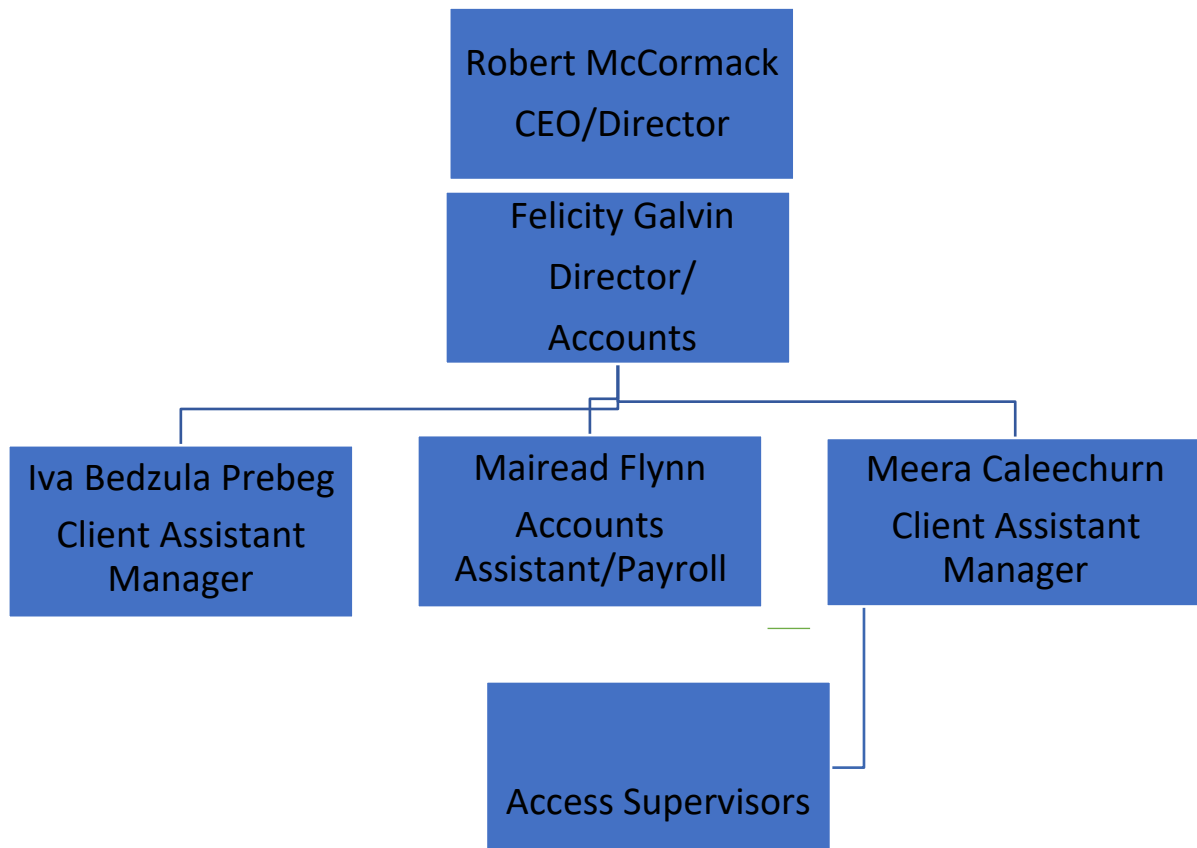
SAI is a supervised access service set up to provide access facilitation workers when a parent or other party gains supervised access rights in a court order.

The parent or other party that has gained such access engages the services of SAI to enable them to see the child or children of the case.

SAI is a private service that is non-judgemental and objective.

The purpose of the access facilitator is to ensure the child or children's safety and happiness are priority and to assist with interactions between visiting party and child/children where appropriate. They are objective observers, aiming to protect all who use the service and improve the relationships of all for the benefit of the children.

Organisational Structure



Confidentiality Policy

Both parties (custodial and non-custodial) contract with SAI for our services, therefore, the visits are not confidential to the access parent. Both parties contracting with SAI will be kept informed about visits. However, as the access worker, you are only required to advise the collecting party that the access went well or advise of anything that they may be able to help with prior to the next visit.

Confidentiality means keeping in strict confidence all private or confidential information obtained by the agency about clients and you are expected to adhere to this.

Parents are to respect the confidentiality of all participants in the program. Should the parent discuss confidential information with you or in front of the child/children, it is your role to deviate them from this conversation.

It is our policy to keep confidential all personal information about children, families and employees involved in the service. All information must not be discussed with outside parties as this will render a breach in confidentiality. All new employees will be informed of our Confidentiality Policy.

Should any Child Protection concerns arise, this should immediately be reported to the DLP (access co-ordinator/manager), in strict confidence, via WhatsApp or phone and you should follow their guidelines accordingly. Information held by the agency in relation to Child Protection concerns will be stored separately, in strictest confidence, and will be shared only on a need-to-know basis in line with our Child Protection Policy and with Data Protection Legislation.

Personal information about families in relation to Child Protection concerns will be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with our Child Protection Policy and should not be discussed outside of the service.

If SAI employees witness abuse or neglect while providing service to a family, we will make a report to the relevant authorities in line with our Child Protection Policy. Your initial point of contact is your manager who will guide you accordingly.

It is an intrinsic part of the access facilitator to make a full and detailed report on the interactions, conversations and activities in which the non-custodial party and child/children engage in during the access, and which takes part with the custodial party before and after the access. This report is used solely for the purpose of improving the visits, protecting all parties and providing the courts with an overview of the progress.

Any breach of confidentiality by staff members will lead to immediate disciplinary action.

SUPERVISED ACCESS IRELAND CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT
NOT TO BE SHARED OUTSIDE THE COMPANY WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION
CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT

Name of service being provided

Supervised Access Ireland (Core Caring Ltd) – is a supervised access service between children and their parents.

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

Supervised Access Ireland provide services of access supervision across Ireland, which encompasses monitoring the access between non-custodial parents/family members and their children. Staff members have contact with children, uniquely, during the allocated supervised access times. Supervised access is primarily provided in public areas.

This child safeguarding statement is furnished to staff. Additionally, it is made available to the public, parents and Tusla on request. It has approved by the HSE.

Supervised Access Ireland agrees that:

- the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations
- we will fully comply with our obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children
- we will fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child safeguarding matters

- we actively promote safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave them open to accusations of abuse or neglect
- we fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters

Supervised Access Ireland believes that the safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. We aim to ensure that, through all our interactions, the best interest of the child is paramount.

Supervised Access Ireland is committed to the safeguarding of children through the following processes:

- Comprehensive recruitment and vetting processes for all staff
- Comprehensive training programmes which all staff are required to fulfil
- Clearly defined and communicated standards of service provision
- Safety management policies are in place and all staff are briefed on any change in them. These include, but are not limited to:
 1. Child safeguarding policy and training, including code of conduct for staff
 2. Incident reporting and reviewing process
 3. Complaints policy

Risk assessment

We carry out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services, taking the definition of harm in relation to a child as "assault, ill treatment, or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects, or is likely to seriously affect, the child's health, development or welfare, or sexual abuse of the child".

On the next page, is a list of the possible areas of risk identified and the list of possible procedures for managing these risks.

All services manage risks by following agreed organisational policies and procedures; the list below is an amalgamation of procedures in place across the organisation.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1.	Child in service may be witness to an incident involving individuals exhibiting challenging behaviour or who are substance affected.	Adequate staffing in place, staff trained in managing difficult behaviour, sanctions policy in place, child support workers available to child where necessary.
2.	Child may be subject to harm from other children while accessing our services.	Staff ratio, clearly defined boundaries for all children using our services, clear communication with parents/ guardians as to expectations of service and support offered where there may be deficits in knowledge / skills. Support plans to reflect needs of children involved
3.	Child may be subject to harm from staff member	Comprehensive recruitment and vetting process in place. Lone working policy outlines procedures for working alone with children. Code of conduct for all staff.
4	Risk of harm of a child while being transported by a member of staff	Comprehensive recruitment and vetting process in place. Lone working policy outlines procedures for working alone. Comprehensive policy and procedure for transporting children. Code of conduct for all staff. Manager on call available to all involved in access.
5	Risk of physical harm to a child while being transported by staff due to either ineffective or non-existent car seats in transport vehicles	Transport of children with ineffective or non-existent car seats is not permitted. Comprehensive policy and procedures in place for protecting children while being transported. Broad recruitment and vetting process in place. Lone working policy outlines procedures for working alone. Comprehensive policy and procedure for transporting children. Code of conduct for all staff. Manager on call available to all involved in access.
6	Risk of harm of bullying of a child by a member of staff/peer	Comprehensive recruitment and vetting process in place. Lone working policy outlines procedures for working alone with children. Site specific safety mechanisms in place.

