

09 July 2020

To: Chief Social Work Officers

## **CORONAVIRUS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2020 – REPORTING ON KINSHIP AND FOSTER CARE PROVISIONS**

Both of the Scottish Coronavirus Acts include provisions for reporting to the Scottish Parliament every two months on the status and operation of the provisions under those Acts. The first report was laid in Parliament and published on 9 June and is available [here](#).

We need to collect data on the use of the Foster Care and Kinship Care provisions in the Act in order to inform the second report which is due to be laid in Parliament at the beginning of August. The [Coronavirus \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#) specified that during the emergency period caused by the COVID-19 pandemic:

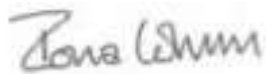
- Local Authorities can place more than the current maximum of three children with a foster carer. Local authorities can only do this if they consider that it is necessary to do so for a reason relating to coronavirus.
- A local authority may place a child with a kinship carer, in an emergency, for a period not exceeding 5 working days, instead of 3 working days. (A local authority is not required to carry out a review within five days of an emergency placement where the chief social work officer is satisfied that the placement is in the best interests of the child, that the placement of the child with that carer is in the best interests of the child and it is not reasonably practicable for the authority to carry out the review within the 5 working day period. It also provides that where a review has not been carried out in the 5 working day period, the local authority still has a duty to carry out a review as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of that period).
- A local authority may extend placements in certain circumstances for a period not exceeding 24 weeks.

- Where a child is placed in kinship care under regulation 11, the first review must be carried out within 3 months of the placement, instead of six weeks, and subsequent reviews must then be carried out within six months of the date of the previous review.

These provisions were introduced in order to ensure that all looked after children and young people could be safely cared for, and to allow local authorities to prioritise their resources effectively to help the most vulnerable children.

I would be grateful if your team could provide data on the above provisions by responding to this survey: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HTBJ1P/>. In order to inform the report responses are requested by 17 July 2020, or as soon as practical thereafter. We understand that not all of the data may be readily accessible, and would appreciate as much information as you are able to provide within these tight timescales.

Yours sincerely



Iona Colvin

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