



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE
IRISH CIVIL SERVICE

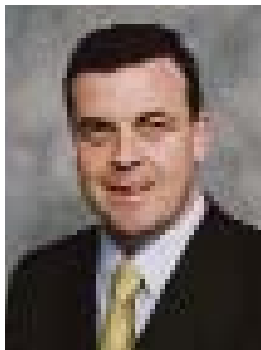
THE CONSTITUTION LEGISLATURE/DIREACHTAS PRESIDENT
OF IRELAND DÁIL ÉIREANN SEANAD ÉIREANN
EXECUTIVE/GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF STATE DÁIL ÉIREANN
THE TAOISEACH THE TÁNAISTE MINISTER FOR FINANCE
JUDICIARY ADMINISTERS JUSTICE THROUGH THE COURTS
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COMPTROLLER & AUDITOR GENERAL CONTROLS ON
BEHALF OF THE STATE THE ISSUE OF MONIES TO THE
GOVERNMENT AND AUDITS GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS THE
ELECTORATE THE CONSTITUTION
LEGISLATURE/DIREACHTAS PRESIDENT OF IRELAND
DÁIL ÉIREANN SEANAD ÉIREANN EXECUTIVE/GOVERNMENT



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE
IRISH CIVIL SERVICE

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FOREWORD



Mr Brian Lenihan TD
Minister for Finance

In Ireland we are fortunate to have a highly developed and professional Civil Service to advise Government and implement policies to achieve our strategic national objectives. Irish Civil Servants are at the forefront of many European and international fora and play a key role in progressing national interests in a spirit of international co-operation.

The citizens of Ireland take pride in the well earned reputation for high standards and ethical behaviour that exists within the Irish Civil Service.

This manual has been designed to provide insight and guidance to new entrants to the Civil Service. It outlines the basic structures of Government and contains information on Civil Service terms and conditions of employment and the opportunities for career progression and development. The manual will also serve as a useful reference guide for serving Civil Servants.

A career in the Civil Service offers an exciting and challenging work environment and the opportunity to deliver world class services to the citizens of Ireland.

There is ample scope for career advancement within the Civil Service. Opportunities for personal development and further training are excellent, allowing new entrants the chance to achieve their full potential.

I wish all new entrants to the Irish Civil Service every success in their future careers.

Brian Lenihan

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WHILE THIS BOOK summarises the general conditions pertaining to the Civil Service it does not constitute a legal interpretation of the regulations.





CIVIL SERVICE

INTRODUCTION



CHAPTER ONE

STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT IN IRELAND

IRELAND IS A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY. THE 1937 CONSTITUTION SETS OUT THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE MAIN ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT. THESE CONSIST OF THREE MAIN BRANCHES:

THE LEGISLATURE, THE EXECUTIVE, AND THE JUDICIARY

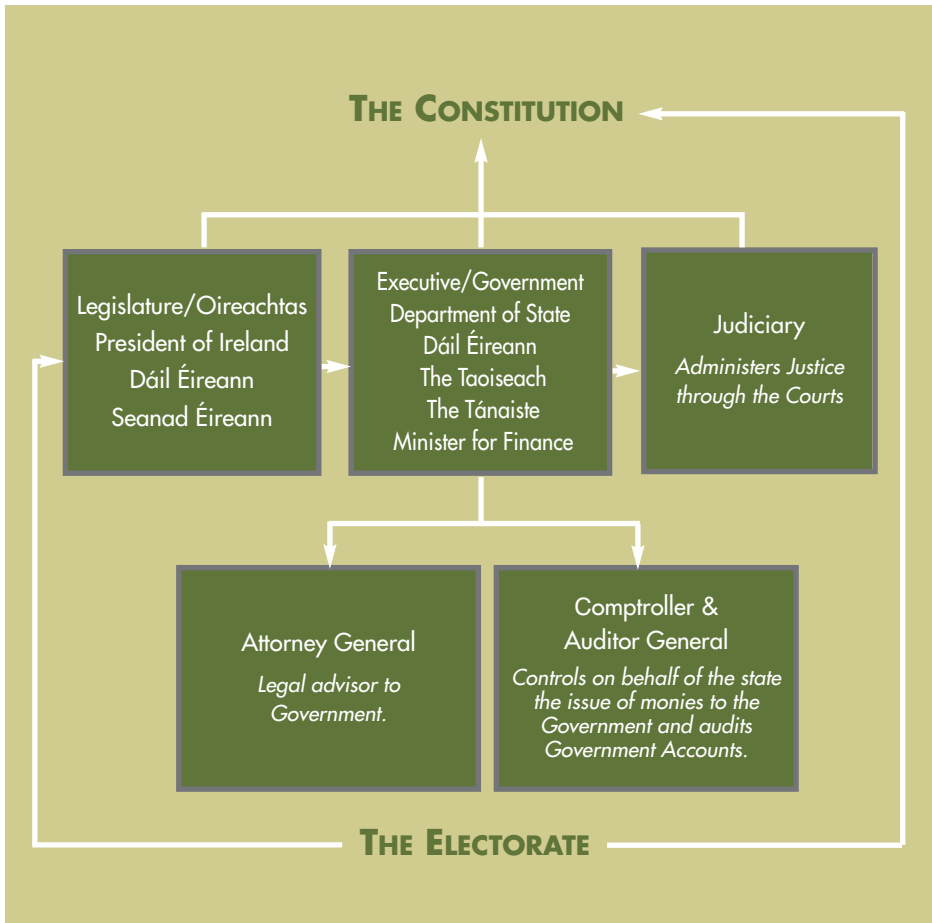
- **The Legislature**, or the National Parliament, is called the **Oireachtas**. This is comprised of the President, Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann. The sole and exclusive power of making laws for the State is vested in the Oireachtas.
- **The Executive** power of the State is exercised by or on the authority of the **Government**. The Government is collectively responsible for the Departments of State administered by its members, and it is responsible to Dáil Éireann. The Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Minister for Finance must be members of Dáil Éireann.
- **The Judiciary** administers justice through the courts. The Constitution also provides for the Office of **Attorney General**, the legal advisor to the government.