		Code of conduct for all staff. Manager on call available to all involved in access.
7	Risk of harm of a child from unauthorised photography	Procedures for staff to follow that outline what is authorised and what is unauthorised photography.
8	Risk of harm of a child from online abuse through social media or internet access	Specific procedures and particular codes of conduct for children and staff to follow that outline what's acceptable behaviour online and what's not.

Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*, and TUSLA's Child Safeguarding "A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice". In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against Supervisors of a child availing of our service;
- Procedures for the safe recruitment and selection of workers to work with children;
- Procedures for provision of, and access to, child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to TUSLA;
- Procedure for maintaining list of the persons in the relevant service who are the mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our organisation is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in regularly or as soon as is practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:



Robert McCormack
Director
Supervised Access Ireland

Child Safety Policy

Both the custodial and access parent are required to engage with the supervisor coordinator (separately) to establish visit guidelines /protocol before a visit can be arranged. You will be advised of the guidelines prior to a new access arrangement and made aware of the protocol to which you must adhere to.

These guidelines are set to ensure a safe and enjoyable visit for parent and child/children.

SAI supervised access workers may be required to end a visit if the access parent is not following the visit guidelines.

Once the child/children have entered the SAI program the safety and well-being of the child/children is the responsibility of the visit supervisor.

If staff witness abuse or neglect while providing service to a family, we will make a report to the relevant parties in accordance with our Child Protection Policy.

The supervised visit worker will end a visit immediately if the child/children are placed in physical danger during the visit.

Lone Working

Lone working is a common aspect of the job for supervised family access workers. However, it can also present unique challenges for the workers, particularly regarding safety and wellbeing. The safety and wellbeing of supervised family access workers during lone working is paramount.

This section is designed to outline guidelines and protocols for the professional, and safe practice of lone working for supervised family access workers.

Policy and Procedure for Lone Working for Supervised Family Access Workers:

Lone working is an essential part of the job for supervised family access workers. It's crucial to ensure the safety and wellbeing of both the worker and the clients. This policy outlines the necessary measures to support and protect the worker during lone working.

Challenges and Supports:

Challenges that may occur during lone working include:

- Potential exposure to physical or verbal abuse from clients or their families.
- The risk of being in an unfamiliar environment.
- The potential for the worker to feel isolated or unsupported.

To address these challenges, the following supports will be in place:

- Regular communication with the worker to ensure their safety and wellbeing.
- Providing the worker with a lone working policy and procedure to follow.
- Training the worker on conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques.
- Providing the worker with protective equipment as necessary.
- Establishing a clear emergency response protocol for the worker to follow.

Policy:

- Supervised family access workers must follow all relevant health and safety legislation and guidance when working alone. They must also adhere to the organization's lone working policy and procedures.
- Management will undertake a risk assessment prior to any lone working activity, identifying any potential risks and mitigating actions.
- Supervised family access workers must have appropriate training and support to ensure their safety and wellbeing when working alone.
- Supervised family access workers must have access to appropriate communication and tracking devices to maintain contact with the organization and alert emergency services if necessary.
- Supervised family access workers must have access to appropriate transportation to and from work locations.
- Supervised family access workers must maintain accurate and up-to-date records of their lone working activity.
- Supervised family access workers must report any incidents or concerns regarding lone working to their line manager immediately.

Procedure:

- Management undertakes a risk assessment prior to any lone working activity and complete the relevant paperwork.
- Supervised family access workers must have access to appropriate communication and tracking devices, such as a mobile phone, to maintain contact with the organization and alert emergency services if necessary.
- Supervised family access workers must keep in regular contact with their line manager or a designated contact person, particularly when working in remote or isolated locations.
- Supervised family access workers must maintain accurate and up-to-date records of their lone working activity, including any incidents or concerns.

- Supervised family access workers must report any incidents or concerns regarding lone working to their line manager immediately.
- Supervised family access workers must receive appropriate training and support to ensure their safety and wellbeing when working alone.

Supports:

- Supervised family access workers must have access to appropriate training and support to ensure their safety and wellbeing when working alone.
- Supervised family access workers must receive regular supervision and support from their line manager or a designated contact person.
- Supervised family access workers must have access to appropriate counselling and debriefing services following any incidents or concerns regarding lone working.

Challenges:

- Isolation and loneliness when working alone.
- Increased risk of violence and aggression from clients or members of the public.
- Difficulty in accessing support and assistance in an emergency situation.
- Difficulty in maintaining accurate records and reporting incidents or concerns.

Reasons for professionalism on lone working:

- To ensure the safety and security of both the worker and the clients.
- To promote good working practices and adhere to the organization's policies and procedures.
- To demonstrate accountability and responsibility while working independently.
- To maintain professionalism and uphold the organisation's reputation.

Travel and Meeting Point Policy

Visit guidelines are set based on the information submitted by both parents in their initial agreement and standard rules set by SAI. You will be advised of these guidelines prior to the visit commencing.

- Children must be collected and dropped off on time. All parties are to arrive at and depart from the meeting point at precisely the prearranged times. If either party are late, you must notify your manager and note this in your report.
- If a party continues to arrive consistently late, the supervised access program may be discontinued.
- The custodial parent or indicated person will drop the child/children off at the agreed meeting point at the designated time for the visit and then will leave the vicinity. As a general rule, you, the access supervisor, will greet the custodial party and allow the custodial party to brief you on the child's wellbeing at time of collection. This is also an opportunity for you to engage the custodial parent to gauge their wellbeing and general demeanour and to reassure them that you are there for the safety and welfare of their child. This is done prior to meeting the visiting party and should not be delayed.
- Custodial parents will not be allowed to stay in the area during a supervised access, (unless court ordered). If you notice the custodial party staying in the area or waiting outside, you must contact you manager to advise.
- The custodial parent will remain available to pick the child/children up if a visit needs to end early.
- The custodial party will be responsible for providing SAI with two telephone numbers and addresses of trusted people who can be contacted in case of emergency if the custodial parent is not immediately available.
- Should the visit need to end early, you must first notify your manager before contacting the custodial party and write this in your report.

- At both the beginning and end of the access, the custodial parent or indicated person will not approach or speak to the non custodial parent or other indicated person and vice versa. Failure to adhere to this may result in access being terminated.
- The custodial parent or indicated person will return at the designated time to pick up the child/children at the end of the visit. It is not your role to go into detail about the visit after the access. This is the time for you to advise the custodial party whether the visit went well, or to report anything relevant to them, such as a cut or fall or if the child was distressed, what action was taken and how they can help support their child for the next visit. This interaction should be short and to the point.
- If another person arrives for the collection, you must contact your manager immediately before allowing a child to go into their custody. It is the policy of the service that children may only be collected by an indicated person who has been approved prior to access by the access co-ordinator.
- Visit guidelines are unique to individual contracts based on information and protocols submitted by both the access and custodial parent. Meeting points are arranged between the clients and the access co-ordinator.
- You are not permitted to change the meeting point, but you may make alternative suggestions to the access co-ordinator if you feel the meeting point is not working for the child/children.
- The client is not permitted to change the meeting point with you. Nor are they permitted to change the visit location without prior arrangement from the co-ordinator.

- If a client has freedom to move locations, their home address is not permissible unless it has been prior approved. Should this be suggested during an access, you must notify the MOC immediately. You should ask the client if this is approved and advise them you will contact your manager for clarification.
- If a client has freedom to move locations, you must ensure you are aware of the guidelines that have been arranged. It may be possible that they are not permitted to use their own vehicle. If this is the case, you may suggest alternatives, such as bus or train. But this must be cleared by the MOC and may not be allowed until the following visit.
- If a client is permitted to use their own vehicle, it is your responsibility to be aware of the legal implications. For example: all persons must wear a seatbelt or have a suitable child safety restraint. Only children over a 150cm height or 36kg weight are allowed to sit in the front seat without a suitable child safety restraint. You may refuse to get into the vehicle and prevent the child from getting into the vehicle if the client will not adhere to the safety guidelines.

You must report any non-compliance to your manager and note it in your report. You must also record whether the driving is safe or if the visiting party put you, their child or other person in any danger.

You may need to terminate access should the guidelines not be adhered to. You must follow the procedures for access termination. If in doubt, contact your MOC.

Children should not be left unattended at any time, nor are they permitted to leave the visit independently. If a child tries to leave by themselves before the visit is finished, it is your responsibility to try and encourage them to stay. Should this be unsuccessful, then the visit will terminate, and you must bring all other children, if attending, with you and contact the MOC.

