

How Comensura is leading the way on the 2024 Child and Family Social Work Statutory Guidance.

Everything local authorities need to know – and do – to stay compliant ahead of October 2025.



New guidance. Tight deadlines. Shrinking resources.

The 2024 Child and Family Social Work Statutory Guidance marks a major shift in how local authorities engage and manage agency social workers. But while many councils are still navigating the changes, Comensura's clients are already ahead of the curve in preparation for stage 2 of the roll out in October 2025.

Comensura leads the way with 100% successful compliance

- ▶▶▶ 1,511 Children and Families Social Workers onboarded compliantly (Q1 2025)
- ▶▶▶ 33 local authorities supported and compliant
- ▶▶▶ 100% compliance with DfE guidance

“The support we have received from Comensura has been superb. They have ensured a thorough understanding of the new National rules around Agency Children's Social Workers and so has been able to work closely with our suppliers to quality check the information they are submitting into our system, ensuring our overall compliance as a local authority.”

Laura Chett, Talent and Resourcing Manager at Staffordshire County Council.

“Navigating the DfE Statutory Guidance was no small task, but working with Comensura provided a level of structure and reassurance that helped us stay on track. While the process wasn't without its challenges, their early engagement, clear communication, and willingness to adapt system configurations and reporting tools to our needs made a noticeable difference. It felt like a genuine partnership rather than a transactional arrangement, and that's what helped us keep disruption to a minimum.”

Joanne Brammer, Recruitment and Retention Lead for Children's Services at Stoke on Trent City Council

What are the next steps for local authorities to remain compliant in the Child and Family Social Work Guidance 2024?



31st October 2024

All new agency placements must comply with the statutory guidance.



1st October 2025

The guidance extends to all agency placements, both new and existing.

“Initially, local authorities struggling with this guidance need to ensure they implement changes as soon as possible,” states Aaron Wawman, Sales Director at Comensura.

“All of our existing clients are fully aware and compliant, but we see a lack of centralised organisation and a serious amount of concern elsewhere. If you’re not compliant at this stage, the next stage is going to be even more challenging.”

Aaron Wawman, Sales Director at Comensura



“From October 2025, the guidance will extend to all agency placements, including both new and existing – or legacy – placements,” warns Nicol Nee, Head of Service at Comensura. “One of the primary aims of rolling this out across the board is to minimise disruption for children and families through fast turnover in social workers, which will promote more consistent relationships.

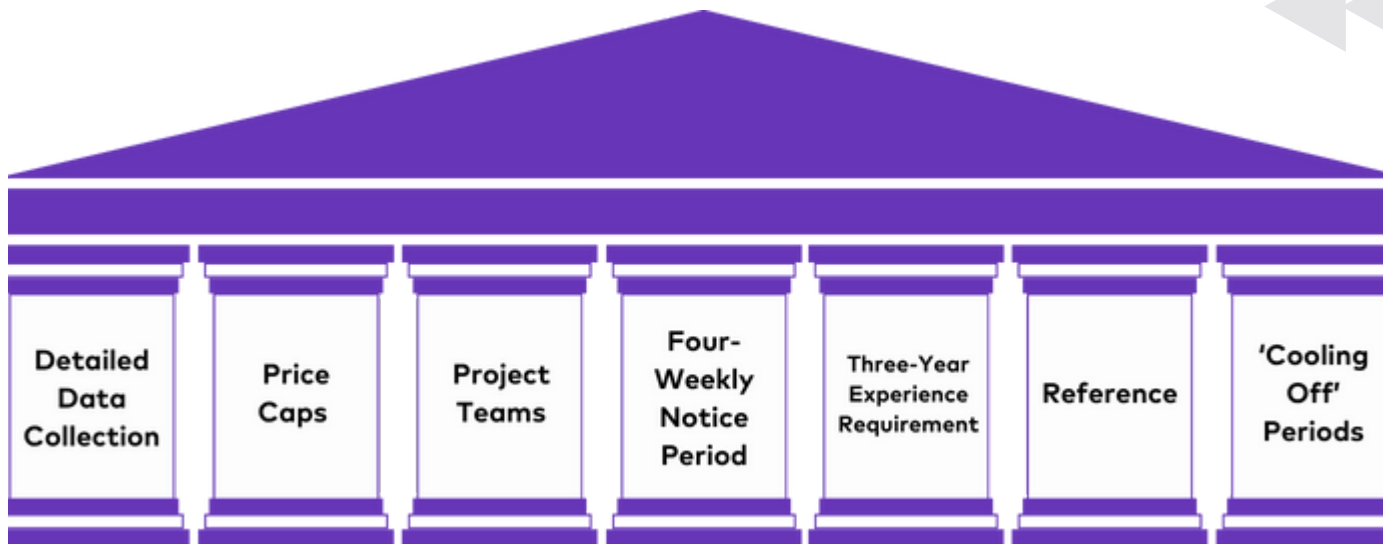
Beyond this, the key aim is to foster greater workforce stability and ensure that local authorities have the qualified and experienced social workers they need. The new guidance will enhance collaboration between agencies, reduce reliance on agency workers, and help monitor and standardise costs. All local authorities need to act now to be ready in time – October is not far away.”

Are you ready?

Contact our expert team today to ensure your processes, workforce, and systems are fully aligned with the Child and Family Social Work Statutory Guidance 2024.

What is the new Child and Family Social Work Statutory Guidance 2024?

We have broken this new guidance into the 7 key pillars.