The Constitution provides for a national auditor, the **Comptroller and Auditor General**, whose main statutory role, on behalf of the State, is to control the issue of monies to the Government for its expenditure and to audit the Government's accounts.

The President is the Head of State and exercises and performs the powers and functions conferred on him/her by the Constitution and by law.



STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT IN IRELAND



MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNMENT

THE GOVERNMENT consists of not less than seven, and not more than fifteen Ministers who meet and act as a collective authority. Individual members of the Government are designated as the Ministers with sole responsibility for the administration of the various Departments of State:

- TAOISEACH
- FINANCE
- AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
- ARTS, SPORT AND TOURISM
- COMMUNICATIONS, ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
- COMMUNITY, RURAL AND GAELTACHT AFFAIRS
- DEFENCE
- EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
- ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT
- ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- FOREIGN AFFAIRS
- HEALTH AND CHILDREN
- JUSTICE EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM
- SOCIAL AND FAMILY AFFAIRS
- TRANSPORT.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

- **MINISTER**
Responsible for policy direction of a Department.
- **MINISTER OF STATE**
Responsible for direction of certain policy areas within a Department.
- **SECRETARY GENERAL**
Administrative head of a Department.
- **ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL**
Top manager responsible for certain policy areas within a Department.
- **PRINCIPAL**
Manager responsible for managing a main structural unit within a Department.
- **ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**
Manager responsible for assisting Principal in managing a main structural unit within a Department.
- **OTHER CIVIL SERVANTS INCLUDE**
Advisors, Specialists, Experts, Inspectors and other grades.

ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

THE CIVIL SERVICE IS CHARGED WITH TWO PRINCIPLE TASKS:

- TO ASSIST MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN MAKING POLICY
- TO CARRY OUT POLICY DECISIONS.

There are approximately 37,000 people [on a whole time equivalent basis] employed in the Civil Service, in areas ranging from clerical and administrative posts to senior managerial, professional and technical posts.

The career choices available within the Civil Service are broad and offer many opportunities, across areas including finance, economic and social policy, education, health services, industry, transport, agriculture, fisheries and food, energy, justice and equality, legal affairs, social and community services, heritage, tourism and sport areas.

The Civil Service has career prospects for people from all educational backgrounds. These prospects are divided into two main categories:

- General Service
- Professional and Technical.

GENERAL SERVICE POSITIONS INCLUDE:

- Clerical Officer
- Executive Officer
- Administrative Officer
- Third Secretary
- Higher Executive Officer
- Assistant Principal.

**PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL POSITIONS
INCLUDE:**

- Accountancy
- Agricultural Science
- Architecture
- Chemistry and Applied Science
- Engineering.