Policy, procedure and protocol for travelling in a parent's car

By following this policy and protocol, we can ensure that family access supervisors can safely and appropriately travel in a parent's car, when necessary, to provide support and supervision to children and youth participating in family access programs.

A family access supervisor travelling in a parent's car depends on the specific circumstances and policies of the organization, but here are some potential reasons for both options:

A family access supervisor should travel in a parent's car if:

- The organisation allows and requires it for supervision purposes.
- The parent or caregiver has a safe and appropriate vehicle for transporting the child or youth.
- The parent or caregiver is willing to have the supervisor in their car.
- The supervisor has passed necessary background checks or screenings.

A family access supervisor should not travel in a parent's car if:

- The organization has safety concerns.
- The parent or caregiver does not have a safe or appropriate vehicle for transporting the child or youth.
- The parent or caregiver is unwilling to have the supervisor in their car.
- The supervisor is uncomfortable or unable to ride in the parent's car for personal reasons.

Policy: Family access supervisors may travel in a parent's car if it is determined to be the most appropriate and safe mode of transportation for a child or youth participating in a family access.

Rationale: There are several reasons why it may be appropriate and beneficial for a family access supervisor to travel in a parent's car, including:

- Ensuring safe transportation for the child or youth
- Building rapport and trust with the parent or caregiver
- Providing immediate support and supervision during transportation
- Reducing the logistical challenges of providing separate transportation for the child or youth

Risk Assessment: Traveling in a parent's car does carry some risks, including:

- Potential liability in the event of an accident or injury during transportation
- Exposing the supervisor to unsafe or uncomfortable situations during transportation
- Compromising the supervisor's neutrality and impartiality in the family access process

Protocol: To minimize these risks, the following protocol will be followed when a family access supervisor travels in a parent's car:

- The parent or caregiver must provide proof of insurance and a valid driver's license.
- Management must inform their supervisor and the program director of their plans to travel in a parent's car and provide the date, time, and destination of the transportation.
- The supervisor should agree in writing their consent to travel in the parent's car
- The supervisor must have a working mobile phone with them during transportation.
- The supervisor should not ride in a car with a parent or caregiver who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or who is exhibiting unsafe driving behaviours.

- The supervisor should not engage in any activities that compromise their impartiality or neutrality during transportation, such as discussing the family access case or taking sides in any disputes.
- The supervisor should report any concerns or incidents that occur during transportation to their supervisor and the program director.
- The supervisor should refer to the manager on call policy with any issues

Child's Right to Refusal procedures

SAI assists in the facilitation of visits but is not an enforcement agency. All children will be encouraged to participate in the program and adhere to court orders; however, no child will ever be forced into a visit.

It is expected that the custodial parent will have prepared the child/children about the visit prior to the visit occurring, where they should be reassuring the child, advising them that a visit supervisor will be with them at all times to ensure their safety and wellbeing and describing the visit positively, encouraging them to enjoy their time on their visit.

However, this is not always the case, and a parent may have inadvertently or otherwise, fed into the child's anxiety and the child may refuse to go to the visit.

Although the child has the right to refuse, it would be in the child's interest that the custodial party encourages the child/children to attend the visit. If the child/children express their right to refuse the access facilitator will try to encourage the child to attend. The access facilitator will try to ascertain as to why the child does not wish to attend their visit with the non-custodial party. This will be noted in the report.

The access worker will contact the access co-ordinator via WhatsApp or phone to advise of the situation and will follow their guidelines on how to proceed. (Please read and sign the separate policy regarding contacting the MOC)

It may be a requirement, dependent on the child's age and stage of development that they will need to go to the visit simply to advise the visiting party that they do not wish to stay. As an access supervisor, you must be prepared for this.

The access will only be cancelled once all avenues have been exhausted. All details of a refusal must be outlined in your report.

Termination of Access Policy

It may become apparent that the access visit must be terminated. This could be for a number of reasons, some of which are outlined below. However, this is not exhaustive, and the termination of access will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

- It may be necessary to terminate access if the non-custodial party will not adhere to safety regulations.
- The child exercises their right to refuse, and all avenues have been exhausted.
- Access workers can end a visit if the access parent is not following visit guidelines.
- The supervised visit worker will end a visit immediately if the child/children are placed in physical danger during the visit.
- Visit supervisors will not end visits unless the child clearly demonstrates ongoing distress during the visit. The visit supervisor will give the child the time and opportunity to overcome their distress before the visit will end.
- If a third-party person arrives without prior permission, this may result in access termination.
- If the visiting party is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- If the visiting party brings weapons of any kind to the access.
- SAI has zero tolerance for bullying or intimidating behaviour by either the custodial or access parent. If the visit supervisor or Program Coordinator believes that bullying or intimidating behaviour has occurred during a visit, the visit will be terminated immediately. If necessary, the access worker will call police/emergency services if the access parent refuses to follow direction concerning ending visits.

- SAI will end the visit if the child is ill and in discomfort.
- If the child/children appear to be in emotional distress during the visit, the supervise access worker are proficient to make the access parent aware of this distress and to redirect conversation and interactions to help ease this distress. If the access parent does not follow this direction, the access worker will end the visit.
- SAI staff reserves the rights to terminate a visit at any time and for any reason they see fit. Should a visit be terminated, you are required to place a note in the file as to the reasoning for the termination. These notes will accompany the observation notes should they be requested.

Procedures for Access Termination

Please read and sign the separate policy regarding contacting the MOC. Access visit can be terminated for a variety of reasons some of which are outlined above. In the event that a visit must be terminated, follow the below guidelines:

- Advise visiting parent of situation
- Call manager on call (MOC)
- WhatsApp MOC if no reply
- Explain situation to MOC
- Work with MOC to resolve problem
- Communicate solution to parent

Use of Buggies, Car Seats, Seatbelts and Highchairs/Equipment Policy.

The provision and use of appropriate child safety restraints and equipment are the responsibility of the custodial and non-custodial parties and should be suitable, safe and age appropriate.

Equipment should be kept clean, hygienic and well maintained at all times and checked regularly for broken parts.

Equipment should be age appropriate and suitable for the different stages of the child's development.

Non-custodial parties should use safety equipment, such as seatbelts, car seats and highchairs where provided. It would not be appropriate to disobey legislation in relation to child safety.

As the access supervisor you have the right to refuse to get into a vehicle or to insist on the use of child safety measures in a well communicated manner.

It may be necessary to terminate access if the non-custodial party will not adhere to safety regulations.

Aggression and Bullying Policy

SAI has zero tolerance for bullying or intimidating behaviour by either the custodial or access parent. We reserve the right to refuse service, at any time, if such behaviour occurs.

If a parent, either custodial or non-custodial is engaging in aggressive behaviours you must:

- Consider the safety of yourself, the child/ren, and other people close by.
- Contact the MOC.
- If you are in a position to de-escalate the situation, continue in a calm but firm manner, but do not endanger yourself, child or others.
- Advise the parent that you may need to terminate access (in the case of visiting party aggressive behaviours).
- If in immediate danger, remove yourself and the child from the danger and call emergency services.
- If not in immediate danger, contact the MOC for guidance on how to proceed.

- Should visit termination be required, follow the procedures and contact your MOC.
- It may be necessary to call police/emergency services if either parent refuses to follow direction concerning visits.

If the custodial parent is displaying aggressive or refusal/non-compliant behaviours:

- Consider the safety of yourself, the child/ren, and other people close by.
- Contact the MOC.

If you are in a position to de-escalate the situation, continue in a calm but firm manner, but do not endanger yourself, child or others.

Speak in a calm, soft tone reminding the parent that you are following a court order, and they must do the same.

Remind them that you are there to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their child and you will be with their child at all times.

Do not engage in argument or dispute. Keep it simple and to the point.

Advise them that if they continue to be aggressive, the guards may be called.

Remind them that their solicitor can reconfirm the court order to them if required.

Ensure the MOC is notified so they can support you through the process.

Policy for trauma-informed care for access supervisors

Definition of Trauma: Trauma is defined as an experience or event that causes intense distress, fear, or terror, and overwhelms an individual's ability to cope.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to ensure that access supervisors are equipped to provide trauma-informed care to children and families who have experienced trauma. This policy outlines the procedures and protocols that will be followed by access supervisors in order to promote a safe, supportive, and healing environment for children and families.

Procedures:

Screening for Trauma:

SAI will screen children and families for trauma upon intake. A standardized screening tool will be used to identify any history of trauma.

