

Introduction

The purpose of this Research Guide is to assist Magdalene survivors in obtaining their records and, where possible, availing of the Residential Institutions Redress Board. Justice for Magdalenes is committed to its campaign to achieve a distinct Redress Scheme for Magdalene survivors, but in the meantime we wish to provide whatever assistance we can to survivors to avail of what is possible under the current system.

We hope that this guide will be of assistance to you and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us at info@magdalenelaundries.com or 086-4059491 (+35386-4059491 from outside Ireland). We have provided some sample letters for you below, but if you would like us to check anything for you before you send it out, please don't hesitate to ask.

If you lost a child or children to adoption contact Adoption Rights Alliance at 086-2359127 (+35386-2359127 from outside Ireland) or at www.adoptionrightsalliance.com for information on supports available and on how to trace if you so desire.

If you wish to track down any of the women you were in the laundry with, please see our Research Guide for Relatives of Magdalene Women, which should help you in your efforts.

About Justice for Magdalenes

Justice for Magdalenes (JFM) is a not-for-profit, totally volunteer-run organisation, with members in Ireland, the UK, the US, EU and Australia. We are a survivor advocacy group, advocating on behalf of a population of women — living and dead, some still living in religious institutions, others living in anonymity, and many now speaking about their past — who are not recognised or acknowledged as survivors of institutional abuse by the State, by the Church, or by Irish society.

Goals

JFM's primary goals are (i) to bring about an official apology from the Irish State and the Catholic Church, and (ii) the establishment of a distinct redress scheme for Magdalene survivors. Once JFM achieves these objectives, the door will be open to every survivor and/or her family and/or other groups representing Magdalene survivors to pursue their own claim for redress.

Beginning Your Research

Before you set out, you should firstly gather whatever information you can from your own records and memories. Make a list of things you remember and put together your paperwork, if any. We suggest that you purchase a folder to keep everything in. As you receive letters back from religious orders and government departments, you can use it to keep them safe and in the one place. Below is a list of questions that might help you remember:

- What laundry/laundries were you in?
- When did you enter the laundry?
- Were you sent into the laundry by your family?
- Were you transferred from an industrial school?
- Were you transferred from a mother and baby home?
- Were you sent into the laundry by a judge in court?
- Were you transferred from a psychiatric institution?
- What part of the country was the laundry in?
- What order of nuns ran the laundry?
- Can you remember any of the nuns' names?
- What were your responsibilities in the Laundry?

1. Contacting the Religious Order

Once you have gathered whatever information you can, your first step should be to contact the religious order that ran the laundry in question. If you can't remember what order was involved, then we suggest that you write to all of them. We have provided a sample letter below to give you an idea of the wording you should use. There is a list of names and addresses of the religious orders at the end of this document.

Guidelines for Dealing with Religious Orders

- ✓ Always communicate **in writing** preferably using **Registered (Signed For) Post**.
- ✓ **Do not** give the order a contact number. If you absolutely have to contact the order by phone, we advise that you use a private number (this can be done from any Irish landline by placing 141 before the number to be dialled).
- ✓ If the religious order wants to meet with you, we advise that you proceed with extreme caution and carefully consider whether it is the right thing for you to meet with the order involved in your incarceration. If you decide to meet with the order we strongly advise that you **do not go to this meeting alone** and suggest that you bring along a family member or friend.
- ✓ Remember, you have the right to be treated respectfully – you have nothing to be ashamed of and deserve an apology for what happened to you.
- ✓ Do not automatically believe everything you are told – e.g. miraculous fires and floods in convents resulting in destroyed records, denial that you were in the Laundry
- ✓ If you are told that you have been placed on a waiting list, ask how long the wait is and ask to be kept regularly informed of your place in the queue.
- ✓ Ask for the name of the person dealing with your query and address all correspondence to this person.
- ✓ If you feel the order is treating you unfairly, please contact Justice for Magdalenes.
- ✓ Keep track of your paperwork in a folder or file and keep a copy of any correspondence sent to the order.
- ✓ If you wish, copy your correspondence to Justice for Magdalenes, clearly stating that you have done so at the end of the letter.

