



**An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh**  
**The Probation Service**

**COMPETITION BOOKLET FOR CANDIDATES**

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

**OPEN COMPETITION FOR**

**Communications Specialist**  
**(Higher Executive Officer)**

**Closing Date: 5pm, Wednesday, 25 October 2023**

The Probation Service committed to a policy of equal opportunity. This competition will be run in compliance with the Codes of Practice prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Codes of Practice are published by the CPSA and are available on [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie).

## **Introduction**

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An opportunity now exists for a suitably qualified and committed individual to take up the role of **Communications Specialist** with the Probation Service.

It is envisaged that similar vacancies may arise in other Government Departments in the future. As such, applicants who are successful in this competition will be placed on a panel, in order of merit, which may be drawn upon to fill future roles.

This is an excellent opportunity for suitably qualified individuals to shape the creative practices within the employing organisation.

## **The Probation Service**

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The Probation Service is an agency of the Department of Justice and is a national service, with a remit to contribute to safer communities' and fewer victims through offender rehabilitation. This is achieved by the effective assessment and management of offenders, challenging offending behaviour and facilitating the integration of ex-offenders.

The Probation Service works to achieve a safer and fairer Ireland by:

- Ensuring Court orders are implemented;
- Reducing risk of harm to the public;
- Reducing likelihood of reoffending;
- Making good the harm done by crime (reparation and restorative justice).

The Probation Service delivers services to contribute to public safety, improve communities and support offenders to change. Its role in this context is to:

- Work with communities and neighbourhoods to manage offenders so as to reduce offending behaviour;
- Challenge offending behaviour;
- Facilitate the integration of ex-offenders into society so that they do not re-offend;
- Manage through effective partnerships offenders and those at risk of causing harm.

The Service provides probation supervision, community service, community return, offending behaviour programmes and specialist support services to both adult and young offenders. It also provides a Probation service to prisons and places of detention to rehabilitate offenders and facilitate prisoner reintegration. The Service has responsibility for the supervision each year of 15,000 offenders in the community nationally.

Further information on the work of the probation Service is available on the Probation Service website **[www.pprobation.ie](http://www.pprobation.ie)**

## **The Role**

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The successful Communications Specialist / Higher Executive Officer will be an integral part of the communications team working closely with the Assistant Principal for Communications, Administrative Officer and wider management team to provide dynamic communications support to the Service.

The duties of Communications Specialists appointed to the team include (but are not limited to):

### **The roles and responsibilities in the unit involve:**

- Supporting the unit's effective roll-out of the Probation Service strategic communications strategy, including providing assistance with corporate messaging, brand development, digital, social, media relations, public affairs and stakeholder management, supporting delivery and evaluation.
- Provide assistance and support around key Probation Service events including the event planning, preparing briefing materials, providing communications support to the wider team.
- Editing content for delivery across a variety of mediums such as social media channels, articles for the website, intranet, PR, video production and eNewsletters;
- Supporting the production of clearly written, understandable and structured communications materials including press releases, responses to parliamentary questions, and briefing materials.
- Oversee successful rollout of the Probation Service media relations plan including direct engagement with journalists across Ireland and overseeing the in-house press office.
- Contribution to the development of the Probation Service social media and public awareness campaigns with particular focus on the promotion of community sanctions and the work of community based projects.
- Support the continued rollout of the Probation Service public affairs plan which is aimed at better informing public representatives, bodies and agencies about the work of the Service and its impact on community safety.
- Developing stakeholder engagement and public information initiatives.
- Drafting speech and briefing packs for the Probation Service Senior Management, Department Ministers, etc.
- Building and maintaining positive stakeholder relationships with the Department of Justice, agencies, offices and bodies across the criminal justice sector.
- Supporting the development of policies, protocols, templates and other key documents for the function. Managing and maintaining these documents, carrying out periodic review and evaluation.
- Oversee communications quality and branding to ensure that all communications are suitably adapt for the chosen channel and their target audience.
- Manage and develop direct reporting staff.
- Other duties as required.

## The Person

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### Essential Requirements

#### Candidates must have:

- hold an honours degree (Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications) in Communications or another related discipline,

OR

have three years relevant work experience in the area of Communications.