Training:

Access supervisors will receive training on trauma-informed care, including the impact of trauma on children and families, trauma symptoms, and how to provide trauma-informed care.

Communication:

Access supervisors will communicate with children and families in a sensitive, empathetic, and non-judgmental manner. This includes using open-ended questions, active listening, and refraining from blaming or shaming language.

Creating a Safe Environment:

Access supervisors will ensure that the physical environment is safe, welcoming, and conducive to healing. This may include providing a calm and quiet space, offering comfort items such as stuffed animals, and using trauma-sensitive language.

Collaboration:

Access supervisors will collaborate with other professionals involved in the child's care, should it be required, such as therapists, social workers, and teachers to ensure that trauma-informed care is consistent and coordinated.

Protocols:**Responding to trauma symptoms:**

Access supervisors will respond to trauma symptoms in a supportive and non-judgmental manner.

Confidentiality:

Access supervisors will maintain strict confidentiality regarding any disclosures of trauma or abuse. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, in accordance with legal requirements and ethical guidelines.

Self-Care:

Access supervisors will prioritize their own self-care and seek support from their managers and as needed. This may include taking breaks, participating in debriefing sessions, and seeking out resources such as counselling and therapy.

Substance Abuse/Misuse Policy

- It is the responsibility of the access supervisor to maintain the child's safety and wellbeing during an access visit.
- The visiting party must not be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol during the access visit.
- The visiting party is not permitted to purchase drugs and/or alcohol during the access visit for consumption on or after the access.
- The visiting party should not smoke during the access visit.
- The access visit may be terminated should the visiting party not comply with the guidelines if the supervisor deems it necessary. It will be terminated immediately if the visiting party arrives appearing to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- It is your responsibility as the access supervisor to ascertain if the visiting party is under the influence. If you discover that this is the case, follow the "Procedure for Access Termination"

- If the visiting party engages in purchasing alcohol during the visit for consumption either during the visit or after the visit, it is your responsibility to remind them that this is not permitted, and they must not engage in this. This must be recorded in your report.
- Should the visiting party discuss any illegal substances during the visit, it is your responsibility to redirect the conversation to something more appropriate and to note this in your report.
- For any uncertainties, contact your manager for guidance.

Health Policy

It is the policy of SAI to promote a healthy lifestyle through prevention of illness, ensuring child safety, child appropriate activities and establishing healthy eating patterns.

Healthy Eating

When visits are scheduled over mealtimes, the visiting party is responsible for supplying nutritious meals for the child(ren).

Although treats such as crisps, sweets and chocolate are permitted, on a case-by-case basis, this should not be the only items provided and should be part of a more balanced diet. Any special dietary needs must be met.

Should there be restrictions in place for the purchase of treats during an access, it is your responsibility as access facilitator to ensure those restrictions are adhered to. It is also your responsibility to encourage healthy options during mealtime visits.

Illness in Children

SAI requests that custodial parents not bring ill children to a supervised access (fever, vomiting, and diarrhoea). SAI will end the visit if the child is ill and in discomfort.

The custodial party must not bring a child to a visit if they have had vomiting/diarrhoea during the night prior to access.

A child with a communicable illness should not attend the access.

Children with a temperature of over 37.5 are considered unwell. If a child has a high temperature which is not reducing after medication, they should not attend access.

If you notice that the child is unwell during the access visit you must contact your manager for guidance and follow the Procedure for Access Termination.

Illness in visiting and custodial parties

Custodial parties who are ill (fever, vomiting, and diarrhoea) should organise an alternative designated person to drop off and collect the child to and from the access.

Visiting parents who are ill (fever, vomiting, and diarrhoea) should cancel their visit and rearrange for an alternative day.

Should the custodial parent or visiting parent have a communicable illness (such as chicken pox or corona virus), access should be cancelled until they are no longer infectious to avoid the child carrying the virus to others.

As the access supervisor, if you notice either parent is ill, this should be notified immediately to your manager for guidance. If termination of access is required, follow the Procedure for Access Termination.

Illness in Staff

The ability of SAI to provide supervised access depends on the availability of our supervised access workers and the availability of our roster.

Employees with a communicable illness will not attend access. It is your responsibility to notify your manager as soon possible of your illness to ensure alternative cover can be arranged.

Arrangements may be made to provide relief cover while staff are unavailable due to sick leave. It may be possible to reschedule your access visit scheduled time to an alternative day if the visiting and custodial parties agree, however, this is not guaranteed and is down to the client's preference.

As an access facilitator you understand that you are not paid for sick leave, and this should be claimed through your local social welfare office.

Hygiene Policy

SAI is committed to promoting healthy practices and a high standard of personal hygiene for adults and children.

Hygiene Procedures

Handwashing must be carried out after using the toilet, playing outside, playing on equipment, after activities and after handling food. It is your responsibility as access supervisor to actively promote and encourage this.

If handwashing is not available or appropriate, then an antibacterial hand sanitiser or sanitising wipes should be used and disposed of accordingly.

Cuts and sores must be covered with a suitable dressing.

Should it be necessary to assist with cleaning of body fluids, disposable gloves should be used and disposed of in a responsible way.

It is your responsibility to ensure your own health and hygiene practices and to carry on your person hand sanitiser and disposable gloves for such instances. Especially in light of infectious virus's such as Covid-19.

Head Lice

Should a staff member notice headlice on a child, both parties will be informed, and it will be noted in the report. The custodial party should be advised tactfully. If it is a recurrent problem, then staff will notify management for an alternative approach, such as in writing if it is not being managed.

Procedure:

- Inform parents verbally if you notice headlice on a child. Be tactful and maintain confidence.
- Note it in the report
- Notify management of continuing issue if it does not appear to be managed or resolved on subsequent visits.

Bathroom Visits & Nappy Changing Policy

The safety, security, and well-being of children under our supervision are our paramount concerns. Under no circumstances is a child to be left alone during supervised access visits. This policy outlines the protocol for situations requiring bathroom use during these visits.

General Procedure:

1. If a child needs to use the bathroom, the supervised access worker should ensure the safety of any other children under their supervision by gathering them in a secure and easily monitored area.
2. The supervised access worker should communicate to all children that they will be stepping away for a brief period but will remain in close proximity.
3. The supervised access worker should escort the child needing to use the bathroom to the facility.

4. If the child is of an appropriate age and comfortable, they can use the bathroom independently while the worker waits outside the door.
5. If the child requires assistance, the visiting party will assist the child under staff supervision unless otherwise stated in the court order or supervised access protocol. If this is not possible, the supervised access worker should provide the necessary support while respecting the child's privacy as much as possible.
6. After using the bathroom, the supervised access worker ensures the child practices good hygiene by washing their hands.
7. The supervised access worker escorts the child back to the group, ensuring all children are accounted for and safe.

Nappy Changing

An access supervisor will attend in the nappy changing area during nappy changing. If, for any reason, you are not in a position to enter the bathroom or nappy changing area with a parent, you must write this into your report with the reasoning behind it, explaining that you could not see or hear interactions during this time.

There should not be any alone time between visiting parent and child.

Protocol in Cases of Multiple Children:

1. If more than one child is under supervision and one child needs to use the bathroom, the supervised access worker should gather all children in a safe and secure area near the bathroom.
2. If possible, the supervised access worker should request the assistance of a colleague to watch over the other children while the worker accompanies the child needing to use the bathroom.
3. If additional assistance is not available, the worker escorts all children to the bathroom area, allowing the child needing to use the bathroom to do so while keeping all other children within sight and at a safe distance.
4. The general bathroom procedure (steps 3-7) is followed.
5. After the child has finished using the bathroom, the supervised access worker gathers all children and returns to the initial activity location.

Access Worker Bathroom Use Policy

The safety, security, and well-being of children under our supervision are our paramount concerns. Under no circumstances is a child to be left alone during supervised access visits. This policy outlines the protocol for situations when a supervised access worker needs to use the restroom during these visits.

General Procedure:

1. The supervised access worker should first ensure the children are in a safe, secure, and easily monitored area.
2. The supervised access worker should notify the children that they will be stepping away briefly but will return promptly.
3. If possible, the supervised access worker should request the assistance of a colleague to watch over the children while they use the restroom.
4. If a colleague is not available, the supervised access worker should ensure the children are engaged in a safe activity within sight before stepping away.
5. The supervised access worker should return promptly from the restroom, minimizing the time spent away from the children.
6. Upon returning, the supervised access worker should ensure all children are accounted for and safe.

Non-negotiable Principle: At no point in the process should a child be left alone or without supervision. All procedures are designed to ensure continuous supervision of all children, prioritizing their safety and well-being. Failure to adhere to this principle may result in disciplinary action.

