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**GUIDELINES ON THE  
RECRUITMENT OF  
CHILD CARE WORKERS  
IN  
RESIDENTIAL HOMES**



**December, 1979**

**Resident Managers Association  
Department of Health  
Department of Education**

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GUIDELINES ON THE RECRUITMENT OF CHILD CARE WORKERS

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1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines apply to the recruitment of child care workers. They have been agreed in discussions between the Resident Managers Association, the Local Government, and Public Services Union and the Departments of Health and Education.

2. DEFINITIONS

'Child care worker' for the purpose of these guidelines means house parent and assistant houseparent, and trainee assistant houseparent. The guidelines are not intended to interfere with existing procedures for internal promotions.

3. ADVERTISEMENT

Vacancies for child care workers should be advertised in the public press. An advertisement should give the following details:-

- the name of the home;
- the title and nature of the job to be filled;
- a short description of the work involved, highlighting the attractive features of the job;
- the qualifications/qualities necessary for the job;
- details of salary;
- an address from which application forms and further information may be obtained;
- a closing date for the receipt of application forms.

4. EDUCATIONAL STANDARD

In order that persons appointed as child care workers may at a later stage avail of opportunities for formal training in child care, they should have attained at least

2.

grade D or better in five or more subjects on Higher or Common level papers in the Leaving Certificate, or its equivalent.

5. APPLICATION FORMS

A model application form is attached at Appendix A.

6. JOB DESCRIPTION

A job description for a houseparent and assistant houseparent is attached at Appendix B.

7. BACKGROUND NOTE ON RESIDENTIAL CARE

A background note on residential care is attached at Appendix C.

Note:

A copy of these documents should accompany the application form forwarded to each applicant.

8. SELECTION OF CHILD CARE WORKERS

The following are the agreed minimum procedures for the selection of child care workers:-

(a) Every candidate for a post of child care worker will be shortlisted for interview on the basis of their application form. The shortlisting of candidates would, ideally, be done by the persons to act on the interview board;

(b) Short-listed candidates will be interviewed by an interview board consisting of the Manager of the home, a professionally qualified person (preferably with experience of child-care) and a third person who can provide a competent objective view of the suitability of the candidate;

- (c) The Manager of the home will investigate in full the written testimonials of the referees of the candidates who have been short-listed for interview, and if the candidate has agreed in his/her application form, will make personal contact with the present employer. The written testimonials should be available to the interview board;
- (d) The Manager will write to his/her local superintendent of the Garda Síochána, giving the name and permanent address of the candidate provisionally selected for appointment to establish whether the candidate has a police record, the nature of which would rather render him/her unsuitable to child care work;
- (e) The person provisionally selected for appointment will be required to undergo and pay for a full medical examination by a doctor nominated by the Manager of the home. The medical report should refer, specifically to the
- previous medical history of the candidate;
  - the candidate's present state of physical health including a report on a recent chest x-ray;
  - the previous psychiatric history, if any, of the candidate;
  - the candidate's present state of mental health;

4.

- (f) The successful candidate will be appointed on probation for a period of one year;
- (g) The successful candidate will be asked to sign a contract of employment which specifies that a condition of employment is that he/she undergoes a probationary period of one year. A specimen contract is under discussion and will be circulated as soon as possible;
- (h) During the period in which the child care worker is on probation there will be an agreed assessment process in operation. (Detailed guidelines on the assessment of staff will be prepared in the near future).

6. SELECTION OF DOMESTIC STAFF

Because of the importance of domestic staff in the running of residential homes, it is recommended that procedures similar to those outlined above should be used for the selection of such staff.

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November, 1979.

RESIDENT MANAGERS ASSOCIATION  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NAME OF HOME

ENTRIES ON THIS FORM SHOULD BE TYPEWRITTEN IF POSSIBLE  
OR BLOCK PRINTED IN BLACK INK

Post applied for:- \_\_\_\_\_

PERSONAL DETAILS:

Surname:- \_\_\_\_\_

Christian Name(s):- \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address:- \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address for correspondence  
(if different from above):-

Recent Photo

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please write  
 name and  
 address on back  
 and attach here.

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex:- Male  Female  (Tick where appropriate)Marital Status:- Single  Married  Widowed  (Tick where appropriate)Married but living apart 

Religion:- \_\_\_\_\_

REFEREES:-

Please give name, address and occupations of 2 responsible persons  
(not related to you), to whom reference may be made as to your  
suitability for the post before the interview.

Name :- \_\_\_\_\_ Name :- \_\_\_\_\_

Address:- \_\_\_\_\_ Address:- \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. no. \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. no. \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

If not cited as a reference, do we have your permission to contact  
your present employer before the interview?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. DETAILS OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:-

(a) Education:- (Please include training courses, etc. even if uncompleted).

<u>Date</u>		<u>School/College attended</u>	<u>Description of Course content</u>	<u>Qualifications etc.</u>
<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>			

(b) Employment Experience:-

Please give full details of all work experience beginning with present position.

<u>Date</u>		<u>Employer's Name and Address</u>	<u>Responsibilities and Duties</u>	<u>Reason for Leaving</u>
<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>			

(c) Spare Time Interests:-

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(d) Have you ever applied to work for this home before?

Date applied:-

Post:-

Interviewed:-

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



4. GENERAL DETAILS RELEVANT TO THIS POST:-

(a) Would you object to any of the following work conditions?

