



St Helena
Government

Safeguarding Directorate:

Policy for Section 30 payments under Welfare of Children Ordinance 2008 (WOCO).

1. Legal Framework

Section 30 (a) of the Welfare of Children Ordinance (2008) defines what is meant by children in need: A child is in need if—

Without the provision for him of services under this Part, he is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining such standard;

The Safeguarding Directorate are subject to a general duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children.

30.(1) *The Department shall, in accordance with the following provisions of this Ordinance, take such steps as appear to it to be appropriate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.*

2. Who is a Child in Need?

Children and families will be assessed under Section 30 of the Welfare of Children Ordinance (2008) after it has been determined that they cannot receive services to meet their needs by other agencies. It is the Safeguarding Directorate's policy that financial support and assistance that is provided under the Welfare of Children Ordinance (2008) should be supplementary to the benefit system and not an alternative to it. Children's Services cannot provide a benefits service.

It is therefore vitally important that families are supported to take steps to access alternative financial support.

This may include use of, where appropriate:

- The Better Living Allowance scheme
- Fostering Payments
- Carers Allowance;
- Any benefits claimed as appropriate
- Maintenance received from an absent parent

Entitlement to all of the above can be established by contacting the Public Solicitor, the Benefits Office or the Human Rights Office and Children's Services will advocate as appropriate for families.

Safeguarding staff also need to be mindful as to whether any costs required should rightly be met by the Health, Housing or Education Directorates.

3. Section 30 Payments

A budget, known as the Child in Need (CIN) budget has been established to enable help to families who are in crisis and are unable to meet the assessed needs of their child(ren). Children Services have the statutory responsibility to assess Children in Need and provide reasonable services, interventions and or provisions to meet those assessed needs.

Payments under section 30 can only be made following a brief single assessment which indicates that specific financial assistance is the most appropriate means of safeguarding or promoting a child's welfare within their family.

4. Remit of a Section 30 (CIN) payment:

- One off payments to secure essential items to meet the assessed needs of a child(ren) up to the value of £150 per child.
- A weekly agreed payment to meet the assessed needs of a child(ren) following a full review of family finances. (approved by Children Services Team Manager)
- Weekly payments could be in the form of food vouchers / payments for child care / support with any recurring family finances, but need to be linked to the assessment of need for the child(ren)
- It is expected that parents / carers will engage with Children Services in financial management support to ensure they do not become reliant upon statutory services.
- Weekly payments will be reviewed on a fortnightly basis.
- Weekly payments should not normally exceed a period of 3 months.
- Payments required over a 3 month period need to be approved by the Director of Safeguarding.

On receipt of a request for section 30 assistance the Social Worker or Social Care Officer must establish via assessment that there are children of the family whose needs would not be met without such a payment, and that the family cannot obtain the help they require from other agencies as outlined above. The Social Worker or Social Care Officer must then discuss the payment with the Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager.

As outlined, any payments made under Section 30 need to be intrinsically linked to the needs of the child and therefore need to clearly identify how such financial support will improve the outcomes of the child(ren).

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Director and the Social and Community Development Committee on a 6 monthly basis.

September 2017.