

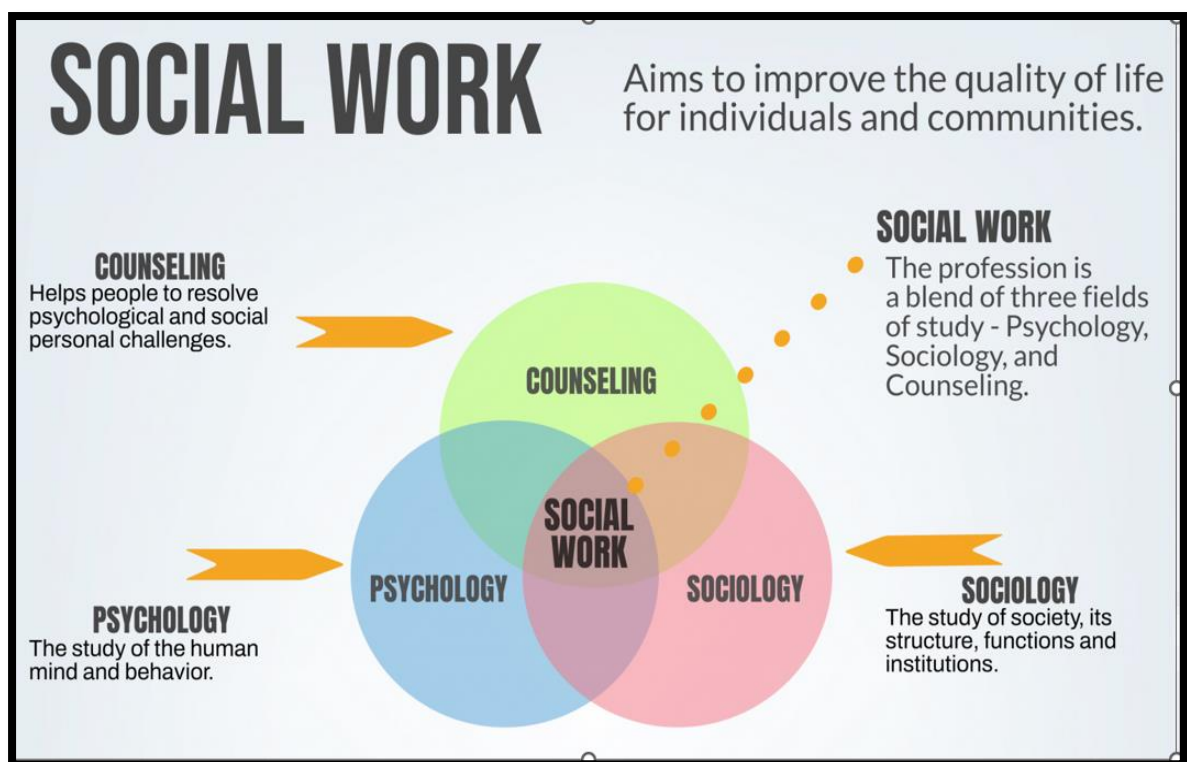


Social Work

Galway County Council – Housing

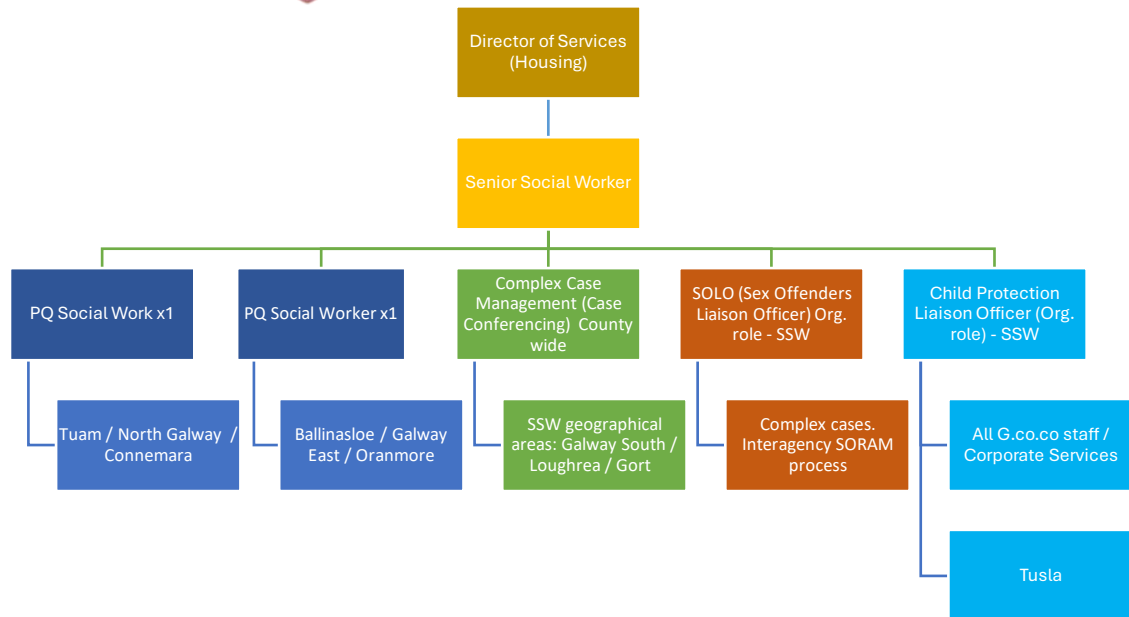
“Social Work is a profession based on principles of human rights and social justice that work to empower individuals, groups and communities to develop their full potential and wellbeing. The focus of intervention is the relationship between the individual and the immediate and wider social environment. Greater emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of vulnerable and marginalised individuals and groups.”

(Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers 2011)



Current Structure:

The Social Work service is delivered by a small team of three Staff: two staff grade Social Workers and 1 Senior Social Worker. The Senior Social Worker post within the local authority is a Principal Social Work grade post. The Senior Social Worker provides a social work service (caseload) to referred clients in addition to clinical supervision of Social Workers caseloads and senior management, strategic and operational responsibilities, as outlined in the Social Work Strategy.



Role of the Social Worker in Housing

In LA's the role of the Social Work has evolved over the years due to the emerging needs of clients. The role was initially established in LA's in the 1960's and has since broadened from being a Traveller specific role to include:

- Potentially all applicants & existing tenants who are identified as vulnerable and require the clinical input from PQ Social Workers.
- Disability (Physical, Sensory, Intellectual) - HSDG & Subgroups
- Older persons
- Vulnerable Adults (Safeguarding)
- Child Welfare Liaison work
- Mental Health
- LGBTQI+ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex)
- Work with other marginalised and vulnerable individuals and groups

In addition, the Social Work team respond to referrals regarding;

- Social Work Assessment
- Crisis Intervention
- Bereavement and Loss
- Advocacy

Concerns regarding capacity of clients (Ref: Assisted Decision Making/Capacity Act)