Fountain at Government Buildings, Dublin 2



GENERAL SERVICE GRADES AND ADMINISTRATIVE EQUIVALENT

Within the general Civil Service there are 15 principle grades:

1. Secretary General
2. Assistant Secretary General
3. Principal Officer (PO)
4. Assistant Principal Officer (AP)
5. Third Secretary
6. Administrative Officer (AO)
7. Higher Executive Officer (HEO)
8. Executive Officer (EO)
9. Staff Officer (SO)
10. Clerical Officer (CO)
11. Telephonist
12. Service Officer
13. Dáil Usher
14. General Operative
15. Store Person.

Within Professional and Technical there are 18 specialist grades:

1. Accountant/Auditor
2. Architect
3. Barrister
4. Dental Surgeon
5. Engineer
6. Examiner of Maps
7. Inspector
8. Law Clerk
9. Marine Biologist
10. Medical General Practitioner
11. Nursing Staff
12. Pharmacist
13. Planner
14. Psychologist
15. Quantity Surveyor
16. Scientist
17. Solicitor
18. Veterinary Surgeon.

Teachers and members of An Garda Síochána (police force), and staff of local authorities and of the health services belong to the wider public service, rather than the Civil Service. Their salaries, however, are also paid from central government funds, through the Departments of Education, Justice, Environment and Health respectively.





Photo courtesy of Áras an Uachtaráin



CHAPTER TWO

CIVIL SERVICE VALUES,
CODE OF STANDARDS AND
BEHAVIOUR

CIVIL SERVICE VALUES

The Irish Civil Service has a reputation for high standards. The values most commonly associated with the Civil Service are:

- HONESTY AND INTEGRITY
- IMPARTIALITY
- RESPECT FOR THE LAW
- RESPECT FOR PERSONS
- DILIGENCE
- RESPONSIVENESS
- ACCOUNTABILITY.

THE CIVIL SERVICE CODE OF STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOUR

The Code of Standards and Behaviour for the Irish Civil Service was introduced in accordance with Section 10 (3) of the Standards in Public Office Act 2001. The Code is an important element of the overall framework within which all Civil Servants are expected to work. It sets out the standards required of Civil Servants in the discharge of their duties. The code requires all Civil Servants to:

- Be impartial in the performance of their duties and maintain high standards of service in all of their dealings with the public
- Work within the law, including avoiding improper disclosure of information gained in the course of their work in accordance with the Official Secrets Act 1963, and
- Respect their colleagues and give due regard to their beliefs.

The Code forms part of the terms and conditions of employment for all Civil Servants. Strict compliance is expected at all times. A copy of the Code is given to every new Civil Servant who is required to certify in writing that they have received and read it.

PROTECTING AND RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

In protecting and respecting human rights, Civil Servants are required to reflect these values in their everyday work and to be aware of human rights legislation in performing their statutory duties. Human Rights Commission Act 2000, and European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003, refer.

ETHICS IN PUBLIC OFFICE

The Ethics in Public Office Act 1995, imposes a statutory obligation of disclosure of interests by public office holders in certain designated positions. These include the Attorney General, members of the Houses of the Oireachtas, special advisers and holders of designated directorships and occupiers of designated positions in the Civil Service and the Semi-State sector.

The Ethics in Public Office legislation applies the principles of openness and transparency to potential conflicts of public and private interests of those in positions of public influence. For those staff members holding a designated position affected by the legislation, a return must be made for the calendar year or any part thereof. The main requirements relate to the furnishing of statements of registerable interests and the disclosure of material interests.

When a Civil Servant occupies a designated position of employment and where he/she has a registerable interest/s, or where he/she has actual knowledge of the registerable interest/s of their spouse, child or spouse's child, which could materially influence them in relation to the performance of their official functions – by reason of the fact that such performance could so affect those interests as to confer on, or withhold from them or their spouse or their child, a substantial benefit – they must prepare and furnish annually a written statement of those registerable interests to their Secretary General or Head of Office. The Ethics in Public Office Acts do not require a statement of interests to be made where there are no registerable interests to be disclosed.

Detailed guidance on compliance with the Ethics in Public Office Acts is published in the 'Guidelines on Compliance with the Provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001 – Public Servants'. This is available from the Human Resources Division of each Department and on the Standards in Public Office Commission website: www.sipo.ie





Cabinet Table, Government Buildings, Dublin 2

MINISTERIAL PRIVATE OFFICE STAFF

The main posts within a Ministerial Office include Personal Assistant, Personal Secretary, Special Adviser and Civilian Driver. Appointments to these positions are subject to the Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956 to 2005, and the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004, and, in the case of Special Advisers, the Public Service Management Act 1997. These are available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

The conditions of appointment of Ministerial Private Office Staff are dealt with in a set of instructions for the Appointment of Ministerial Private Office Staff, available on www.finance.gov.ie

The Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act 2001, provides the legal basis for Ireland's anti-corruption strategy for public servants. The Act penalises active and passive bribery involving public employees and domestic and foreign public office holders. The maximum penalty for those convicted of corruption is an unlimited fine or up to 10 years imprisonment, or both.

The Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill 2008, amends the existing provisions of the 2001 Act, and includes the insertion of a new provision (section 4) which provides protection for "whistleblowers", i.e. persons, including employees, who report offences under the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 to 2008.

TAX CLEARANCE OBLIGATIONS OF APPOINTEES TO "SENIOR OFFICE"

The Tax Clearance provisions of the Standards in Public Office Act 2001, apply to persons appointed to "senior office". This includes any designated position of employment in a Department of State or in any public body prescribed for the purposes of the Ethics legislation, for which the remuneration is not less than the lowest remuneration in relation to the position of Deputy Secretary General in the Civil Service.

All persons appointed to senior office are obliged to provide a valid tax clearance certificate to the Standards in Public Office Commission.

OUTSIDE INDEPENDENT APPOINTMENTS BOARD

An Outside Independent Appointments Board was established under the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour in September 2004. Membership of the Board comprises of the Secretary General, Public Service Management and Development Division of the Department of Finance, the Secretary General to the Government and three members who are not Civil Servants – one of whom acts as Chairperson.

Civil Servants at Assistant Secretary General level and above must obtain approval from the Outside Appointments Board if they intend, within twelve months of resigning or retiring to:

- accept an offer of appointment from an employer outside the Civil Service
- accept an engagement in a particular consultancy project, where the nature and terms of such an appointment or engagement could lead to a conflict of interest.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Civil Servants may not at any time engage in, or be connected with, any outside business or activity which would in any way conflict with the interests of their Departments/Offices, or be inconsistent with their official positions, or interfere with the performance of their work. For instance, full-time professional Civil Servants must not engage in private practice in their professions.

If a Civil Servant is in doubt about the propriety of engaging in a particular outside activity he/she should consult the Personnel Section of their Department.

A Civil Servant must not use his/her position in the Civil Service to try to influence a decision on some matter concerning himself/herself or any other person.

Breaches of the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour will constitute a breach of the terms and conditions of employment of a Civil Servant and may result in disciplinary action.

If a Civil Servant gets into serious financial difficulties which may compromise or be reasonably seen by others to compromise him/her in the performance of his/her duties, he/she should report the matter to the Secretary General or Head of Office.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Civil Servants are subject to certain restrictions regarding their involvement in political activity:

- No Civil Servant may become a member of the Oireachtas or of the European Parliament while remaining in the Civil Service. If a Civil Servant wishes to contest an election to the Oireachtas or the European Parliament he/she must first resign from the Civil Service.
- Members of grades with maximum salaries above the Clerical Officer maximum are completely debarred from political activity, including standing for election to a Local Authority, making public statements or comments on political topics, and being a member of a political party.
- Clerical Officers and equivalents who wish to take part in political activity, e.g. join a political party or stand for election to a Local Authority, may be given permission to do so by the Head of Department/Office. However, permission may be refused in the case of officers engaged in certain types of work. Members of some other grades, e.g. Service Officers, may engage in political activity without seeking prior permission. Similar arrangements apply to departmental, professional and technical grades at corresponding levels.

Political involvement by Civil Servants is dealt with in the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.



Entrance Hall - Government Buildings

DATA PROTECTION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Data Protection

Information relating to individuals, called 'personal data', is collected and used in many aspects of everyday life and is used constantly by the Civil Service. The Data Protection Act 1988, regulates the collection, storage and disclosure of personal information or data which is processed by automated means. Under the amended Data Protection Act 2003, the privacy rights of individuals were further strengthened and, in particular, data protection rights were extended to include manual files. Under the Act the explicit consent of an individual is now required before personal data can be processed.

The Acts give the following rights to every individual, irrespective of nationality or residence:

- to establish the existence of personal data
- to have access to any such data relating to him/her
- to have inaccurate data rectified.

Technology and IT Usage

Technology is a critical business tool in the Civil Service. Its availability is crucial to the delivery by Government of its business goals.

Provisions in national legislation regarding obscenity, child pornography, sedition and incitement to hatred regulate the use of the Internet.