01. Detailed Data Collection

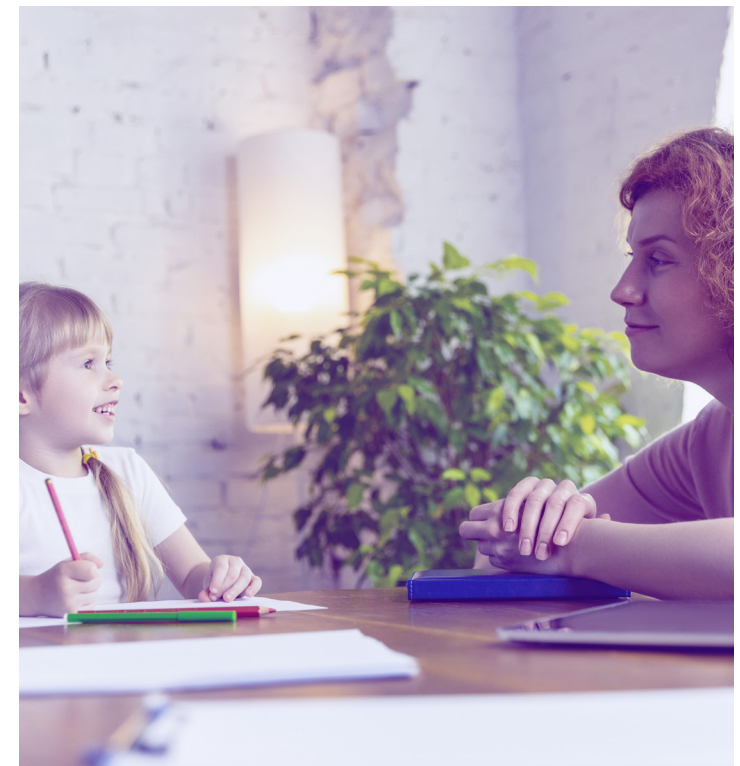
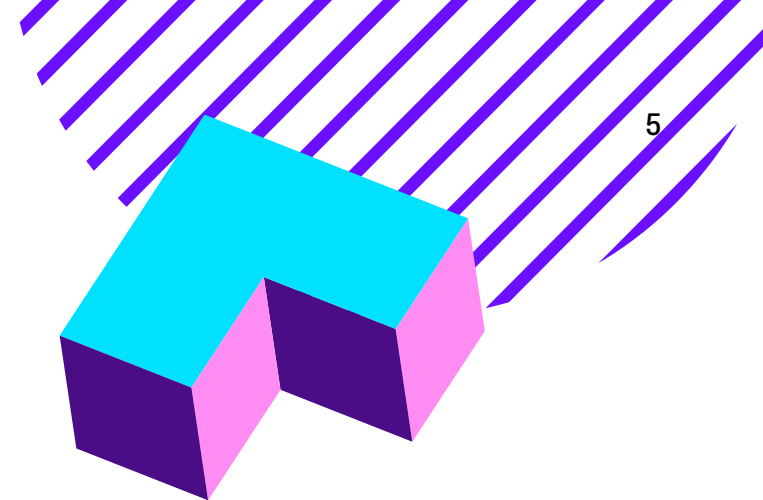
Accurate, comprehensive record-keeping that breaks down the full cost of child and family social care enables local authorities to monitor service effectiveness, ensures legal compliance, and provides the Department for Education with the data needed for informed decision-making and rapid response to emerging issues.

02. Price Caps

Many local authorities already utilise a 'Memorandum of Understanding'—a regional agreement that mandates adherence to price caps, binding councils to prevent social workers from regularly changing authorities for higher pay. The enforcement of these caps ensures that councils cannot exceed agreed rates in response to high vacancies or case backlogs, maintaining fair compensation, preventing excessive costs, promoting transparent resource allocation, and safeguarding the integrity and quality of care.

03. Project Teams

This underscores the need for clearly defined, measurable goals and expectations in social care projects, enabling local authorities to foster collaboration, accountability, and resource efficiency so desired outcomes for children and families are achieved to the highest standard. It will ensure project teams have the same rules as individual agency workers. It will also ensure that local authorities are inside of IR35, and that they achieve full compliance in all areas.





04. Four-Week Notice Period

The new guidance introduces a mandatory four-week notice period for all contingent social workers, unless the permanent equivalent role is less than four weeks. This aims to give families and social workers ample time to prepare for transitions, minimise disruptions, and ensure continuity of care.

05. Three-Year Experience Requirement

This prohibits local authorities from engaging agency social workers with less than three years of post-qualification experience with an English authority while registered with a UK-based regulator, ensuring that only those with substantial practical experience and a solid understanding of child and family social work are eligible for contingent roles.

06. References

Local authorities will need to ensure that – regardless of the placement’s length – they provide a detailed practice-based reference for contingent social workers using the agency rules standard template and require two detailed practice-based references for workers before assignment. This ensures greater scrutiny so only capable and well-prepared social workers are engaged and facilitates better matching to assignments.

07. Cooling off’ periods

This introduces a minimum three-month cooling-off period and regional geographical boundaries to ensure greater consistency for local authorities, social workers, and families, while minimising frequent short-notice moves. (Exceptions may apply for circumstances such as transitioning to permanent roles, redundancy, leaving during probation, seeking assignments in different regions, or compassionate grounds.)

Next steps in getting ready for the complete roll out of Child and Family Social Work Statutory Guidance in October 2025

Take action now: Ensure your compliance with Comensura

Don't leave your organisation's readiness to chance. With the October 2025 rollout fast approaching, now is the time to partner with Comensura, delivering 100% compliance for local authorities across the UK.

Get in touch with Comensura and take the next step toward confident, compliant social work provision.

[Contact us](#)

