

Mr. Charlie Flanagan TD,  
Minister for Justice & Equality,  
Department of Justice & Equality,  
51 St. Stephens Green,  
Dublin 2.

12 February 2018

**Re: Magdalene Laundry Redress Scheme.**

Dear Minister,

I hope you are keeping well.

I am writing to you in respect of the administration of the Magdalene Ex-gratia Scheme and how it has been operated. I wanted to raise with you two issues.

First, I understand that the Scheme to date has rejected approximately 100 applications. Some of these 100 applications were rejected on the basis that although it was accepted that the women worked in a Magdalene Laundry, the records of the religious order did not have them as being admitted to that laundry. The Scheme states that in order to apply a person must be admitted to and have worked in a laundry. I would ask that the administration of this Scheme be altered to permit women whose applications were rejected on the basis that they did not have evidence of being admitted to a laundry (even though there was evidence that they worked in a laundry) to have their applications now accepted as legitimate. It seems extremely harsh that women who clearly worked in Magdalene Laundries are excluded from the Scheme because their names appear to be registered in an adjoining and associated religious institution. I believe that such a move on your part would be consistent with the apology given by former Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD and the Scheme as envisaged by Mr. Justice John Quirke in his report.

The second reason I am writing to you is because Mr. Justice Quirke recognised that there should be an appropriate memorial and that the women should be consulted in respect of this memorial. Since it is the case that there is no one representative group that represents a large number of the women, the only entity that has the identity and access to the women for such consultation is your Department. I know that there is a plan to have a day in the Mansion House, courtesy of the Lord Mayor, in May 2018 for women who were in Magdalene Laundries. In order to inform the women about this event I would ask that, once the date has been finalised, your Department would write to all of the applicants informing them of this event and how they could meet other Magdalene Laundry women at it and discuss proposals for a memorial. As you are no doubt aware, one of Mr. Justice Quirke's recommendations was that the Magdalene women should be supported to meet each other.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely

**Jim O'Callaghan TD**