Each Department/Office is responsible for ensuring they have a policy document on the use of the Information Technology (IT) Network, email, internet, and voicemail. A breach of a Department's IT policy may be grounds for disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

INTEGRITY/CONFIDENTIALITY

Civil Servants have a statutory obligation to preserve the secrecy and integrity of the information that they have access to in the course of their official work. This is in line with the requirements of the Official Secrets Act 1963. This statutory obligation continues to apply after Civil Servants have ceased their duties whether on resignation, retirement or otherwise.

ARCHIVES

The National Archives Act 1986, provides for the preservation of records and the transfer of records which are more than 30 years old to the National Archives, to be made available for inspection by members of the public.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Irish Civil Service strives to operate in a spirit of openness and accountability.

The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 1997, and FOI (Amendment) Act 2003, allow for the disclosure of certain official information.



CHAPTER THREE

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

PROBATION

In the Irish Civil Service, probation is the trial period during which new entrants and promotees are assessed for their suitability. New entrants are required to serve a probationary period which normally lasts for one year, during which period they are assessed on efficiency, conduct, punctuality, health and sick leave record. If an officer's probationary service is unsatisfactory the appointment can be terminated at any time during the probationary period.

Officers who are appointed on the basis of a one year probationary contract and who satisfactorily complete their period of probation will be appointed as an established Civil Servant in the Civil Service. Officers who are appointed on a fixed term contract and who satisfactorily complete their period of probation will continue in employment in the Civil Service for the duration of the fixed term contract.

PAY

Most Civil Servants are placed on a pay scale with annual increments up to a maximum level. The annual increment is normally paid on the anniversary of appointment provided performance during the year is satisfactory.

Long Service Increments, which are also subject to satisfactory performance, apply in the case of some pay scales.

Certain deductions from pay are mandatory (income tax, PRSI and superannuation contributions).

The Civil Service encourages the policy of paying salaries directly into bank accounts.

DEDUCTIONS FROM PAY

In addition to deductions in respect of tax, PRSI and superannuation, there are other non compulsory deductions from pay. These deductions may be paid to various organisations including:

- All recognised unions and staff associations
- Health Insurance Providers, e.g. VHI, Hibernian Health and Quinn Health Care
- Public Service Friendly Society
- Combined Services Third World Fund.

INCREMENTAL CREDIT

Certain entry levels to the Civil Service have incremental credit agreements in place. These allow for the granting of incremental credit for an officer's previous service, in circumstances where they have previously been employed in a relevant grade in the Public Service, in Ireland or an equivalent EU body.

Circulars 21/04, 16/05, 6/06 and 40/07 refer.

LEAVE

ANNUAL LEAVE

The most recent circular governing annual leave is *Circular 27/03*. The circular deals with the annual leave allowance for various Civil Service grades, the limited carry-over of annual leave and reckoning of prior service for the purpose of determining annual leave allowance, etc. For ease of reference, the following are the annual leave allowances for some of the main service grades:



Government Buildings, Dublin 2

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Clerical Officer | 20 days at the outset, rising to 21 after 5 years service, and 22 after 10 years service. |
| Staff Officer | 21 days at the outset, rising to 22 after 5 years service, and 23 after 10 years service. |
| Executive Officer | 21 days at the outset, rising to 22 after 5 years service, and 23 after 10 years service. |
| Administrative Officer | 23 days at the outset, rising to 27 after 5 years service, and 29 after 10 years service. |
| Higher Executive Officer | 27 days at the outset, rising to 28 after 5 years service, and 29 after 10 years service. |
| Assistant Principal Officer | 30 days at the outset, rising to 31 after 5 years service. |
| Principal Officer | 31 days. |

Details of annual leave for other grades are available from Personnel Sections of employing Departments.

SICK LEAVE

The arrangements for sick leave are set out in a number of circulars, in particular *Circular 25/78 refers – Sick Leave*.

If an officer is sick, he/she should contact their manager by telephone, or get someone else to do so, before noon on the first day of absence.

Written confirmation of inability to attend work due to illness should be

forwarded as soon as possible to Personnel Division. If sick absence lasts more than two working days a medical certificate from a doctor, stating the nature of the illness and the length of the absence, should be provided to the Personnel Section. This certificate should be sent in no later than the third day of absence, and the officer should arrange to submit a certificate at weekly intervals during continuous sick absence.

Civil Servants appointed on or after 6 April 1995, when absent on sick leave, are required to make the necessary claims for Illness Benefit to the Department of Social and Family Affairs within the required time limits. They should also comply with whatever requirements are laid down by that Department as a condition of claiming Illness Benefit. Full details of the Department of Social and Family Affairs requirements and conditions for making claims are made available at the time of appointment. www.welfare.ie

Circular 6/95 refers – Revised social insurance status and conditions of service of certain Civil Servants.

