

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 commenced on 29 April. It contains many changes to Garda vetting, who it applies to, and how it is administered. This is just a brief summary of the changes and how they will affect community groups in practice.

Provisions are mandatory and wide ranging so it is important for groups to have proper procedures in place. Muintir na Tire can provide Garda vetting on behalf of affiliated groups.

Firstly the Act provides for the **mandatory** vetting of persons who wish to undertake certain work or activities relating to children or vulnerable persons or to provide certain services to children or vulnerable persons. These activities are widely defined but would include Youth Clubs, Childcare, care of the elderly, Community Alert where the elderly are visited and many more activities. Groups therefore need to be certain they have an appropriate vetting system in place.

Retrospective vetting will apply so that any existing staff must also be vetted. There will be a re-vetting period, possibly 5 years, where staff will have to have their vetting updated.

Unlike the previous procedures, applicants will be required to prove their identity and address. There is a further change in that information other than convictions can now be disclosed. This is information concerning a finding or allegation of harm to another person received by the Bureau from An Garda Síochána or a scheduled organisation (eg the HSE). The decision to disclose specified information requires the Chief Bureau Officer to believe that the information in question is of such a nature as to give rise to a bona fide concern that the vetting subject may harm, attempt to harm or put at risk of harm a child or vulnerable person.

For further information on obtaining Garda vetting for your employees or volunteers, contact [info@muintir.ie](mailto:info@muintir.ie).