This policy and procedure is put in place to ensure that we create a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all children in our care.

Toys & Gifts Policy

Parties are expected to provide their own toys, crafts and activities for the access visit. These can be brought to the visit by the child/children or by the visiting party. It is not the responsibility of the access facilitator to provide such items

All toys, crafts and activities must be age and stage appropriate. They must also be in good repair and clean and checked for health and safety hazards. If items are inappropriate, unsuitable or unsafe, the access worker may advise the parent or child to put them aside and not use them in a well communicated way.

In some circumstances, gifts must be approved in advance. This is on a case-by-case basis. If there is an item that you feel may be unsuitable, contact your manager immediately to avoid causing the child any unnecessary distress.

Accidents and Incidents Policy

It is the policy of SAI to promote health, wellbeing and personal safety of the children who enter into a programme with us.

Accident Prevention:

All employees are made aware of our Child Safety and Child Protection policies.

Children are supervised by their visiting parent and an access supervisor at all times.

Children are not permitted to leave the visit area unsupervised at any time. It is your responsibility to ensure they are encouraged to remain at the visit until the visit is over.

A mental risk assessment will be conducted of all areas, activities and premises in line with visit guidelines. Should you deem the activity unsafe, it is your responsibility to redirect or suggest a safer alternative.

Only suitable and age-appropriate activities, toys and games should be available to children. If items are unsuitable or unsafe, you are required to advise the parent or child to cease their use during the access.

It may be necessary to terminate access should the guidelines not be adhered to. In which case, you must follow the access termination procedures.

Accident Procedures

Should an accident occur during a visit inside a premises, such as a hotel or children's play centre, then the visiting parent must manage the situation and contact the premises qualified First Aid Responder.

- You, the access supervisor, will assist where necessary.
- A record of the event will be noted in the report.
- Minor accidents will be treated by the visiting party and the custodial parent will be advised of the injury and action taken when the child is collected.

In case of a serious accident:

- Your first priority is to the welfare of the child
- The visiting party will follow accident protocol as set out by the premises.
- The supervisor will follow SAI's Emergency Procedures
- If necessary, emergency services will be called.
- The access supervisor must call the MOC and the custodial parent to advise of the situation and follow procedures and guidelines accordingly.
- The supervisor must remain with the child at all times.
- A detailed report of the accident must be included with the observations report.

Procedure re emergencies / problems /difficulties

For any accidents, emergencies, problems or difficulties, it may be necessary to contact the manager for guidance or clarification.

- Call manager on call (MOC)
- WhatsApp MOC if no reply •
Explain emergency to MOC
- Work with MOC to resolve problem
- Communicate solution to parent

Fire Safety Policy

In the event of a fire at a visit premises, fire safety procedures for that premises must be adhered to. It is your priority as an access supervisor to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child or children who are in your care.

Our emergency on call procedures is to be followed and both the MOC and the custodial party are to be notified of such an emergency. Should a fire drill be carried out during an access visit, fire safety procedures will be adhered to, and the custodial party will be notified upon collection. You must write this in your report and the procedures that were followed, including the interactions and conversations between visiting party and child during this time.

Behaviour Management Policy

The management and staff of SAI believe that children should be encouraged to grow and develop to their full potential with full support of both parents, in a suitably planned environment, where they come to know what is expected of them, where clear limits are set, appropriate to their age and stage of development and any special needs they may have.

We believe that with good practice, parents will become proficient at coparenting, keeping their child's best interests at heart.

It is our mission to build positive behaviour management strategies for parents and children to help support relationship building between families.

Guidelines:

Children's efforts, achievements and feelings will be acknowledged so as to promote the growth of self-esteem and self-discipline. As an access supervisor, it is your role to model and encourage this behaviour.

Behaviour management should be consistent in order that children have security of knowing what to expect and can build up good patterns of self-discipline. If you notice inconsistencies in a visiting parents' methods, this should be pointed out tactfully and in a well communicated way.

Clients and staff must strive to be good role models, showing respect for each other and the children.

Parents should engage in positive strategies for behaviour management and not use physical punishments or degrading, abusive techniques. You may need to challenge a parent should this happen. You may need to terminate access should the visiting party not adhere to our guidelines.

Observations on behaviour management is recorded to enable guidance on management strategies and the identification of problem areas that the parent may need assistance in, such as a parenting class.

It is your role to advise management of any potential problems and how you think we can support the parent going forward to build a positive relationship with their child.

It is your responsibility to undertake the online training on avoiding and managing challenging behaviours.

You are not mediators or counsellors and must not involve yourself in communication or disputes between parents.

The access parent will not engage in any discussion concerning custody or access with child/children during the supervised access. This does not foster positive behaviour and puts the child under unnecessary stress. Should this happen, it is your responsibility to redirect the conversation.

The access parent will not ask children for any information concerning custodial parent during the visit. The access parent will not engage in any negative talk with child/children concerning custodial parent during the supervised access. This has a negative impact on the child and is a

form of abuse. This will not be tolerated. Should this happen, it is your role to redirect the conversation. All comments must be noted in your report. Should negative talk continue it may be necessary to follow the access termination procedures.

The custodial parent will not engage in any negative talk with the child/children concerning the access parent before or after the supervised access. This has a negative impact on the child and is a form of abuse. This will not be tolerated and must be noted in the report. If a child confides in you that the custodial party is speaking negatively about the visiting party, this must also be noted in your report.

As an access worker, it may be necessary to encourage parent/child interaction during a visit. It may also be necessary to encourage parents to meet child's needs during a visit. It is your role to identify when there is a difficulty and to intervene as required.

Use of Language (including Mother Tongue Language) Policy

SAI will attempt to provide a language appropriate visit, but we are limited to the bilingual or multilingual Visit Supervisors available.

Therefore, SAI reserves the right to limit the language of the visit to English. This is to ensure that there is no manipulation to the child or negative language being used and that the Visit Supervisor understands what is being said at all times.

It is also for the clients' protection so there can be no ambiguity or misleading or misinterpretation of events by the custodial party.

It is your responsibility as access facilitator to remind clients to speak in English if you are not fluent in their language. It is within your role to ask the client what had just been said, should they engage in conversation that you do not understand.

Inappropriate or abusive language around the child or directed at the access facilitator will not be tolerated and will be noted in the report. The visit may be terminated if the client does not adhere to our language policy.

Should they continue to use their own language, inappropriate language or abusive language, you must remind them that:

- it is unacceptable
- it will go in your report that they engaged in this practice and refused to adhere to the guidelines
- you may need to terminate access should it continue

For any difficulties, you must contact the MOC for guidance.

Third Party Access Policy

The SAI staff does not allow outside third-party visitors or observers to attend a supervised access unless approved by SAI Program Coordinator.

The custodial party will not bring guests to the supervised visit unless the visitor is approved by SAI Supervised Access Program Coordinator.

The custodial party will not ask the child/children to have a phone conversation or Skype an individual unless prior consent has been given by the SAI Supervised Access Program Coordinator.

It is your role as access facilitator to ensure these guidelines are adhered to. Should the person have a third party with them, and you have not been notified of this by your manager you must:

- Ask the visiting party if they have received prior approval for the guest
- Contact MOC for clarification
- If the visiting party do not have permission for their guest, you will politely advise them that they cannot stay as they do not have permission.
- If the visiting party refuses or you get into difficulty, explain that you may need to commence access termination procedures and contact your MOC for further guidance.
- Note everything in your report about the incident.
- If permission is granted, continue with the access visit as normal and make note in your report.

Should they engage in a telephone or skype call with their child to a third party:

- Ask the visiting party if they have approval for this
- Determine who they are calling.
- Message the MOC via WhatsApp to advise and seek clarification of approval.
- Note it in your report.

Establishing and Maintaining Professional Boundaries

The visit supervisor is there in a professional capacity to ensure the safety, wellbeing and for the child or children's enjoyment of the access.

It is not appropriate to discuss your own personal life in detail. However, from time to time, it is permitted to use examples from your own life experience to help the client feel at ease and to gain trust. Clients must not quiz employees about their personal life. If you are made to feel uncomfortable with the line of questions from a client, you may redirect the conversation or advise the client you are not permitted to discuss your details. You must never divulge your home address.

You must not make or receive telephone calls or message with the client outside of access times. Any calls or texts outside of these times should be directed to your manager. If possible, keep your phone number private to avoid out of access communication. Do not share your email address with clients. Failure to adhere to this may result in disciplinary action.

You must not offer the client a lift or otherwise socialise with clients outside of access hours. To do so is a serious conflict of interest and can put both your professional reputation and the reputation of the company in jeopardy. Failure to adhere to this may result in disciplinary action.