Up to seven days uncertified sick leave may be permitted in any period of twelve months. The purpose of uncertified sick leave is to allow for recovery from illness which is likely to last only a day or two. Any case where the facts appear to show that an officer is abusing the uncertified sick leave regulations will be pursued.

The decision on whether sick leave is to be granted with or without pay is a matter for the Head of the Department/Office.

Full pay during properly certified sick absence (provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service) may be allowed, up to a maximum of six months in one year, and half pay thereafter, subject to a maximum of twelve months sick leave in any period of four years or less.

Circular 25/78 refers – Sick Leave.

A period of sick absence can be a single day or a number of consecutive days sick leave.

Abuse of sick leave arrangements by, for example, frequently resorting to uncertified sick leave or to unjustified spells of certified sick leave, may lead to penalties including, withholding salary increments, withdrawal of sick pay privileges and ultimately dismissal.

Where certified illness occurs during a period of annual leave, an officer should cancel the annual leave, subject to approval by the Personnel Division. In such circumstances the annual leave may be taken at a later date. After the period of illness the Civil Servant must, before taking annual leave, either resume duty or furnish medical evidence of fitness to resume duty.

MATERNITY LEAVE

At present in the Civil Service, maternity leave consists of twenty six weeks paid leave with an option to avail of a further sixteen weeks unpaid leave. In general, a minimum of two weeks maternity leave and a maximum of fourteen weeks maternity leave may be taken before the due date of birth.

Civil Servants appointed on or after 6 April 1995, when absent on paid maternity leave, are required to make the necessary claims for Maternity Benefit to the Department of Social and Family Affairs within the required time limits, and to comply with whatever requirements are laid down by that Department as a condition of claiming benefit. Full details of the Department of Social and Family Affairs requirements and conditions for making claims are made available at the time of appointment.

Circular 6/95 refers – Revised social insurance status and conditions of service of certain Civil Servants.

The period of paid maternity leave counts as service in all respects. The period of unpaid additional maternity leave counts as service for

promotion, increment, and public holidays but not for remuneration and superannuation purposes.

A pregnant employee is entitled to paid time off as is necessary for attendance at ante-natal classes. Expectant fathers are also entitled to time off from work, without loss of pay, for the purpose of attending the last two ante-natal classes with the expectant mother. Evidence of attendance at the clinic will be required.

A mother who is breastfeeding her child/children is entitled to, without loss of pay until the child is 2 years of age, either an adjustment of working hours or where breastfeeding facilities are provided by the employer, breastfeeding breaks. Where such facilities are provided, breaks may be taken in the form of one break of 60 minutes per day.

Circular 31/06 refers – Implementation of the Regulations of the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Act 2004.

Circular 6/95 refers – Revised social insurance status and conditions of service of certain Civil Servants.

Circular 35/95 refers – Maternity Leave.

Circular 9/01 refers – Extension of Maternity and Adoptive leave.

PATERNITY LEAVE

Three days paid leave is granted to fathers of children born or adopted on or after 1 January 2000. This leave may be taken up to four weeks after the date of birth or the date of placement of the child. Paternity leave is in respect of each child, therefore in the case of twins, for example, six days are allowed.

Circular 32/99 refers – Paternity Leave is available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

PARENTAL LEAVE

Parental Leave is available to all staff who have one year's continuous service, but it is also allowed, on a reduced basis, to staff who have more than three months but less than twelve months continuous service.

Various circulars set out the provisions for Parental Leave, which is a statutory entitlement under the Parental Leave Act 1998, and the Parental Leave (Amendment) Act 2006. This legislation allows the parent of a child, born or adopted on or after 3 December 1993, to take unpaid leave of fourteen working weeks for the purpose of caring for his/her child. Those who are "*in loco parentis*" may also be entitled to avail of Parental Leave – a definition is provided in the Parental Leave (Amendment) Act 2006. Parental Leave must be taken before the child is eight years of age, or sixteen in the case of a child with a disability.

Parental Leave may be taken as one continuous period of fourteen weeks or as shorter periods amounting to fourteen weeks in total. This entitlement is reduced *pro-rata* in cases where the parent is availing of worksharing arrangements.

Parental Leave entitlements may be transferred from one parent to another if both parents are employed by the same employer (the Civil Service is deemed a single employer for this purpose), subject to the employer's agreement.

A Civil Servant who falls ill while on parental leave and, as a result is unable to care for the child, e.g. hospitalisation, may suspend the parental leave for the duration of the illness following which the parental leave period recommences.