**AND**

- excellent written and verbal communications skills,
- experience working in a fast paced communications role in government, journalism, public relations, stakeholder management or related field.
- a keen interest in *'all things digital'* including social media, websites, intranets, video conferencing platforms, content creation etc.
- strong interpersonal skills and service-mindedness with the ability to interface collegially and effectively with others and foster good working relationships.
- proficient computer skills with a high-level of competency in MS Office packages (Word, PowerPoint, Excel).
- an ability to work as an active, efficient and helpful team player in a busy work environment.
- a willingness to operate flexibly within a busy work environment and be able to shift focus when required.
- good analytical and innovation skills with the ability to identify how to stream-line and increase efficiency and review procedures with a view to proposing innovative solutions.
- a 'can-do' attitude and is committed to the aspirations of the Probation Service.
- The ability to work collaboratively in a complex stakeholder environment, with strong stakeholder management skills.
- Understanding of how the Irish political system and civil service works, and an interest in, and understanding of, the Irish media landscape.

#### ***Desirable Skills (not essential):***

- Experience producing video content from recording through to editing and publishing.
- Experience in photography or managing photo shoots for promotional purposes.
- Skills or prior experience in graphic design or visual communications.
- Experience in creating content for digital platforms such a websites, eNewsletters, social media or intranet portals.

**Candidates will also be expected to demonstrate the competencies set out overleaf.**

## **Civil & Public Service – Key Competencies for Effective Performance**

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The Civil & Public Service competency framework defines the key competencies that civil and public servants should possess to be successful in their roles.

Identifying the competencies required at each grade has many benefits:

- Provides greater clarity on what is expected at different grades.
- Individuals can review and assess their own level of competency against recommended competencies for their current grade. This will allow them to identify their strengths and their areas for development, which can feed into their performance objectives and personal development in PMDS.
- Individuals can focus their development on the competencies that are most relevant for their role.

The competencies at Higher Executive Officer level are listed below:



## Higher Executive Officer Level Competencies

### Effective Performance Indicators

Team Leadership	Works with the team to facilitate high performance, developing clear and realistic objectives and addressing and performance issues if they arise
	Provides clear information and advice as to what is required of the team
	Strives to develop and implement new ways of working effectively to meet objectives
	Leads the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required
	Places high importance on staff development, training and maximising skills & capacity of team.
	Is flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change
Analysis & Decision Making	Gathers and analyses information from relevant sources, whether financial, numerical or otherwise weighing up a range of critical factors
	Takes account of any broader issues and related implications when making decisions
	Uses previous knowledge and experience in order to guide decisions
	Makes sound decisions with a well reasoned rationale and stands by these
	Puts forward solutions to address problems
Management & Delivery of Results	Takes responsibility and is accountable for the delivery of agreed objectives
	Successfully manages a range of different projects and work activities at the same time
	Structures and organises their own and others work effectively
	Is logical and pragmatic in approach, delivering the best possible results with the resources available
	Delegates work effectively, providing clear information and evidence as to what is required
	Proactively identifies areas for improvement and develops practical suggestions for their implementation
	Demonstrates enthusiasm for new developments/changing work practices and strives to implement these changes effectively.
	Applies appropriate systems/ processes to enable quality checking of all activities and outputs
Practices and promotes a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service, for internal and external customers	
Interpersonal & Communication Skills	Builds and maintains contact with colleagues and other stakeholders to assist in performing role
	Acts as an effective link between staff and senior management
	Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues
	Projects conviction, gaining buy-in by outlining relevant information and selling the benefits
	Treats others with diplomacy, tact, courtesy and respect, even in challenging circumstances
Presents information clearly, concisely and confidently when speaking and in writing	
Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development	Has a clear understanding of the roles, objectives and targets of self and team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department/ Organisation and effectively communicates this to others
	Has high levels of expertise and broad Public Sector knowledge relevant to his/her area of work
	Focuses on self development, striving to improve performance
Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values	Strives to perform at a high level, investing significant energy to achieve agreed objectives
	Demonstrates resilience in the face of challenging circumstances and high demands
	Is personally trustworthy and can be relied upon
	Ensures that customers are at the heart of all services provided
	Upholds high standards of honesty, ethics and integrity

## **The Application Process**

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### **Applications**

Please submit a current CV (of not more than 2 pages) and a cover letter of no more than 1 page outlining your experience relevant to the role. The email should be entitled HEO Communications Specialist – candidates name and sent to [psrecruit@probation.ie](mailto:psrecruit@probation.ie)

### **Deadline for Applications**

Applications must be submitted online **not later than 5pm, Wednesday, 25 October 2023**. The onus is on applicants to ensure that they have correctly submitted their applications. Applicants must complete and submit one application only. The onus is on applicants to ensure that they have correctly submitted their applications.