Clients should not purchase gifts for the visit supervisors. If the client offers you a gift or sum of money this should be politely declined and advise the client that you are not permitted to accept gifts from clients. This should be noted in your report.

It is acceptable to accept a beverage from a client and/or a meal if the visit is during mealtime, however, it is not recommended as may cause difficulty further down the line. Should you accept, ensure to note this in your report.

You must not council the client or act as mediator between visiting and custodial parents.

SAI staff are to remain non-bias, non-judgemental and objective in their observations. You are there for the child/children, you are not there to befriend the clients. We are there to form a bond of trust and confidence in our role and in the service. Be friendly, but you are not their friend.

SAI employees will always remain professional. Use of inappropriate language is not permitted and should be avoided.

Policy on Accepting Food and Beverages

At Supervised Access Ireland, our aim is to maintain a professional, unbiased, and respectful environment during all supervised visits. To avoid any potential conflicts of interest or perceptions of favouritism, family access workers should exercise caution when offered food, tea, coffee, or any other items from parents during supervised visits.

Procedure:

1. If a parent offers a supervised access worker food, tea, or coffee during a supervised visit, the worker should kindly and respectfully decline.

2. The worker should explain to the parent that as a matter of policy and in order to maintain professional boundaries, they cannot accept such offerings.
3. If the parent insists, the worker should remain firm but polite, reiterating the policy and the importance of maintaining professionalism.
4. In case a parent continues to insist or becomes upset, the worker should immediately report the situation to their supervisor.

Protocol for Special Circumstances:

1. In special circumstances, such as a child's birthday party or a cultural event where it may be considered rude or disrespectful to decline, a supervised access worker may accept a small amount of food or a non-alcoholic beverage.
2. The worker should always inform their supervisor about such instances in advance, if possible, or immediately afterwards.
3. The worker should remain mindful of maintaining professional boundaries and ensuring their actions do not give the appearance of favouritism or a conflict of interest.

Non-negotiable Principle: Maintaining professional boundaries and avoiding any perception of favouritism or conflict of interest is a key responsibility of all family access workers. Compliance with this policy is essential to ensuring fair and effective services. Failure to adhere to this principle may result in disciplinary action.

Technology and mobile phone policy - Clients

SAI recognises the use of technology is part of daily life. However, there are some guidelines for use of such technology during an access visit.

Mobile Phones and Tablets:

The visiting party is permitted use their mobile phone and/or tablet during the visit; however, the access supervisor may ask the visiting party to stop the use of the phone and/or tablet at their discretion if they feel that it is not being used appropriately. Phone or video calls should not be

made to third parties for the purpose of speaking with the child/children without prior approval from the access co-ordinator.

Staff should not use their mobile phone during supervision unless it is to communicate with the access co-ordinator or to take notes. Ensure you clearly explain to the client as to why you are using the phone and note same in report.

Children should not bring mobile phones to the access visit. You may ask the child to put away their mobile phone until after the visit.

Laptops

Laptops are permitted by the visiting party for certain purposes, and these should be outlined to the visit supervisor. If a laptop is used, it should be only appropriate material for the child and the supervisor must also be able to see the screen. You may ask the client to cease use of the laptop should you deem it inappropriate.

Cameras (on phones or otherwise)

Visiting parties may take photos and videos during the access visit so long as it has been approved by the Supervised Access Program Coordinator and is not otherwise banned by a court order. If the visiting party want to take a photograph, advise them that you must seek clearance for this first. SAI staff have the right to demand that a photo or video be deleted at their discretion.

Internet Use

SAI acknowledges the benefits of internet use for the purpose of seeking activities, times of cinema listings, etc. Staff and clients are permitted to use the internet for such reasons.

Unsupervised access to the internet by the child is not permitted. Any use of internet between parent and child must be monitored by you, the supervisor.

Social Media

Any photographs or videos taken by/for clients must not be used for social media purposes unless prior approved by the access coordinator. Any issues or queries relating to same, by clients, must be directed to their solicitor.

Visiting parties must not make contact with their child or children via social media unless this has been agreed between both parties. If you become aware this is happening, you must notify your manager immediately and write it in your report.

Policy on staff and social media

Policy Statement:

It is the policy of Supervised Access Ireland that all employees, including supervised access workers, use social media in a professional and responsible manner. This policy outlines the expectations for appropriate use of social media by our employees.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to our employees on how to use social media responsibly and professionally. It also aims to protect the reputation of Supervised Access Ireland and maintain the confidentiality of our clients and their families.

Procedure:

1. Definition of social media:

Social media includes any online platform that allows users to create, share, and exchange information, opinions, and content with others, such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and others.

2. Professional Conduct:

Supervised access workers are expected to maintain a professional demeanour when using social media. This includes refraining from making any derogatory or negative comments about the organisation, clients, or colleagues. They should also avoid engaging in any behaviour that could be deemed inappropriate or offensive.

3. Confidentiality:

Supervised family access workers should always maintain the confidentiality of our clients and their families. They should not discuss any personal or confidential information on social media. Additionally, they should not share any photos or videos of our clients.

4. Accountability:

Supervised family access workers are accountable for their online behaviour, and any inappropriate behaviour could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Why an Access Worker Should be Professional Online:

1. Reputation:

Being professional online can help establish and maintain a positive reputation for our organisation. Negative or inappropriate behaviour by an employee can damage our reputation and negatively impact our ability to serve our clients.

2. Confidentiality:

Maintaining confidentiality is essential to protect our clients and their families. Social media is a public forum, and any disclosure of confidential information can have serious consequences.

3. Professionalism:

Maintaining professionalism on social media is essential to avoid any misunderstandings, conflicts, or inappropriate behaviour. Professional behaviour can also promote positive communication and relationships between employees, clients, and their families.

App Use (Connecteam)

Connecteam is used by the company in order to schedule accesses.

A link to the app will be sent to each employee to download it to their phone.

Connecteam does not monitor or track your phone. If you turn your location on while using the app, it may track your phone location.

Connecteam does not give us access to your phone or its contents.

Every employee **must** put their availability and unavailability on the app in order to ensure work is allocated efficiently.

It is essential that staff check the app regularly to confirm if work has been allocated to them.

If a staff member agrees to a shift, they must accept it on the app so that a green dot appears.

If a shift is being rejected, we ask that the staff member message management to explain why.

Contacting other employees via the app is not permitted. Should it be brought to management's attention that unsolicited messages have been sent, disciplinary action may be required.

Accountability Policy

This policy is regarding general non-compliance with policies, procedures and guidelines:

- Parent will be reminded of the program rules.
- A verbal warning will be given stating that if non-compliance continues the visit or exchange will end.
- If non-compliance continues, the visitation will end immediately. The participant will receive written incident report, as well as a verbal and written report warning that visits/exchanges will be terminated at the next incidence of non-compliance. The other parties and respective lawyers will receive copies of the letter.
- If non-compliance continues, the participant is notified that visits or exchanges are formally suspended or terminated. The other party and respective solicitors will receive notification.

Dress Code Policy

All employees are expected to be well-groomed and to have good hygiene.

All attire must be appropriate for work. All attire should be clean and in good shape. Avoid attire with offensive or inappropriate drawings or sayings.

Record Keeping and Report Writing Policy

- All records will be kept up to date and accurate at all times.
- Reports are to be submitted within 24 hours of access taking place.
- You must keep all records confidential and stored securely when not in use.
- All records and reports must be written impartially and factually.
- Any Child Protection concerns must be immediately reported to your manager and such records in relation to Child Protection concerns are stored separately and in strict confidence and are shared only on a need-to-know basis in line with our Confidentiality Policy.
- All supervised access workers must write a full and detailed report on the interactions, conversations and activities in which the non-custodial party and child/children engage in during the access.
- All supervised access workers must write a full and detailed report on the interactions, conversations and activities in which the custodial party and child/children engage in before and after the access, during handover.

Reports written must be objective and factual and written using the guidelines provided by the supervised access co-ordinator. These are vital for the purpose of assessing and improving the visits, protecting all parties and providing the courts with an overview of the progress.

- Reports will be made available to relevant parties upon request, therefore, be mindful of the language and style used for your reports and adhere to the guidelines that are provided to you. There may be a fee for this service, and this should be discussed with the access co-ordinator.
- A summary report may be requested by relevant parties. There may be a fee for this service, and this should be discussed with the access co-ordinator.

- Employees are not permitted to provide reports to the clients under any circumstances and should direct the clients to the access co-ordinator.
- Employees are not permitted to discuss clients or provide reports to any other party and should direct enquiries in relation to this to the access co-ordinator.
- Access workers and the agency must only keep records in line with Data Protection Legislation.

