



**To: DCEDIY stakeholders, funded youth services and organisations**

5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Re: Guidance for DCEDIY funded youth services and organisations in light of the current public health restrictions**

Dear Colleagues,

I'm writing to you in relation to the delivery of youth services in the context of the updated public health advice which came into effect at the beginning of the year.

The Department has been closely monitoring the developing public health situation. In this regard we are particularly conscious of the significant recent deterioration in all of the key disease indicators (case numbers, hospital admissions, ICU occupancy etc) and the potential impact of new, more transmissible, variants of the virus. In this context, it is now considered necessary to take immediate action to reflect this new situation by means of supplemental measures over and above the Level 5 restrictions set out in the published Guidance for Youth Work Organisations.

In view of the immediate, uncertain and rapidly evolving public health scenario, it is not intended to update the published text of the Guidance for Youth Work Organisations. Rather, I am writing to advise that for the current period of restrictions, and until notified otherwise, funded youth services should move to exclusively remote delivery of services, except in the following circumstances:

- Essential youth work support, focused on at-risk, vulnerable young people or young people in crisis, may continue in person. It is expected that the nature of this work will predominantly involve one to one or very small group work.
- Such essential youth work should be delivered in line with prevailing public health restrictions and should only take place where mandated by the most senior management of the youth service. Numbers involved should be kept to an absolute minimum and should never exceed groups of 6. Outdoor options should be utilised in all cases where available and feasible.
- Use of Youth Service Transport should only be considered where absolutely necessary in the context of the above essential service provision.



In relation to the remote delivery of all other youth services, the Department acknowledges the critical role played by such online services in supporting young people through this acutely challenging time as well as the flexibility, innovation and resilience that has been shown by the sector in providing this important support.

Your assistance in communicating this updated position to relevant stakeholders is much appreciated. It is also intended that a notice will be published alongside the current guidance on the Department's website.

We will continue to keep the guidance under review in view of the developing public health situation and in consultation with Government colleagues and with the youth sector.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Roderic O'Gorman', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Roderic O'Gorman, TD  
Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth