

Regulatory Impact screening for the introduction of The Foster Placement & Fostering Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023

Screening Questions	Response to Screening Questions	Full Appraisal Required	Justification/Key Issues and Groups to Focus On
Is the policy or amendment to the policy likely to have a direct or indirect impact on businesses?	Yes	No	<p>The Regulations will have a direct impact on fostering agencies making them subject to a system of registration with, and inspection by, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority.</p> <p>However, the introduction of a system of regulation will enable Health and Social Care Trusts to engage fostering agencies in the activities of assessing and approving foster parents on their behalf of subject to a written agreement. The agencies will be paid for this service by the Trusts. The Regulations will also remove duplication from the current system, in which some foster parents already approved by an independent fostering service provider have to undergo a second approval process by an HSC Trust. Representatives from independent fostering service providers have been involved in the process of developing the draft Regulations, and were supportive of the move to reduce this duplication. In conclusion, it is not considered that the Regulations will impact negatively on the independent fostering service providers</p>
Is the policy or amendment to the policy likely to have a direct or indirect impact on the voluntary/community sector?	Yes	No	<p>Currently all 4 independent fostering providers operating in Northern Ireland operate on a not-for-profit basis.</p> <p>In future there will be a requirement for fostering agencies to pay a registration fee however this will expand agencies' ability to undertake work on behalf of Trusts.</p>

CONCLUSION		No	A full Regulatory Impact Assessment is not required on the basis that the proposals will impose negligible cost.

When Is a Regulatory Impact Assessment Required?

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes, consideration should be given to undertaking a Regulatory Impact Assessment. However, the level of appraisal should be proportionate to the costs involved.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment is not required for:

- i. Proposals which impose **no costs or no savings**, or negligible costs or savings on business, charities, social economy enterprises or the voluntary sector;
- ii. Increases in statutory fees by a predetermined formula such as the rate of inflation; or Road closure orders.

NOTES:

This Includes charities and the social economy sector.