



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
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“Vetting Unit Lay Offs a Cause of Grave to Concern to All Those Working With Children and Young People - Job Bridge Not Appropriate for this Important Work” Says Leading Youth Organisation

Youth Work Ireland has today voiced grave concerns in relation to staff changes at the Central Garda Vetting Unit in Thurles. The information was raised on foot of a debate initiated by Michael Lowry T.D. in the Dáil today. The youth organisation who process thousands of vetting forms every year has said it believes a stable staffing situation is best for this critical area of child protection policy. The organisation has also expressed surprise that it appears to all intents and purposes that temporary positions are being replaced with recruits under the JobBridge Scheme despite denials by the Minister. Youth Work Ireland whose members have over 7,000 volunteers around the country believes the Vetting Unit needs to keep its complement of staff particularly to meet new demands that will arise from recent legislation in relation to “soft information”

“Garda Vetting is a key issue for all organisations involved in front line work with children and young people. However the system has been bedevilled by delays and problems down the years. It did seem in the last number of months inroads were being made now however it seems a lot of this good work is to be reversed. The laying off of staff at the Vetting Unit regardless of the background is a bad development for those groups who are now increasingly relying on volunteers due to Government cutbacks. It also seems bizarre that at the same time the Unit is hiring people under the Government’s JobBridge Intern Scheme” Said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“It’s not as if there isn’t enough work for people to do in this area. The Government has published the heads of a bill that will inevitably mean more work for the Vetting Unit with the introduction of a system of ‘Soft Information’ where a greater number of complaints and concerns about people can be disclosed. The Vetting Unit will be central to this and it needs proper staffing and resources. The current Government has promised a lot in the area of children and young people yet this measure is a potential huge setback to child welfare and protection. Proper professional standards and staffing arrangements are needed in all areas of our child protection system and these cuts send out all the wrong signals” Mc Loughlin added.

ENDS

417 words

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