Application Forms must be submitted using Microsoft Word only. Applications using another programme, such as '.pdf', will not be accepted.

Human Resources Division's experience is that some applicants leave submitting their application until the last day or indeed the last few minutes before a competition deadline. This invariably leads to a number of applications being received late. Applicants are strongly advised to submit their applications as early as possible to avoid any difficulties with applying in time. In the interest of fairness to all applicants, late applications will not be accepted in any circumstances. This policy is strictly applied.

## **The Selection Process**

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The selection process will take the form of an interview, the overall focus of which will be to assess each candidate on the basis of their career and experience to date in terms of the requirements/desirable competencies to successfully undertake the job.

While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the Department of Justice may decide that a smaller number will be called to the next stage of the selection process. In this respect, the Probation Service provide for the employment of a shortlisting process to select a group who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and / or have more relevant experience.

An expert board will examine the application forms against agreed shortlisting criteria based on the requirements of the position. The shortlisting criteria may include both the essential and desirable criteria specified for the position. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application.

It is anticipated that competitive interviews will be held as soon as possible after the closing date for receipt of applications. The onus is on candidates to make themselves available for interview at the scheduled time. It is expected to have a Communications Specialist panel in place by later this year. While the interview will centre around the skills and competencies set out below candidates should note that the interview will be semi-structured in nature.

Information from Sections **A & B** of the application form will be considered during the interviews. The competencies set out below will be used by the interview board to assess candidates and form the panel.

Communications Specialist marking scheme:

Attributes/Areas of Experience	Maximum Mark Available	Minimum Mark Required*
Specialist Knowledge Expertise and Self Development	150	75
Judgement, Analysis and Decision Making	100	50
Management and Delivery of Results	100	50
Interpersonal and Communications Skills	100	50
Team Leadership	100	50
Drive and Commitment to Public Service Values	100	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>390*</b>

\* \*A minimum mark 75 out of a total of 150 is available under Specialist Knowledge Expertise and Self-Development and a Minimum Mark 50 out of a total available of 100 under each of the remaining criteria heading is required for an applicant to pass the interview. It should be noted however that in order to be considered for placement on the panel, a score of at least 390 marks, from the total of 650 available, must be achieved; furthermore, achievement of this mark does not guarantee that an applicant will be placed on the panel.

### **Eligibility to Compete and Certain Restrictions on Eligibility**

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#### **Citizenship Requirements**

Eligible candidates must be:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- (b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or



- (c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- (d) A non-EEA citizen who has a stamp 4 visa; or
- (e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa or
- (f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa

**To qualify candidates must be eligible by the date of any job offer.**

**Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants**

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the Public Service by any Public Service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility).

**Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER)**

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are not eligible to apply for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

**Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010)**

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider Public Service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years. People who availed of the VER scheme are not eligible to compete in this competition. People who availed of the VRS scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility).

**Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013)**

The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013 introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for Local Authorities. In accordance with the terms of the *Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants* dated 28 June 2012 as detailed above, it is a specific condition of that VER Scheme that persons will not be eligible for re-employment in any Public Service body [as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011 and the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012] for a period of 2 years from their date of departure under this Scheme. These conditions also apply in the case of engagement/employment on a contract for service basis (either as a contractor or as an employee of a contractor).

### **Declaration**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a Public Service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

### **Employer of Choice**

As an **Employer of Choice** the Civil Service has many flexible and family friendly policies e.g. Worksharing, Shorter Working Year, Remote Working (operated on a 'blended' basis), etc. All elective policies can be applied for in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and are subject to the business needs of the organisation.

The Civil Service also operates a Mobility scheme for all general service grades. This scheme provides staff with career opportunities to learn and partake in diverse roles across a range of Civil Service organisations and geographical locations.

## **Principal Conditions of Service**

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### **General**

The appointment is to a permanent post in the Civil Service and is subject to the Civil Service Regulations Acts 1956 to 2005, the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil Service.

