

ARTICLE EIGHT ADVOCACY

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NUIG postgraduate students create Guide to help people affected by the Mother and Baby Homes and adoption in Ireland

Students in the Human Rights Law Clinic at the Irish Centre for Human Rights have created a new Guide to help people affected by the Mother and Baby Homes and adoption. The project is part of a collaboration with Article Eight Advocacy, an independent non-profit organisation which advocates for data subject rights in Ireland.

DUBLIN, Ireland, 3rd May 2021

The records formerly held by the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes transferred to the Department of Children on 28th February 2021. Requests for personal records can now be submitted to the Department. The Guide helps those affected by Mother and Baby Homes and adoption to make requests to the Department for their records or those of their relatives.

The Guide will benefit anyone affected by adoption and/or the Mother and Baby Homes to understand their information rights. The Guide is available as part of the Mother and Baby Homes Hub on Article Eight Advocacy's [datasubject.ie](https://datasubject.ie/mbh/resources/) website at: <https://datasubject.ie/mbh/resources/>.

The GDPR entitles everyone to a copy of their personal data and the Freedom of Information Acts enable people to request their relatives' records. The Guide provides information on these rights and contains template letters which can be used to make a Subject Access Request (SAR) under the GDPR

or Freedom of Information (FOI) Request to the Department. The Guide also contains template letters to make requests to Tusla and other organisations holding records.

The Guide builds on the work of last year's Clinic students who created a website and guides for former residents of Ireland's industrial schools and reformatories, available at <http://mydatarights.ie/>.

Anmarie Townsend, one of the three LLM students who worked on the project said "We feel honoured to have worked with Dr. Maeve O'Rourke and Claire McGettrick who have been incredibly supportive and provided amazing guidance as we developed this Guide. Building upon last year's work helped us feel connected to the larger issue. We hope the Guide will empower people to use their information rights to successfully obtain their records. This project is dedicated to all those affected by adoption and the Mother and Baby Homes, especially those who continue to struggle to access their records."

Loughlin O'Nolan of Article Eight Advocacy added "Navigating the processes involved in exercising information rights is frequently made more difficult for individuals than it should be by public sector data controllers in Ireland. If this Guide goes some small way towards assisting people in doing that, and reminding data controllers such as the Department of Children that they have obligations which must be met then it will have been a success."

- ENDS -

Press contacts

Loughlin O'Nolan,
Director, Article Eight Advocacy
info@article8.ie

About the Human Rights Law Clinic at the Irish Centre for Human Rights

The Human Rights Law Clinic at the Irish Centre for Human Rights was launched in 2019 and is directed by Dr Maeve O'Rourke. The Clinic introduces students to the concept of 'movement lawyering' (alternatively described as 'social change lawyering' or 'rebellious lawyering') and prepares and enables students to contribute their skills to community-based movements for social change. Students learn about the human rights issues and movements which will be the focus of their clinical projects through their own in-depth research and, crucially, from community organisers who are working in the area on a daily basis. Students devise their clinical projects in coordination with community organisers and they then work in small groups over two semesters to produce legal research and analysis and/or other material which will hopefully make a positive contribution to the protection of human rights in Ireland and internationally.

Web: <https://www.nuigalway.ie/irish-centre-human-rights/public/clinic/>

About Article Eight Advocacy

Article Eight Advocacy is an independent not for profit organisation which advocates for data subject rights in Ireland. We support data subjects by using all the tools available to us to ensure their fundamental right to protection of their personal data is respected. We do this by providing easy to understand information on what data protection means for individuals on our datasubject.ie website, submitting complaints to the Data Protection Commission on behalf of individuals and managing the progress of these, initiating litigation where necessary, and carrying out research to uncover misuses of personal data.

Web: article8.ie/ and datasubject.ie/