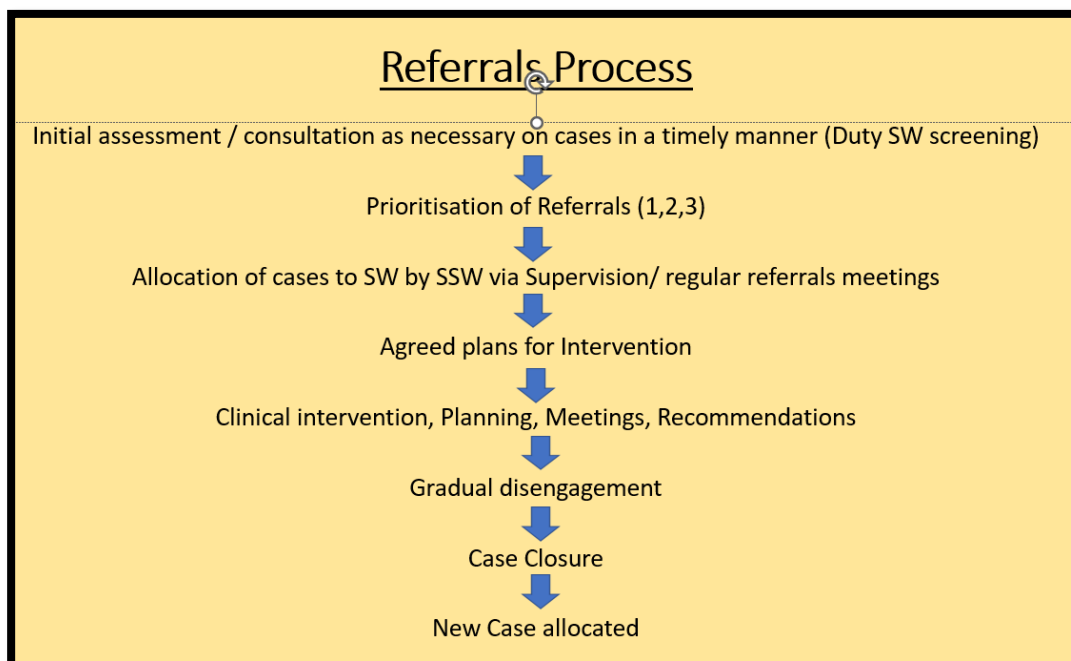
The aim of the Social Work service is to work with housing clients who are experiencing difficulties in the social areas of their lives. Social Work may be required either alone or as part of a multi-faceted intervention, multi-disciplinary teams, interagency working etc. Collaborative working with Housing colleagues is required. However, PQ Social Workers must provide objective, clinical assessment and recommendations.

Due to the high volume of referrals, some cases will need to be waitlisted for input.



Social Work Referrals

- Referrals are usually made internally by Galway County Council staff.
- External referrals can be made by contacting housing directly on 091-503900, ask to be directed to the Social Work office.



Child Protection Policy & Procedures – Organisational Responsibility of Senior Social Worker

This section could have a link bringing it to the Child Protection page under Corporate to avoid duplication

The current Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Procedures were adopted in January 2023. SSW reviewed the policy and procedures in January 2025 and confirmed that there are no legislative updates since that are required to be reflected in the policy at this time and therefore the policy continues to be fit for purpose.

- Kieran Keon is the *Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer* for G.co.co
- Children's First Training now online – led by HR / Corporate. The training requires follow up by HR for new staff to ensure they have completed it. Additional support from SSW for individual staff, teams as required.

Sexual Offences Liaison Officer (SOLO)

- The SOLO role is attached to Senior Social Worker and Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer role.
- The Housing section in Galway County Council have proactively set up an Internal automated referral to be sent to the SOLO when a housing client/applicant/tenant has been identified as a sex offender via Garda vetting. An assessment (meeting/home visit) may be required to review and assess the client in terms of risk. It ensures

Social Inclusion

- The Senior Social Worker is leading on the implementation of the Galway County Council Strategic Plan 2021-2026 in partnership with the Senior Executive Officer for Allocations and the wider Housing SMT and staff.
 - In partnership with Allocations, there have been many positive examples of delivery for clients under Disability Mental Health, in partnership with the HSE, Intellectual Disability in partnership with the Brothers of Charity, Ability West, Rehabcare and the HSE and Disability Physical in partnership with the HSE and the Irish Wheelchair Association.
 - The establishment of the Housing Disability Steering Group (HDSG) and stakeholder/interagency Action Teams, chaired by the Senior Social Worker.
 - The Housing Agency recognise Galway County Council's role nationally in terms of our 'on the ground structures' with stakeholders and positive interagency working. The Housing agency have set up a *Social Inclusion Advisory Group* to incorporate Disability. Kieran Keon is part of the group to advise the Housing Agency on Social Inclusion issues such as Disability, 'At Risk' Youth, Aftercare, Child Protection etc.
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