### **Salary**

**The Higher Executive Officer Standard Salary Scale for the position is as follows: (rates effective from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023):**

#### **Personal Pension Contribution (PPC):**

€54,764 €56,365 €57,963 €59,560 €61,163 €62,758 €64,358 €66,667<sup>1</sup> €68,970<sup>2</sup>

The PPC pay rate applies when the individual is required to pay a Personal Pension Contribution (otherwise known as a main scheme contribution) in accordance with the rules of their main/personal superannuation scheme. This is different to a contribution in respect of membership of a Spouses' and Children's scheme, or the Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC).

A different rate will apply where the appointee is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3 (LSI1) and 6 (LSI2) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

### **Important Note:**

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Different terms and conditions may apply if you are a currently serving civil or public servant.

Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy. You will agree that any overpayment of salary, allowances, or expenses will be repaid by you in accordance with Circular 07/2018: Recovery of Salary, Allowances, and Expenses Overpayments made to Staff Members/Former Staff Members/Pensioners.

### **Tenure and Probation**

The appointment is to a permanent position on a probationary contract in the Civil Service.

The probationary contract will be for a period of one year from the date specified on the contract. During the period of your probationary contract, your performance will be subject to review by your supervisor(s) to determine whether you:

- (i) Have performed in a satisfactory manner,
- (ii) Have been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- (iii) Are suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Prior to the completion of the probationary contract a decision will be made as to whether or not you will be retained pursuant to *Section 5A(2) Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956 – 2005*. This decision will be based on your performance assessed against the criteria set out in (i) to (iii) above. The detail of the probationary process will be explained to you by the Probation Service and you will be given a copy of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's guidelines on probation.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs in this section, the probationary contract may be terminated at any time prior to the expiry of the term of the contract by either side in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts, 1973 to 2005.

In the following circumstances your contract may be extended and your probation period suspended.

- The probationary period stands suspended when an employee is absent due to Maternity or Adoptive Leave.
- In relation to an employee absent on Parental Leave or Carers Leave, the employer may require probation to be suspended if the absence is not considered to be consistent with the continuation of the probation.
- Probation may be suspended in cases such as absence due to a non-recurring illness, and
- Any other statutory provision providing that probation shall -
  - (i) stand suspended during an employee's absence from work, and
  - (ii) be completed by the employee on the employee's return from work after such absence.

Where probation is suspended the employer should notify the employee of the circumstances relating to the suspension.

All appointees will serve a one-year probationary period. If an appointee who fails to satisfy the conditions of probation has been a serving civil servant immediately prior to their appointment from

this competition, the issue of reversion will normally arise. In the event of reversion, an officer will return to a vacancy in their former grade in their former Department.

### **Headquarters**

Headquarters will be such as may be designated from time to time by the Head of the Department / Organisation. When required to travel on official duty the appointee will be paid appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances, subject to normal civil service regulations.

### **Hours of Attendance**

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time but will amount to not less than 41 hours 15 minutes gross per week. The successful candidate will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations. The rate of remuneration payable covers any extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

Candidates should be aware that requirements in relation to working on site at their place of work will be in line with the Probation Service Blended Working Policy. Staff are required to attend their place of work on, at least three days per week to be agreed with their line manager. Additional, in person, attendance may be also required depending on the business needs.

### **Training**

The Probation Service is committed to providing on-going training and development opportunities for all its staff. There is a dedicated staff training and development section within the Probation Service which provides induction training to all new staff. It also offers on-going skills and knowledge training in specific areas relevant to the core work of the Probation Service.

### **Annual Leave**

The annual leave allowance for the position of Communications Specialist is 29 days rising to 30 days after 5 years' service. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the civil service, is based on a five day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

### **Sick Leave**

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars.

Officers who will be paying Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts directly to the employing Department / Organisation. Payment during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of and Social Protection within the required time limits.

### **Superannuation and Retirement**

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil Service at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”). Full details of the Scheme are at [www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie](http://www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie)

Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable (non-Single Scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or is currently on a career break or special leave with/without pay different terms may apply. The pension entitlement of such appointees will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

- Pensionable Age: The minimum age at which pension is payable is the same as the age of eligibility for the State Pension, currently 66.
- Retirement Age: Scheme members must retire on reaching the age of 70.
- Career average earnings are used to calculate benefits (a pension and lump sum amount accrue each year and are up-rated each year by reference to CPI).
- Post retirement pension increases are linked to CPI

### **Pension Abatement**

- If the appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during his/her re-employment that pension **will be subject to abatement** in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. **Please note: In applying for this position you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Department/Office will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.**
- However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil or Public Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER), the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS or the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular letter LG(P) 06/2013, any of which renders a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements may, however be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

### **Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007**

The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular documentation, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed

in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the ceasing of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

### **Ill-Health-Retirement**

Please note any person who previously retired on ill health grounds under the terms of a superannuation scheme are required to declare, at the initial application phase, that they are in receipt of such a pension to the organisation administering the recruitment competition.