Sample Letter to the Religious Orders:

Your Name and Address

Date

Name of Religious Order
Address of Religious Order

To Whom It May Concern:

I was in a Magdalene Laundry that was run by your order at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY] . I would be obliged if you could supply me with whatever information you have on file in relation to me.

My details are as follows:

Your Name
Your Date of Birth

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

Sample Questions to Ask Religious Orders

Below is a sample list of additional questions that you might like to ask the religious order once you have established which order was involved. If you cannot get any of the religious orders to admit you were incarcerated in their Laundry, then send the list to all of them. You should amend the list to reflect your own situation.

- What date did I enter the Laundry?
- What name was I given in the Laundry?
- As I was unpaid for my work, where did the money go and what plans do you have to reimburse me?
- Did you pay tax and PRSI on my behalf?
- What date did I leave the Laundry?

If you were transferred from an industrial school:

- What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the industrial school?
 - Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
 - Did the industrial school request the transfer?

If you were transferred from a psychiatric institution:

- What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the psychiatric institution?
 - Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
 - Did the psychiatric institution request the transfer?
 - Was I deemed fit for work?
- If you were transferred from a mother and baby home:
 - Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
 - Did the mother and baby home request the transfer?

If you were transferred from one Magdalene Laundry to another:

- What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from one Magdalene Laundry to another?

If you were incarcerated in the Magdalene Laundry via the courts service:

- What was my alleged crime?
- What was the sentence?
- What was the actual time served?
- Did you keep track of my release date?
- Why was I incarcerated for a longer time than my sentence?

2. Contacting Government Departments & Other Agencies

While the Magdalene Laundries were church run institutions, the state was also involved and you should therefore write to the government departments involved and seek whatever information they possess on file. Some sample questions and a sample letter are supplied below. You should amend the questions and letters to reflect your own situation and reword the letter(s) in a way that you feel happy with.

Guidelines for Dealing with Government Departments

- ✓ Always communicate **in writing** preferably using **Registered (Signed For) Post**.
- ✓ **Do not** give a contact number. If you absolutely have to contact the department by phone (e.g. to arrange an appointment), we advise that you use a private number (this can be done from any Irish landline by placing 141 before the number to be dialled).
- ✓ Remember, you have the right to be treated respectfully.
- ✓ If you are told that you have been placed on a waiting list, ask how long the wait is and ask to be kept regularly informed of your place in the queue.

- ✓ Ask for the name of the person dealing with your query and address all correspondence to this person.
 - ✓ If you feel you are being treated unfairly, please contact Justice for Magdalenes.
 - ✓ Keep track of your paperwork in a folder or file and keep a copy of any correspondence sent to the department.
 - ✓ If you wish, copy your correspondence to Justice for Magdalenes, clearly stating that you have done so at the end of the letter.
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Department of Education

Many Magdalene survivors were transferred from industrial schools to the laundries as children. In these particular cases, the Department of Education is responsible on behalf of the State.

The Residential Institutions Redress Act states that any woman who was transferred from an industrial school to a laundry is eligible to apply to the Redress Board as the time spent in the laundry will be treated as time spent in the industrial school. We realise that this is by no means a sufficient acknowledgement of the hurt and abuse done to you but this is an avenue that is open to you.

We are also aware that some women who went to the Redress Board were told that their time in the laundry would not be given any consideration. We believe that you may have been treated unfairly and we have provided a sample letter below to assist you. You should also seek the advice of your solicitor in this matter and refer her/him to the following section of the Residential Institutions Redress Act:

“(3) An applicant who was resident in an institution and was transferred from that institution to another place of residence which carried on the business of a laundry and who suffered abuse while resident in that laundry shall be deemed, at the time of the abuse, to have been resident in that institution.”

Sample Letter 1 – If you are just seeking information and do not wish to go to the Redress Board (note we are not referring to the proposed Magdalene Redress Scheme)

Insert Your Name and Address

Date

John Kelly
Principal Officer
Residential Institutions Redress Unit
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath

Dear Mr. Kelly,

I was in the industrial school at [INSERT ADDRESS OF SCHOOL] and I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY]. I would be obliged if you could supply me with whatever information you have on file in relation to me.

