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contact

Office:

098 36036 (from Ireland)

+ 353 98 36036 (from abroad)

Mobile:

+ 353 86 059 4538

(Text/WhatsApp)

Website:

www.safehomeireland.com

Email:

info@safehomeireland.com

Safe Home Ireland,
St. Brendan's Village,
Mulranny, Co. Mayo
F28 A386

Safe Home office hours:

Monday to Thursday:

9.00am to 5.00pm

Friday:

9.00am to 4.00pm

Thinking of returning or moving to Ireland?

Get in touch with us!

Safe Home Programme CLG
trading as Safe Home Ireland
Charity No: 20049119
Company Reg No: 351678

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Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An tSeirbhís Cathartha tacaíochta agus taidhle
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Welcome from our CEO

Happy New Year to all our readers. As we begin 2026, I want to sincerely thank everyone, both in Ireland and abroad, who supported Safe Home Ireland throughout 2025. Your continued belief in our work enables us to support people seeking to move or return to Ireland, and those who have recently returned.

2025 was particularly meaningful for us as we marked 25 years of Safe Home Ireland. One of the highlights of our anniversary year was our Christmas **Concert** on 14th December, held at [St. Andrew's Parish Church](#), Westland Row, Dublin. Featuring our Ambassador [Seán Keane](#), joined by the [Timahoe Male Choir](#) and special guest [Kate Dineen](#), The concert was particularly special, as it marked **25 years of Safe Home Ireland** supporting Irish emigrants globally and those who have returned home. It was a memorable night and a lovely way to end both 2025 and our 25th birthday!

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who supported and purchased our 2026 **Calendar**. A limited number of copies are still available [HERE](#). The calendar was made possible thanks to the generous support of our monthly sponsors, whose contributions help us to continue our work supporting returned emigrants across the country.

We are continuing to develop our [Returned Emigrants Network \(REN\)](#). Our next REN meeting will take place on **Saturday 14th February (2pm)** and will be held **online**, enabling participation from returnees across a wider geographical area. REN provides returnees with a space to connect, share some of the positive aspects of returning to Ireland as well as highlight some of the challenges and barriers encountered. These shared experiences help inform policy and strengthen advocacy for a smoother journey home for others considering a return. You can register on Eventbrite [HERE](#) to attend and to receive the Zoom link.

Advocacy remains central to our work, and this year we will continue to press for progress on the [US | Irish Driver's Licence Exchange Campaign](#). In 2025 we worked closely with partners in Ireland and the US to highlight the significant impact of licence exchange on returnees, particularly those living in rural areas. A major milestone in 2025 was the inclusion of this commitment in Ireland's [Programme for Government](#). The Department of Transport, in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), has identified New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts as the first three priority states for initial consideration due to their large Irish-born populations in those States. We now await the outcome of a request from [Ireland's Minister for Transport](#) to the [Governor of New York](#), seeking reciprocity with New York, as the first state. **If you, or someone you know, has recently returned or moved to Ireland from the US, or are considering doing so, please support the Campaign by completing our short survey [HERE](#). You can also learn more about the Campaign and subscribe to our Newsletter [HERE](#).**

We welcome the first Bank Holiday of the year this weekend, to mark **Lá Fhéile Bríde/St Brigid's Day**, a special occasion that also coincides with Imbolc, the ancient festival marking the beginning of spring. This is Ireland's only bank holiday named in honour of a woman. St Brigid is associated with healing, renewal, and hope, a fitting symbol as we look forward to longer days and the first signs of spring across Ireland. Since 2018, Irish Embassies and Consulates around the world have marked the day by celebrating the creativity of women, through a broad programme of events. See [HERE](#) for more information on events in your area!

Wishing you all a very happy St. Brigid's Day! Take care, stay safe and keep in touch, from
Karen, the Staff, Board, Friends and Ambassador of Safe Home Ireland

Tax Advice and Registering with Revenue Services on return to Ireland

If you wish to register for tax purposes here, it's probably best to start by setting up an online account with the Revenue Commissioners.