(if yes, please specify a reason, where possible).

- (i) Rostered duties? \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Irregular Hours? \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) Night duties? \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) A year's probation? \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) Further training if required? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(b) What interests you about this post?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(c) Why do you think you would be particularly suitable for this post?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(d) How soon would you be available to take up this post?

\_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the information above is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief:-

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Candidates are cautioned that misleading or false information may result in disqualification.

JOB DESCRIPTION

**Title** Child Care Worker - Houseparent.  
(Residential Children's Home).

- Objectives:**
1. To care for the specific needs of each child;
  2. To provide a stable, stimulating environment where children can make worthwhile relationships with staff, other children and others with whom they come in contact.
  3. To co-ordinate and actively contribute towards the efforts of other members of the team in creating an atmosphere of unity and consistency in carrying out the overall policy of the home.

**General Responsibilities:**

- Responsibility for a group of children, subject to the resident manager to whom the houseparent is accountable; this responsibility extends to the physical, emotional, social and religious formation needs of the children; it entails attending to the day to day running of the group.

**Principal Duties**

- The principal duties comprised under the prescribed responsibilities would include:-
  1. calling the children each morning and ensuring they are properly

dressed and in time for their appointments during the day; escorting them to school where necessary;

2. preparing meals for children as required;
3. undertaking house work and involving the children as appropriate;
4. undertaking the ongoing social training of children; (e.g. chores, shopping, trips);
5. stimulating and involving the children in appropriate recreational activities;
6. assisting with children's educational progress (e.g. homework) and personal development (e.g. providing the children with the opportunity to discuss their personal problems, always respecting the children's freedom) and the planning, implementing and reviewing of programmes for the special needs of the children, in consultation with management and other members of the staff;
7. caring for and stimulating children who are too young, or otherwise unable, to attend school;
8. planning for, stimulating and caring for the children on holidays;
9. ensuring that the children are properly prepared for bed in the evening, observing the sleep-in roster (where this applies) and being responsible for the children at night;

10. co-operating with the resident manager in the arrangement of the duty roster, in planning for the children and in preparing requisite reports and records on the children - observing confidentiality in accordance to the principles of professional ethics;
11. such other duties appropriate to a houseparent which he/she may be requested by the Manager to perform.

Co-ordinating - 1.  
Duties.

in consultation with the resident manager and other members of the team arranging appointments and consultations with outside agencies (doctors, teachers, etc), and ensuring that children are suitably placed in schools and employment.

Supervising  
Duties

- 1. supervising a group of children;
- 2. supervising assistant houseparent(s);
- 3. supervising training of inexperienced staff/trainees.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title - Child care worker -  
Assistant Houseparent -  
(Residential Children's  
Home)

Objectives - As for houseparent.

General Responsibilities - Responsibility, under the  
direction of the houseparent,  
for caring for a group of  
children.

Principal Duties - The principal duties comprised  
under the prescribed  
responsibilities would include  
1 - 9 of houseparents duties and  
such other duties appropriate  
to an assistant houseparent  
which he/she may be requested  
by the Manager of Houseparent  
to perform.

A CAREER IN RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE

1. WHAT IS RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE?

Residential care is one way amongst others of helping children, who for various reasons must go beyond their own homes and families in order to live in a happy, accepted and loved environment. Children are helped to cope more effectively with their personal or family problems. Children in residential care must find security, love and care; residential care must be for them a home, a place where they can be truly themselves. They must be helped to grow spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and socially. They must learn social behaviour and acquire values which will enable them to come to terms with themselves, with the demands of society and their place and contribution to society.

2. RESIDENTIAL CARE NEEDS A HIGH LEVEL OF SKILLS

Those working in Residential Care must realize that the children they are caring for are not their own. They often are rejected, deprived, disturbed and insecure children. These children need all the parental care they can get but they also need professional, skilled people to help them work through insecurity towards full personal development. Residential work needs people with tremendous physical, mental and spiritual vitality. The person who is to become a residential child care worker must be able to work with people in an intimate way. He

or she should have a deep understanding of human nature and the needs of individuals, together with a genuine affection for deprived children.

The work demands the highest level of training which is available. A child care worker is expected to use every opportunity to improve his or her skills in working with deprived children.

Those wishing to train for a career in residential child care must work for at least one year in a residential home. Following successful completion of this year, the child care worker will be required to undertake formal training, which may involve attendance at day release or full-time courses at a training centre.

### 3. QUALITIES NEEDED BY RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE WORKERS

Those wishing to work with deprived children must be mature, stable and warm hearted adults, with a good and stable background. The worker must be able to communicate with others and must operate as a member of the team. He/she must understand and accept the philosophy of the establishment as a whole and be prepared to play his/her role as a fully responsible member. One of the most obvious skills in residential care is to be able to offer a warm and secure relationship to children. The child care worker must be able to organize the activities of a group of children, and show creativity in making the most constructive use of the childrens' leisure time. SKILLS

3.

In sewing, cooking, crafts and music are very useful as much of the day-to-day routine is taken up with looking after the physical needs of the children, washing clothes, cooking dinner and playing with the children. Applicants must have a good standard of education and a sound religious set of values.

4. DETAILS OF THE RESIDENTIAL HOME TO WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING FOR A JOB.

(Managers may wish to insert here some details of their individual homes for the information of applicants).