While the Parental Leave Act does not confer an entitlement to remuneration and superannuation benefits, a Civil Servant on parental leave is deemed to be in employment and the absence counts as service for promotion, increment and annual leave.

Circular 22/98 refers – Parental Leave (Circular 39/02 Amendments to Parental Leave Entitlement (Age & Disability)),

Circular 25/03 refers – Amendment to Parental Leave Entitlement (age), available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

ADOPTIVE LEAVE

At present, twenty four consecutive weeks of paid Adoptive Leave is allowed to adopting mothers and to sole male adopters. Adoptive Leave may be followed by up to sixteen consecutive weeks of unpaid additional Adoptive Leave.

Civil Servants appointed on or after 6 April 1995, when absent on paid Adoptive Leave, are required to make the necessary claims for Adoptive Benefit to the Department of Social and Family Affairs within the required time limits and to comply with whatever requirements are laid down by that Department as a condition of claiming benefit. www.welfare.ie.

Full details of the Department of Social and Family Affairs requirements and conditions for making claims are made available at the time of appointment.

Circular 6/95 refers – Revised social insurance status and conditions of service of certain Civil Servants.

Time off to attend certain pre-adoption classes and meetings in the context of arranging foreign adoptions, should be organised through the Department's Personnel Division.

The period of paid Adoptive Leave counts as service in all respects. The period of unpaid additional Adoptive Leave counts as service for promotion, increment, and public holidays but not for remuneration and superannuation purposes.

Circular 2/97 refers – Adoptive Leave

Circular 9/01 refers – Extension of Maternity and Adoptive Leave (as amended by the Adoptive Leave Order 2004)

Circular 30/06 refers – Adoptive Leave Act.

CARER'S LEAVE

Carer's Leave, which is a statutory entitlement under the Carer's Leave Act 2001, allows Civil Servants to take temporary unpaid leave to enable them personally to provide full-time care and attention for a person who is in need of such care. The maximum entitlement to Carer's Leave is two years or one hundred and four weeks.

Carer's Leave may be taken as one continuous period of one hundred and four weeks or, within certain limits, as one or more periods amounting to not more than one hundred and four weeks.

A Civil Servant who wishes to avail of Carer's Leave must have completed at least twelve months continuous service in the Civil Service.

Officers on Carer's Leave will be treated as if they had not been absent from employment: all employment rights will be unaffected during the leave except the right to remuneration, annual leave and public holidays in excess of the initial period of thirteen weeks of Carer's Leave, and superannuation benefits.

Circular 39/05 refers – Carer's Leave sets out the arrangements for Carer's Leave.

FORCE MAJEURE LEAVE (PAID 'EMERGENCY' LEAVE)

Force Majeure Leave means that all Civil Servants have a limited right to paid time off (three days in any period of twelve consecutive months, and five days in any period of thirty six consecutive months) for urgent family reasons owing to accident/illness of an immediate relative, or of a person "in a relationship of domestic dependency". In order to avail of *force majeure* leave, the event must be *urgent & unforeseen*, and the

employee's *immediate* presence with the ill or injured person must be *indispensable*.

Circular 22/98 refers – *Parental Leave* explains the entitlement to Force Majeure Leave which, like Parental Leave, is provided for in the Parental Leave Act 1998, and the Parental Leave (Amendment) Act 2006.

SPECIAL LEAVE

Special Leave is granted to Civil Servants in certain circumstances, subject to work exigencies:

Marriage Leave: allows for up to five days paid leave at the time of marriage provided the total of the Marriage Leave and the annual leave does not exceed twenty six days (General Council Report 1449 refers).

Special Leave at Time of Bereavement: Five days paid leave on the death of spouse or child; three days on the death of an immediate relative; one day for other relatives as defined. *Circular 28/91 Special Leave for Domestic Reasons* refers.

Study and Examination Leave: Five days paid study leave is allowable for all the years of a third level course and paid leave for time spent at examinations and ten days paid study leave in respect of the final year of a third level primary or masters degree. *Circular 23/07 Post Entry Education – Refund of Fees, Study Leave and Examination Leave*.

Leave for civic purposes: A number of days paid leave per year are allowed for:

- instruction in Civil Defence
- training with the Reserve Defence Force
- training or call out with Voluntary Search and Rescue Organisations
- acting as a staff representative or representing Ireland in certain major international sporting events.

Circular 22/62 refers – Special Leave for instruction in Civil Defence.