My details are as follows:

Your Name
Your Date of Birth

I would also be obliged if you could answer the following questions:

1. What are the circumstances surrounding my admission to the industrial school?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the industrial school to the Magdalene Laundry?
3. Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
4. Did the industrial school request the transfer?

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

Sample Letter 2 - If you have not yet been to the Redress Board and wish to do so

Insert Your Name and Address

Date

John Kelly
Principal Officer
Residential Institutions Redress Unit
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath

Dear Mr. Kelly,

I was in the industrial school at [INSERT ADDRESS OF SCHOOL] and I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY]. I would be obliged if you could supply me with whatever information you have on file in relation to me.

My details are as follows:

Your Name
Your Date of Birth

I would also be obliged if you could answer the following questions:

1. What are the circumstances surrounding my admission to the industrial school?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the industrial school to the Magdalene Laundry?
3. Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
4. Did the industrial school request the transfer?

Up until now I was unaware that I was eligible to apply to the Residential Institutions Redress Board and I now wish to do so. I would appreciate if you could forward the relevant documentation to me.

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

Sample Letter 3 - If you have been to the Redress Board and your time in the laundry was not taken into consideration:

Your Name and Address

Date

John Kelly
Principal Officer
Residential Institutions Redress Unit
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath

Dear Mr. Kelly,

I was in the industrial school at [INSERT ADDRESS OF SCHOOL] and I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY]. I would be obliged if you could supply me with whatever information you have on file in relation to me.

My details are as follows:

Your Name
Your Date of Birth

I would also be obliged if you could answer the following questions:

1. What are the circumstances surrounding my admission to the industrial school?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the industrial school to the Magdalene Laundry?
3. Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
4. Did the industrial school request the transfer?

I applied to the Residential Institutions Redress Board and my time at the laundry was not taken into consideration. The following section from the Residential Institutions Redress Act has recently been brought to my attention:

“(3) An applicant who was resident in an institution and was transferred from that institution to another place of residence which carried on the business of a laundry and who suffered abuse while resident in that laundry shall be deemed, at the time of the abuse, to have been resident in that institution.”

I was not made aware of the legislation above and feel that I was therefore treated unfairly. I would be obliged if you could advise what options are now open to me.

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

Sample Letter to Psychiatric Hospitals:

Your Name and Address

Date

Name of Psychiatric Hospital
Address of Psychiatric Hospital

To Whom It May Concern:

I was a patient at [INSERT ADDRESS OF HOSPITAL] and I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY]. I would be obliged if you could supply me with whatever information you have on file in relation to me.

The details are as follows:

Your Name

Your Date of Birth

I would also be obliged if you could answer the following questions:

1. What were the circumstances surrounding my being a patient at the psychiatric hospital?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the psychiatric hospital to the Magdalene Laundry?
3. Was I considered fit for work?
4. Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
5. Did the hospital request the transfer?

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

If you were transferred from a psychiatric institution, we also suggest that you write to the Mental Health Commission and a sample letter is below:

Sample Letter to Mental Health Commission:

Your Name and Address

Date

Mental Health Commission
St Martin's House
Waterloo Road
Dublin 4

To Whom It May Concern:

I was a patient at [INSERT ADDRESS OF HOSPITAL] and I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY].

I would be obliged if you could investigate the circumstances surrounding this transfer, namely:

1. What were the circumstances surrounding my being a patient at the psychiatric hospital?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the psychiatric hospital to the Magdalene Laundry?
3. Was I considered fit for work?
4. Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
5. Did the hospital request the transfer?

Her details are as follows:

Your Name

Your Date of Birth

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

Sample Letter To Religious Orders Who Ran Mother & Baby Homes:

Your Name and Address

Date

Name of Religious Order
Address of Religious Order

To Whom It May Concern:

I was a resident at [INSERT ADDRESS OF MOTHER AND BABY HOME] and I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY]. I would be obliged if you could supply me with whatever information you have on file in relation to me.

My details are as follows:

Your Name
Your Date of Birth

I would also be obliged if you could answer the following questions:

1. What were the circumstances surrounding my being a resident at the mother and baby home?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding my transfer from the psychiatric hospital to the Magdalene Laundry?
3. Was I considered fit for work?
4. Did the Magdalene Laundry request the transfer?
5. Did the mother and baby home request the transfer?