Applicants will be required to attend the CMO's office to assess their ability to provide regular and effective service taking account of the condition which qualified them for IHR.

### **Appointment post Ill-health retirement from Civil Service**

If successful in their application through the competition, the applicant should to be aware of the following:

1. If deemed fit to provide regular and effective service and assigned to a post, their civil service ill-health pension ceases.
2. If the applicant subsequently fails to complete probation or decides to leave their assigned post, there can be no reversion to the civil service IHR status, nor reinstatement of the civil service IHR pension, that existed prior to the application nor is there an entitlement to same.
3. The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

### **Appointment post Ill-health retirement from public service:**

1. Where an individual has retired from a public service body his/her ill-health pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement under that scheme.
2. If an applicant is successful, on appointment the applicant will be required to declare whether they are in receipt of a public service pension (ill-health or otherwise) and their public service pension may be subject to abatement.
3. The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

Please note more detailed information in relation to pension implications for those in receipt of a civil or public service ill-health pension is available [via this link](#)

### **Pension Accrual**

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one pre-existing public service pension scheme (i.e. non-Single Scheme) as per the 2012 Act shall apply. This 40-year limit is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

### **Additional Superannuation Contribution**

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. **Note:** ASC deductions are in addition to any pension contributions (main scheme and spouses' and children's contributions) required under the rules of your pension scheme.

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme please see the following website: [www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie](http://www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie)

### **Ethics in Public Office Act 1995**

The Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 will apply, where appropriate, to this employment.

### **Outside Employment**

The position will be whole time and the appointee may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business, which conflicts in any way with his/her official duties, impairs performance or compromises his/her integrity.

### **Secrecy, Confidentiality and Standards of Behaviour: Official Secrecy and Integrity**

During the term of the probationary contract, an officer will be subject to the Provisions of the Official Secrets Act, 1963, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2014. The officer will agree not to disclose to unauthorised third parties any confidential information either during or subsequent to the period of employment.

The officer will be subject to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour. The Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 will apply, where appropriate, to this employment.

### **Political Activity**

During the term of employment, the officer will be subject to the rules governing civil servants and politics.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate**

## Review Procedures

The selection process for this competition is being carried out in accordance with the principles set out in the Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. This Code of Practice can be accessed through the Commission for Public Service Appointments website at [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie).

Information regarding review procedures is set out in Sections 7 and 8 of the above Code of Practice. (The two procedures are mutually exclusive. Where a formal review has taken place under Section 7 of the Code, you may not seek a further review of the same process under Section 8, other than in the most exceptional circumstances that will be determined by the Commission at its sole discretion.)

- **Informal Review:** Where possible, and only with the agreement of the candidate, every effort will be made to resolve any issues/complaints by way of an informal process.
- **Section 7** review procedures apply in cases where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to his/her candidature (but does not believe there was a breach of the Code of Practice).
- **Section 8** review procedures apply where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA's Code of Practice.

### Requests for Review

Where a candidate requests a review, they should determine which procedure is appropriate to their circumstances, i.e. Informal or Formal, Section 7 or Section 8. The candidate must submit their request within the timelines specified in the Code of Practice. These timelines are restricted in order to ensure that corrective action can be taken, if necessary, without delaying the process for other candidates. Candidates must clearly set out the grounds for review and specify the relevant Section of the Code. *A request for a review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.*

You are entitled to acknowledgement, within 3 days, of a request for formal review, and the outcome of the review must be provided to you within 25 days of receipt of the request. If it is not possible to complete the review within this time, you will be informed of the status of the review and the reasons for the delay.