Policy and Procedure

Contacting management or the manager on call (MOC) during and after access times

Policy:

To ensure that all parties are supported during access visits, SAI have a manager on call (MOC) policy to support the service. The policy is safety focused. There is always a MOC available. When there is a challenging or unknown situation, the Supervisor should contact the MOC for support and guidance.

Procedure for during access visit:

WhatsApp and then Call the manager **during** access if the following happens:

- Child refuses to attend access
- Child becomes overtly distraught during the access
- Any child protection issues
- Visiting parent becomes aggressive or challenging
- Visiting parent seems to be under the influence of alcohol and/or unknown substances
- Any challenging or concerning issues
- Either parent doesn't show for access
- If any child doesn't attend access visit

Always call, text or WhatsApp if there is a doubt or query regarding behaviours during access visits. DO NOT call on WhatsApp.

Procedure for after access visit

Call and inform your manager via WhatsApp or phone call **after** the access if

- Visiting parent is not complying with policies and procedures during access visit

- Visiting parent needed to be verbally warned to not speak of the court process or about the custodial parent
- Anything considered an incident during the visit e.g., the child fell
- Any concerning issue but that may not be dangerous
- When the custodial parent remains in the access vicinity during the access
- If the custodial parent is texting or calling the supervisor during the access visit
- When the visiting parent remains in the access vicinity after the access
- If either parent is contacting you outside of the access times

Document acknowledgment and agreement

Date:

I confirm I have read the document “Policy and Procedure: contacting management or the manager on call (MOC) during and after access” in its entirety and understand the contents of it. I agree to abide by it and understand that failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action by Management of Core Caring Ltd., t/a Supervised Access Ireland.

Name (print)

Name (signature)

Please return a signed copy to HR via recruitment@supervisedaccessireland.com

Policy on communication with other professionals

At Supervised Ireland, we prioritise clear, direct, and organised communication channels. In order to maintain the integrity of information and GDPR, all communication with clients, social workers, solicitors, Guardian ad Litem (GAL), and other professionals should be directed through the service manager.

You are not authorised to communicate with the afore mentioned people unless approved by management. Family access workers should not independently engage in direct communication with these parties.

Procedure:

1. If a supervised access worker is contacted by a client, social worker, solicitor, GAL, or another professional, they should politely inform them of the policy and redirect them to the service manager.
2. The worker should not engage in any conversation or provide any information about the case or client to the inquiring party.
3. The supervised access worker should promptly inform the service manager about the contact, providing all relevant details.
4. If the supervised access worker needs to share information or discuss matters related to a client, they should do so directly with the service manager.

Protocol for Incoming Calls:

1. If a supervised access worker receives a call from a client, social worker, solicitor, GAL, or another professional, they should not disclose any information.
2. The worker should respectfully inform the caller of the communication policy and provide the contact information for the service manager.
3. The worker should immediately inform the service manager about the call, including details about the caller and the information requested.

Non-negotiable Principle: All communication with clients, social workers, solicitors, GAL, and other professionals must go through the service manager. This principle ensures the consistency and integrity of communication and protects the confidentiality and privacy of our clients. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

This policy and procedure is put in place to ensure effective and consistent communication while maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality.

Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

Introduction

Core Caring Ltd t/a Supervised Access Ireland (SAI) is committed to diversity, equal opportunity employment, equal opportunity services for clients and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Core Caring Ltd t/a Supervised Access Ireland (SAI) does not discriminate on the basis of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age (does not apply to a person under 18), disability, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), membership of the Traveller community or pregnancy and maternity.

Purpose

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best. Core Caring Ltd t/a Supervised Access Ireland (SAI) - in providing services - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.

- not unlawfully discriminate through abiding by The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000–2015 which include protected characteristics of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age (does not apply to a person under 18), disability, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), membership of the Traveller community or pregnancy and maternity.
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

Scope

This policy applies to hiring, internal promotions, training, opportunities for advancement, and terminations and applies to all Core Caring Ltd t/a Supervised Access Ireland (SAI) employees, volunteers, members, clients, and contractors.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has implications for most aspects of service provision including:

- The Workplace – diversity among the workforce and interaction between staff members.
- Management of Human Resources – Employment - advertising; recruitment; selection; interviewing; promotion; access to training and other employee benefits.
- Guiding Behaviour.
- Communication.
- Training – Ensuring that all training needs relevant to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion are identified and included in the budget and that appropriate training is provided for all staff members.

Children's needs

- A safe, accessible environment that facilitates, supports and encourages a positive individual and group identity.
- Well-trained and informed staff who understand their individual culture, identity, needs and interests.

Parents/Families' needs

- To know that their child will have their individual needs met and that their family culture and identity will be recognised and valued.
- To be communicated with clearly and effectively, and be able to communicate effectively, with the people who they trust to supervise their children.

Staff needs

- To know and to ensure that all of the service's processes are fair, open and transparent and not discriminatory.
- To work in and be involved in providing a safe, anti-bias, accessible environment.
- Be supported to be comfortable with difference and to engage effectively with parents/guardians and families; to be able to critically think about and confidently engage in dialogue around issues of equality, diversity, inclusion, bias and discrimination.

Management needs

- To know that all those who use the service or who work in it have their individual needs met as far as possible within the context of the service and that staff members have the appropriate skills and knowledge to meet the diverse needs of all of the children who use the service and their families.

- All of the service's policies and procedures to reflect a commitment to equality and inclusion and that the service promotes positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.
- The review and evaluation of policies is used to identify specific actions to address equality, diversity and inclusion issues.

Policy Statement

Core Caring Ltd t/a Supervised Access Ireland (SAI) commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
- Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.
- All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy is working in practice, reviewing it annually and considering, and taking, action to address any issues.

Sanctions

- Complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.
- Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations.

**Policy, procedure and protocol for accepting a candidate for the position
of access supervisor**

Policy: Candidates for the position of access supervisor will be selected based on their qualifications, experience and fit for the position, in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations.

Procedure: The following procedure will be used for accepting a candidate for the position of family access supervisor:

1. Conduct initial screenings of all applications and resumes to determine which candidates meet the minimum qualifications for the position.
2. Schedule interviews with qualified candidates to assess their qualifications, experience, and fit for the position.
3. Conduct thorough reference and background checks on candidates to verify their qualifications, experience, and suitability for the position, and in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations.
4. Review all candidate information, including interview notes, references, and background checks.
5. Offer the position to the selected candidate, contingent on satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment procedures, including background checks and other necessary steps.

Protocol: The following protocol will be followed when accepting a candidate for the position of access supervisor:

- All candidates will be evaluated fairly and consistently based on their qualifications and experience, in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations.
- The hiring decision will be made based on the candidate who is best qualified and suitable for the position.

- The selected candidate will be notified of the offer provided with all necessary information regarding the position, compensation and other relevant details.
- All pre-employment procedures will be completed in a timely and efficient manner.
- The organisation will maintain all records related to the hiring process in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations.

Conclusion: By following this policy, procedure and protocol, we can ensure that access supervisors are selected based on their qualifications, experience, and fit for the position, and in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations. This will help to ensure that the organisation is staffed with competent and qualified professionals who can provide high-quality services to families and children in need.

Staff Training Policy

Rationale and Policy Considerations

The Staff Training Policy must identify and address the training needs of employees.

It is important for all Access Supervisors to avail of opportunities to enhance knowledge and understanding within the roll on an ongoing basis. This applies in particular to areas of practice relating to children's wellbeing and also applies to other important areas of practice such as governance and planning as well as health and safety and child protection.

The aims of this policy are:

- To outline this service's commitment to full induction for new staff members and ongoing staff development and training thereafter.
- To ensure that staff development and training needs are identified and are well-planned for, well-resourced and organized efficiently and effectively.
- To link the performance and staff development to the achievement of the service's operational and strategic goals and objectives, and its commitment to continuous improvement and quality service provision.

Parents'/Families' needs

Parents/guardians need to:

- Be aware of the purpose of staff training and development and the service's approach to facilitating such training and development for their staff members.
- Know that those to whom they entrust the wellbeing of their children are appropriately inducted, trained and supported to carry out that task competently.

Staff needs

Staff members need to know:

- What the service management expects of them in relation to participation in training opportunities.
- That there is equality of access to training.

Management needs

Management needs to:

- Make sure everyone involved with the service is aware of the service's commitment to a positive start in the service for all new team members, as well as ongoing staff training and development.
- Ensure that all staff members have the information they need to do their jobs competently.
- Ensure that staff training and development is well planned, well-resourced and organised efficiently and effectively.
- Ensure that the appropriate training is provided to ensure a quality service.