Once you are set up, you can pose direct queries via to Revenue relevant to your exact circumstances. Please see guidance [HERE](#), including documentation required, to register for the myAccount portal with Revenue

You may also wish to engage the services of a Tax Consultant to advise you on the specifics of your own situation

You can find details of registered tax advisors in Ireland (on an area by area basis) [HERE](#)

Note! Before you return/move to Ireland, it may also be beneficial to seek advice from tax professionals in the country you are leaving.

UK Based Support Services for Survivors of Institutional Abuse

[Fréa Renewing Roots](#), [the London Irish Centre](#) and [Coventry Irish Society](#) recently ran a webinar on applications to the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme and Family Tracing in conjunction with [Barnardos Ireland](#).

The webinar updated people on eligibility to apply for the Payment Scheme and how to apply to the scheme. In addition, Barnardos Ireland discussed how to go about accessing Family Tracing as well as self-care when you are going through this process. The webinar is designed to be accessible to both potential applicants, their family members and professionals who offer support to survivors of Ireland's institutions and is available on YouTube, please click here to the [link](#).

Survivors of Irish Institutions living in the US

Support is available in the United States for people who were adopted from Ireland or who spent time in a Mother and Baby Home, County Home, or other Irish institution. Assistance is available for those seeking early life information, support with the Payment Scheme, or opportunities to connect with others who have had similar experiences.

[Irish Community Services, Chicago](#) are reaching out to offer support to people in the Chicago area. They can be contacted directly (Sarah: 773-282-8445 Ext. 1 or sflynn@irishchicago.org).

Further information is also available through the [Coalition of Irish Immigration Centres](#), which can help identify an Irish Centre in your local area.

ALERT! - Did you apply for your Irish Passport between 23RD of December 2025 and 6th of January 2026?

Due to a technical issue with a software update, passports issued between **23 December 2025 and 6 January 2026** inclusive are not fully compliant with international travel standards and there is a possibility that such passport holders may have an issue at eGates and Border Control when travelling.

Check the date on your passport, if it was issued between the dates in question, it is important that you return your passport book (and card if applicable) so that a replacement passport can be sent out to you as soon as possible.

For more information, please see [HERE](#)

OR call the dedicated customer care line on; **00 353 (0)1 613 1780** from 9am to 4:30pm daily.

Safe Home Ireland Outreach and Advocacy Service

Providing Outreach is one of the important services that Safe Home Ireland can offer. Our Outreach and Advocacy Officers Noreen Mulrine and Karen Bollen can assist you with returning to Ireland, whether you are in the stage of gathering information, planning your return, or have recently returned back home. They provide advice on important documents to gather and important things to keep in mind when planning your move. Once you have returned to Ireland, an outreach visit can be done to help you settle in, for example by providing assistance with applying for a medical card, an Irish non-contributory pension or any other benefits you may be entitled to. You can find more information on our Outreach Service [here](#)

We are also currently reaching out to Irish organisations abroad to inform them on the services we provide and to offer our assistance. Safe Home Ireland will gladly host information sessions either online or in person to provide more information on returning to Ireland and how we can support with this process. **If any organisations are interested in information clinics for staff and/or service users, please feel free to reach out to our Outreach Officers:**

Karen Bollen: Email: bollenk@safehomeireland.com Tel: 00 353 87 2839259;

Noreen Mulrine: Email: Noreen@safehomeireland.com Tel: 00 353 87 6190491

Over to You.....

Each month we try to cover a variety of topics and highlight issues which we think may be of interest to you, our readers. We hope that these subjects have relevance to you.

We are aware our subscribers are based in many countries and locations. This month we are asking you to please let us know if there is anything you would like us to research and highlight in future issues.

If so please let us know by sending an email to info@safehomeireland.com

We look forward to your suggestions.

For the latest news and updates, be sure to stay connected with us on all the main social media platforms!