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

Sample Letter To Department of Justice:

Your Name and Address

Date

Mr. James Martin
Assistant Secretary
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
94 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2

Dear Mr. Martin,

I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry at [INSERT ADDRESS OF LAUNDRY] through the courts system. I would be obliged if you could supply me with whatever information you have on file in relation to me.

The details are as follows:

Your Name
Your Date of Birth

I would also be obliged if you could answer the following questions:

1. What were the circumstances surrounding my being incarcerated at the Magdalene Laundry?

2. What was my alleged crime?
3. What was the sentence, if any?
4. What was the actual time served?
5. Did the Department of Justice monitor me during my time at the Magdalene Laundry?
6. Did the Department of Justice make any effort to ensure I was released at the end of my time?

I would appreciate if you could give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT YOUR NAME HERE]

The Names and addresses you will need are at the end of this Guide – if you cannot find the address you need, contact us and we will try to help.

Best of Luck

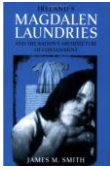
We hope the information in this Guide is of help to you. Remember, you have every right to pursue the information you are looking for and deserve to be treated with respect. If you have any questions or concerns or if you are unsure of anything, don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

If you need some additional emotional support during this process and if you wish to avail of the National Counselling Service, we have provided the contact details at the end of this Guide.

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Suggested Reading List

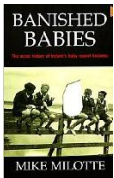
Justice for Magdalenes recommends the following books and film for more information on the Magdalene Laundries and the related issue of adoption in and from Ireland.



Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment
by James M. Smith



Do Penance or Perish
by Frances Finnegan



Banished Babies
by Mike Milotte



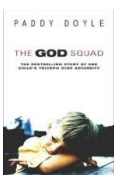
Suffer the Little Children by
Mary Raftery & Eoin O'Sullivan



The Magdalene Sisters
directed by Peter Mullan



The Light in the Window
by June Goulding



The God Squad
by Paddy Doyle



Hannah's Shame
By Derek Leinster

Religious Order Contact Details (Laundries & Industrial Schools)

Good Shepherd Sisters

Ran Magdalene Laundries at New Ross, Waterford, Cork (Sundays Well), Limerick and industrial schools in Cork, Waterford, New Ross and Limerick

Good Shepherd Provincialate
245 Lower Kilmacud Road
Goatstown
Dublin 14

Tel: 01-2982699
Fax: 01-2989033

Email: rgsdublin@eircom.net

Provincial Superior: Sr. Noreen O'Shea

Mercy Sisters

Ran Magdalene Laundries in Galway and DunLaoghaire (and one in Tralee that closed approx 1907-8) and industrial schools at Athlone, Goldenbridge, Tralee, Booterstown, Templemore, Galway (Renmore & Ballinasloe), Loughrea, Birr, Clare, Cobh, Clifden, Clonakilty, Cappoquin, Dundalk, Killarney, Kinsale, Mallow, Moate, Summerhill, Rathdrum, Newtownforbes, Westport, Wexford and Limerick.

Mercy Congregational Archives
Catherine McAuley Centre
23 Herbert Street
Dublin 2

Tel: 01-6387521

Mercy Sisters
14 Walnut Avenue
Courtlands
Drumcondra
Dublin 9

Tel: 01-8377602
Fax: 01-8570684

Sisters of Charity

Ran Magdalene Laundries in Cork (Peacock Lane) and Donnybrook; other laundries at Henrietta Street and Stanhope Street and industrial schools in Kilkenny, Ballaghadereen, Dublin (Lakelands), Sligo Town

Religious Sisters of Charity Generalate
Caritas
15 Gilford Road
Sandymount
Dublin 4

Tel: 01-2697833/2697935

Sisters of Charity continued...