2. Policy Statement

Supervised Access Ireland (SAI) aims to be an environment which supports individuals and their development. Access to a quality induction and ongoing training and development opportunities prepares staff members for both existing and future roles and responsibilities and helps them to reach their full potential thereby enhancing the quality of their practice.

A structured approach is taken to induction for new staff team members to ensure consistent and accurate communication about the service's policies, procedures and statements.

All staff members regardless of age, grade, gender, ability/disability or ethnic background or the nature of their contract of employment are expected to undertake staff development and training, which is viewed as a continuous process throughout their time with SAI. SAI encourages its staff members to undertake any other training or activities which aid their personal or professional development. Records are kept on each staff member's personnel file of all training completed while employed with SAI.

This policy demonstrates SAI's commitment to the development of staff members' awareness, knowledge and competencies through relevant training courses. All staff members also have regular supervision meetings within which to formally review their practice and training needs.

3. Procedures & Practices

A good induction program provides a solid foundation on which the new staff member and employer can build a strong and trusting relationship. It informs the new staff member about the way the company operates, and it ensures that they are welcomed into the company.

Induction for new staff members

The main purposes of the induction process for new staff members are:

- Ensure the staff member is aware of and has access to initial training for the role.
- Ensure the staff member completes essentials such as Child Protection training.
- To familiarize them with the service's staff handbook.
- To familiarize them with the service's essential policies, procedures, routines and approach to quality and to the service's organisational structure.
- To clarify their roles and responsibilities (including record management).

Who, when and how?

- Induction is carried out by Iva Bedzula Prebeg.
- It will be carried out initially by email, sending links for training and policies etc. Once these have been completed, a Zoom call will take place to go through any questions or concerns and to give more information.
- There is no limit to the duration for induction. The most important thing is that the staff member is happy and comfortable rather than a date to finish by.

The induction program will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is still meeting the needs of new staff members and the service overall and will be amended if needed.

Types of training and development opportunities provided

- Induction Process
- Supervision every 6 months, or earlier if requested by staff members
- Mentoring/Coaching

Training priorities will be decided on the basis of the current and evolving needs of the children and families who use the service, the agreed plans and aims of the service, and ongoing developments in the sector related to legislation and quality practice.

Follow up to training

Robert McCormack is responsible for evaluating the impact of learning and development provided for staff members throughout the year, that is, to discuss the learning, and assess improvements as a result of the training. This is to ensure that opportunities are being identified appropriately and the added value of the training that staff have participated in can be assessed.

Records and record keeping

Training records for all staff members will be maintained by the service subject to General Data Protection (GDPR) requirements. Records of Certified/Accredited training are held on each staff members file.

GDPR Compliance Policy & Procedures

GDPR Compliance Policy

1. Introduction

Objective: This policy is designed to ensure our organization's compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Our aim is to protect the privacy and security of personal data we handle, respecting the rights of individuals and maintaining their trust.

Scope: This policy applies to all personal data processed by our organization, across all departments, personnel, and systems, regardless of whether the data is stored electronically or in paper form.

Definitions: Key terms used in this policy are defined as follows:

- **Personal Data:** Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject').
- **Processing:** Any operation performed on personal data, whether automated or manual, including collection, use, recording, organization, structuring, storage, adaptation, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure, dissemination, alignment, combination, restriction, erasure, or destruction.
- **Data Subject:** A natural person whose personal data is processed by the controller or processor.

2. Principles of Data Processing

Our organization adheres to the following principles when processing personal data:

- **Lawfulness, Fairness, and Transparency:** Processing will be lawful, fair, and transparent to the data subject.
- **Purpose Limitation:** Data is collected for specified, explicit, and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner incompatible with those purposes.
- **Data Minimization:** Only data that is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed is collected.
- **Accuracy:** Every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that personal data is accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
- **Storage Limitation:** Personal data is kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects for no longer than necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed.
- **Integrity and Confidentiality:** Processing is done in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data.

3. Rights of the Data Subject

Data subjects have the following rights:

- **Access:** To request access to their personal data and information about how this data is processed.
- **Rectification:** To request the correction or completion of their personal data.
- **Erasure ('Right to be Forgotten'):** To request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing.

- **Restriction of Processing:** To request the restriction of processing of their personal data.
- **Data Portability:** To request the transfer of their personal data to another party.
- **Object:** To object to the processing of their personal data in certain circumstances, including for direct marketing.

4. Data Protection Measures

To safeguard personal data, we implement suitable technical and organizational measures. These include:

- **Security Practices:** Use of encryption, access controls, secure data storage and transfer methods, and regular security assessments.
- **Data Breach Response:** A clear procedure for responding to data breaches, including notification to the relevant authorities and affected data subjects where applicable.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Data Protection Officer (DPO):** Our DPO oversees compliance with this policy, acting as a point of contact for data protection authorities and data subjects.
- **Staff Training:** All staff handling personal data will receive training to act in compliance with this policy and GDPR.

6. Consent and Data Collection

Consent must be freely given, specific, informed, and unambiguous. Privacy notices explaining the purpose of data collection and processing will be provided at the point of data collection.

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to significant changes in data protection legislation or our business practices. Regular audits will be conducted to ensure compliance.

8. Implementation

All staff are required to understand and adhere to this policy. Breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

GDPR Compliance Procedure

Introduction

This procedure outlines the steps our organization takes to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). It serves as a practical guide for our employees, detailing how to handle personal data from collection to deletion, ensuring the rights of data subjects are respected and protected.

Procedure Overview

1. Data Collection and Consent

- **Identifying the Basis for Processing:** Before collecting personal data, determine the lawful basis (e.g., consent, contract necessity, legal obligation).
- **Obtaining Consent:** When using consent as the basis for processing, ensure it is freely given, specific, informed, and unambiguous. Record the consent received.

2. Data Processing and Security

- **Implementing Data Protection Measures:** Apply appropriate technical and organizational measures to ensure data security, including encryption, anonymization, and access controls.
- **Documenting Processing Activities:** Maintain records of data processing activities, including the purpose of processing, data categories, and data recipients.

3. Data Subject Rights

- **Handling Requests:** Establish a system for managing data subjects' requests (e.g., access, rectification, erasure). Ensure requests are addressed within the GDPR's specified timeframes.
- **Verifying Identity:** Before processing requests, verify the identity of the data subject making the request to prevent unauthorized access.

4. Data Breach Response

- **Detecting and Reporting Breaches:** Implement procedures to detect, report, and investigate personal data breaches. Report breaches to the relevant supervisory authority within 72 hours, unless the breach is unlikely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
- **Notifying Affected Individuals:** When the breach poses a high risk to individuals' rights and freedoms, notify them without undue delay.

5. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

- **Conducting DPIAs:** When processing operations are likely to result in a high risk to individuals' rights and freedoms, conduct a DPIA. Document the process, findings, and measures to mitigate risks.

6. Data Transfer

- **International Data Transfers:** Ensure that data transferred outside the EU/EEA complies with GDPR requirements. Use appropriate safeguards such as standard contractual clauses or binding corporate rules.

7. Training and Awareness

- **Providing Training:** Regularly train staff on GDPR principles, their responsibilities under the regulation, and the organization's data protection policies and procedures.
- **Raising Awareness:** Keep data protection and privacy practices a central aspect of organizational culture through ongoing communication and updates.

8. Monitoring and Review

- **Conducting Audits:** Perform regular audits to ensure compliance with GDPR and the effectiveness of the implemented measures.
- **Updating Procedures:** Review and update data protection procedures in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or organizational practices.

Record Keeping

Maintain comprehensive records of all data protection efforts, including data processing records, consent documentation, DPIA results, training records, and data breach reports. These records demonstrate compliance with GDPR and are essential for accountability.

Implementation

This procedure should be implemented across all levels of the organization. Compliance is mandatory for all employees, and failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as well as legal consequences for the organization.

DPO for Supervised Access Ireland

The DPO for SAI is Robert Mc Cormack

Contact details Robert@supervisedaccessireland.com

Contact number 087 2853472.

Policy acknowledgment and agreement

Date:

I confirm I have read the Policies and Procedures as outlined in the Staff Handbook in its entirety and understand the contents of them.

I agree to abide by them and understand that failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action by Management of Core Caring Ltd., t/a Supervised Access Ireland.

I understand that amendments may occasionally be required of the Policy documents, which will be notified to me in writing, to which I will need to sign off on.

Name (print)_____

Name (signature)_____

Date_____