

## Response to Request for Information

### The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020

I can confirm that the information requested is held by City of Wolverhampton Council. I list below the information that is being released to you.

In your request you asked:

*I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information:*

1. *Please could you a) provide a statement of the overarching approach that you have taken to utilising the legislative flexibilities provided by the The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 and b) confirm who signed this off within both the local authority and any providers that you commission to run children's social care services?*

Reg 4

1. Adoption@Heart has continued to run adoption panels throughout the Covid 19 period. Panels have continued to run to the previous regulatory requirements except on 2 occasions when there quoracy was reduced in line with the amended regulations. (1 in May / 1 in June)
2. Relinquished babies have continued to be considered at panel for the should be placed decision.
3. Prospective adopters in the process of being assessed have been routinely taken into stage 2 of the process without a medical report in line with the regulator reduction (data not yet available so precise numbers can not be provided - in excess of 20)
4. There has been not usage of the change to the 6 month time limit for adopter to give notice of their intention to proceed to stage 2.
5. Adopters suitability to adopt have been referred directly to the agency decision maker rather than being heard at panel on 4 occasions. The majority of approvals have been heard at panel. (2 in August and a further 2 will go to ADM in September)
6. The service has continued to work to the 4 month requirement for completion of stage 2 of the adopter assessment process.
7. No adopters have been declined or deemed unsuitable due to medical or policy checks so the removal of the option of an application to IRM has not been relevant in any adopter applications
8. No adopters have had their suitability terminated thus have not needed to use the regulatory change requiring this to be referred to panel.
9. Change to inter country adoption regulation. Sub contracted to Inter country adoption agency (ICA) Data not available
10. All matches have been referred to adoption panel prior to being considered by the agency decision maker.

City of Wolverhampton Council  
Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square,  
Wolverhampton,  
WV1 1SH

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11. [Reviews of child's cases under regulation 36 sits with the local authority with corporate parenting responsibility for the child and not the RAA.](#)

2. *With reference to the need to record any use of the legislative flexibilities provided by the The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 as well as the 'reasons for doing so' and 'local circumstances that have given arise to the need to use the flexibilities' ' as set out in the Government's Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for children's social care services as per 6 May 2020 ' please confirm how many of each specific flexibility has been utilised in total and in each month since the regulations came into force, and summarise the reasons and local circumstances which made the use of each type of flexibility necessary? [See answers above](#)*

*In your answer, please include both the specific regulation that has been utilised and a description of the flexibility (it may be helpful to make reference to the Children's Commissioner for England's summary of each of the regulations), and, as far as possible, present the information as per the following table:*

*Regulation*

*Description of flexibility*

*Total number of uses*

*Number of uses in May*

*Number of uses in June*

*Summary of reasons and local circumstances*


*Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulation 23*

*An emergency placement with an approved foster carer can now last 24 weeks, rather than 6 days, even if that foster carer is eg not approved to look after that many children*

XX  
XX  
XX

*E.g. Shortage of foster carers and inability to recruit more*

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3. *What information relating to your use of the legislative flexibilities provided by the The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 has been a) requested by or b) provided to Ofsted, and what, if any, further action are you aware of Ofsted taking in response? No such information in relation to regulation 4 has been requested or provided*

*Please quote the reference number 1766357 in any future communications.*


If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Information Governance Team  
Governance  
City of Wolverhampton Council  
Civic Centre  
St. Peter's Square  
Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Email: [foi@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:foi@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

If you are still dissatisfied with the Council's response after the internal review you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner, contact details can be found on their website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

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