Religious Sisters of Charity Provincialate
Provincial House
Our Lady's Mount
Harold's Cross
Dublin 6W

Tel: 01-4973177

Sisters of Our Lady of Charity (of Refuge)

Ran Magdalene Laundries at High Park, and Gloucester Street/Sean McDermott Street (merged with Mecklenburg Street) and ran industrial schools at High Park and Kilmacud

Sisters of Our Lady of Charity
4 Beechlawn
High Park Grounds
Grace Park Road
Dublin 9

Tel: 01-8368887
Fax: 01-8377311

Email: regionaloffice@olc.ie

Superior: Sr. Teresa Burke

Other Religious Orders (Industrial schools – girls only)

Order of the Poor Clares

Ran an industrial school at Cavan Town

Poor Clare Monastery
Upper Faughart
Dundalk., Co. Louth
IRELAND

Tel. 353 (0)42 937 1966

Fax 353 42 937 1908

Email: poorclares@poorclaresireland.org

Sisters of St. Louis

Ran an industrial school in Monaghan Town, moved to Bundoran in 1957

Mill Road
Dundalk
Co. Louth
Tel: 042-9335773

Presentation Sisters

Ran industrial schools in Cashel and Dundrum (Tipperary)
Presentation Provincialate

Garden Vale
Athlone
Co. Westmeath
Ireland
Zip Code

Email: presnpro@iol.ie

09064 72186

09064 75895

Religious Orders (Mother and Baby Homes)

(May not be complete)

Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary

Ran mother and baby homes at Bessboro, Co. Cork; Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea & Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath.

Sacred Heart Convent
Bessboro
Blackrock
Cork
Tel: 021-4357841

Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul

Ran a mother and baby home at St. Patricks, Navan Road
Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul
Seton House
Northbrook Road
Dublin 6
Tel: 01 - 6674346

Good Shepherd Sisters

Ran a mother and baby home at Ard Mhuire Dunboyne

Good Shepherd Provincialate
245 Lower Kilmacud Road
Goatstown
Dublin 14

Tel: 01-2982699
Fax: 01-2989033

Email: rgsdublin@eircom.net

Provincial Superior: Sr. Noreen O'Shea

Other:

Legion of Mary

(Regina Coeli Hostel)

International centre: Concilium Legionis Mariae (Legion of Mary)

De Montfort House
Morning Star Avenue
Brunswick Street
Dublin 7
Ireland

Tel: +353 1 872 3153 +++ Fax: +353 1 872 6386
email : concilium@legion-of-mary.ie

Government Departments/Agencies Contact Details

Department of Education

John Kelly
Principal Officer
Residential Institutions Redress Unit
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath

Department of Health

Department of Health and Children
Hawkins House
Hawkins Street
Dublin 2

Mental Health Commission

Mental Health Commission
St Martin's House
Waterloo Road
Dublin 4

Department of Justice

Mr. James Martin
Assistant Secretary
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
94 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2

Psychiatric Hospitals Contact Details

(May not be complete as some hospitals have closed)

St. Conal's Hospital

Letterkenny
Co. Donegal

Central Mental Hospital

Dundrum
Co. Dublin

St. Brendans (Grangegorman)

PO Box 418 Rathdown Road, Dublin, Co Dublin, 7
Ireland
Tel: 353 (0) 1 8693000
Fax: 353 (0) 1 8680020

St. Patricks Hospital

St James Street
Dublin 8

District Mental Hospital

Clonmel
Co. Tipperary

St. Ita's Psychiatric Hospital

Portrane
Co. Dublin

St. John of Gods Hospital

Stillorgan
Co. Dublin

St. Vincent's Psychiatric Hospital

Convent Ave
Richmond Road
Fairview
Dublin 3

St. Loman's Hospital

Palmerstown, Co. Dublin

St. Fintan's Psychiatric Hospital

Portlaoise, Co. Laois

St Marys Psychiatric Hospital

Castlebar Co. Mayo

St Brigids Hospital (Psychiatric)

Ballinasloe Co. Galway

St. Brigid's Psychiatric Hospital

Ardee, Co. Louth

National Counselling Service

The National Counselling Service was set up by the HSE to provide counselling services (free of charge) to adults who have experienced child abuse, with priority given to adult survivors of institutional abuse in Ireland.

North East	1800 234 117
North Dublin	1800 234 110
North West	1800 234 119
West	1800 234 114
Mid-west	1800 234 115
Midlands	1800 234 113
Dublin South West/Kildare/West Wicklow	1800 234 112
South Dublin & East Wicklow	1800 234 111
Kerry & Cork	1800 234 116
South East	1800 234 118