Timelines for review requests are as follows

<b>SECTION 7 Review</b>	<b>SECTION 8 Review</b>
<p><b><u>Interim stage of competition</u></b></p> <p>- Request for Informal Review – 2 working days after receipt of decision</p> <p>- Request for Formal Review – 4 working days after receipt of decision</p> <p><b><u>Final stage of competition</u></b></p> <p>- Request for Informal Review – 5 working days after receipt of decision</p> <p>- Request for Formal Review – 10 working days after receipt of decision <u>or</u> 2 working days after notification of informal review</p>	<p><b><u>Interim and Final stages of competition</u></b></p> <p>- Request for Informal Review – 5 working days after receipt of decision</p> <p>- Request for Formal Review – 2 working days after notification of decision arising from informal review or without delay where candidate does not avail of informal Review</p> <p>- CPSA – 10 working days after receipt of decision arising from office holder's review</p>



## **Canvassing**

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Applicants should note that canvassing by or on behalf of an applicant will disqualify the applicant and will result in their exclusion from the appointment process.

## **Confidentiality**

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Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014 applications will be treated in strict confidence.

## **Security Clearance**

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You will be required to complete and return a Garda eVetting form should you come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to An Garda Síochána for security checks on all Irish and Northern Irish addresses at which you resided. However should your application for the competition be unsuccessful this form will be destroyed by the Probation Service.

If you have resided / studied in countries outside of the Republic of Ireland for a period of 6 months or more, it is **mandatory** for you to furnish a **Police Clearance Certificate** from those countries stating that you have no convictions recorded against you while residing there. You will need to provide a separate **Police Clearance Certificate for each country you have resided in**. Clearance must be dated after the date you left the country.

**It is YOUR responsibility to seek security clearances in a timely fashion as they can take some time. You cannot be appointed without this information being provided and being in order.**

## **Other important information**

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The Probation Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the Probation Service are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview.

If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises the Board may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

A panel may be formed from which future vacancies may be filled from this campaign.

**Once a candidate has accepted an offer of appointment their name will be removed from the panel and no further offers of appointment will be made.**

**Should similar type vacancies arise elsewhere in the Civil Service candidates may be drawn from this competition.**

### **Requests for Feedback**

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Feedback will be provided to candidates in relation to the selection process is available on request. There are no specific timeframes set for the provision of feedback.

Please note that the Review Process as set out in the Code of Practice is a separate process with specified timeframes that must be observed. Receipt of feedback is not required to invoke a review. It is not necessary for a candidate to compile a detailed case prior to invoking the review mechanism. The timeframe set out in the CPSA Code cannot be extended for any reason including the provision of feedback.

### **Candidates' Obligations**

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Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- personate a candidate at any stage of the process
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the selection process e.g. through social media or any other means, may result in you being disqualified from the competition.

Please note that all assessment and test materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the test material (including passages of information, questions or answer options), associated materials or interview(s) may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person who contravenes this provision, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.

### **Contravention Code of Practice**

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Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, if a person found guilty of an offence was, or is a candidate at a recruitment process:

- they will be disqualified as a candidate and excluded from the process;
- has been appointed to a post following the recruitment process, they will be removed from that post.

## **Use of Recording Equipment**

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The Probation Service does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording equipment on its premises. This applies to any form of sound recording and any type of still picture or video recording, whether including sound recording or not, and covers any type of device used for these purposes.

Any person wishing to use such equipment for any of these purposes must seek written permission in advance. This policy is in place to protect the privacy of staff and customers and the integrity of our assessment material and assessment processes.

Unsanctioned use of recording equipment by any person is a breach of this policy. Any candidate involved in such a breach could be disqualified from the competition and could be subject to prosecution under section 55 of the Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act, 2004.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- Where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- Where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

## **Specific candidate criteria**

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Candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned;
- Be suitable on the grounds of character;
- Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned;
- and if successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:
- Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed.
- Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

## **Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

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Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required by the Probation Service or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the Probation Service require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Candidates are expected to provide all requested documentation to the Probation Service, including all forms issued by the Probation Service for completion, within five days of request. Failure to do so will result in the candidate being deemed to have withdrawn from the competition and their candidature will receive no further consideration.

## **Quality Customer Service**

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We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

Feedback will be provided on written request. A request for feedback does not impact on the timeframe set out for seeking a review.

## **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

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The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive.

When you register with [jobs.justice.ie](http://jobs.justice.ie) or submit an application for a competition, we create a computer record in your name. Information submitted with a job application is used in processing your application. Where the services of a third party are used in processing your application, it may be required to provide them with information, however all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the security of your data.