Circular 51/79 refers – Leave for attendance at training with the Reserve Defence Force.

Circular 15/02 refers – 1 Leave for attendance at training courses with Voluntary Search and Rescue Organisations. 2. Leave for call out to an emergency Search and Rescue.

Circular 09/03/07 L P refers – Special Leave for Sporting Purposes.

Circular 14/1980 refers – Facilities for non full-time representatives of staff associations/union.

Leave for domestic circumstances: Up to six months unpaid leave is available to deal with difficulties arising from the death or serious illness of an immediate relative.

Circular 28/91 refers – Special Leave for domestic reasons.

See also section on Carer's Leave.

Leave to work with the EU or an international organisation: Up to ten years unpaid leave to serve with the EU and up to five years unpaid leave to serve with an international organisation of which Ireland is a member.

Circular 33/91 refers – Special leave without pay to take up an appointment with an institution of the European Communities or other international organisation of which Ireland is a member.

Leave for charitable and humanitarian work: Up to one years unpaid leave for charitable or cultural work in Ireland (*Circular 2/76 refers– Special Leave*), and up to five years for humanitarian emergencies and development work overseas.

Special leave without pay may be given in certain other circumstances at the discretion of the Head of Department/Office. It should be noted however that unpaid leave will not reckon for superannuation purposes. Officers considering applying for special leave should consult their Personnel Division.

TERM TIME

The Term Time Scheme means that Civil Servants who are parents or primary carers may take eight weeks, ten weeks or thirteen weeks of unpaid leave to be with their children (up to eighteen years of age) from June to the end of August or to care for a person living with them who has a disability giving rise to the need for care on a continuous basis, subject to management approval. New entrants on probation may apply for Term Time subject to certain conditions. Applicants should contact their Personnel Division.

The period of Term Time leave will count as service for the purposes of increments and seniority. It will not, however, count for remuneration or superannuation purposes.

Civil Servants participating in the Term Time Scheme may apply for special administrative arrangements for the payment of part of their basic salary during the period of Term Time.

Circular 32/06 refers - Revised Term Time Scheme 2006.

CAREER BREAKS

Under the Career Breaks Scheme, established Civil Servants, who have satisfactorily completed two years continuous service may apply for special leave without pay for a Career Break. Eligible staff may, in general avail of two Career Breaks in the Civil Service. A second Career Break may not be taken until the officer has served for a period equal to the duration of the initial career break. The total period of the special leave should not exceed ten years in all and no one period of absence should exceed five years. The period of a career break will not count as service for promotion, increment or superannuation.

On completion of a Career Break, a Civil Servant will be assigned to the next appropriate vacancy, with a guarantee of re-employment to his/her original grade (although not necessarily in his/her original

Department/Office), within twelve months of the end of the career break.

Circular 18/98 refers – Special Leave without pay for career break, and Amendments to Circular 18/98 dated 03/03/2008 refers.

ATTENDANCE

The Civil Service operates a system of Flexible Working Hours (FWH) in many of its Departments/Offices which is open to all grades up to the grade of Assistant Principal Officer in most Departments/Offices.

The conditioned hours of various grades are set out in individual circulars. Civil Service office hours are from 09.15 to 17.30 Monday to Thursday (17.15 on Friday). Fulltime attendance for Civil Servants is forty one hours gross per week, i.e. inclusive of lunch breaks.

The operation of the system is subject to the work requirements of the Department/Office and it may not always be possible to allow officers the maximum flexibility. Under the Flexible Working Hours System, Civil Servants must work their full quota of hours, but they are given greater flexibility in doing so. For example, staff may within certain limits vary their arrival times, departure times and lunch breaks. Hours that are open to variation in this way are known as “Flexible Working Hours”. Hours when staff are required to be in attendance is known as Core Time and is not open to variation. A typical working day under Flexible Working Hours would be divided as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Flexible Morning Band 08.00-10.00 | Staff may start work anytime during this band. Time worked before 08.00 will not gain credit |
| Morning Core Time 10.00-12.30 | Staff must be present during this period unless on an authorised absence |
| Flexible Lunch Band 12.30-14.30 | Staff must take a minimum lunch break of 30 minutes but the break may be extended to last up to 2 hours |
| Afternoon Core Time 14.30-16.00 | Staff must be present during this period unless on an authorised absence |
| Flexible Evening Band 16.00-19.00 | Staff may finish work anytime during this band. Time worked after 19.00 will not gain credit |

Under the Flexible Working Hours system, Civil Servants are allowed to work up additional time which may subsequently be taken as time off. In order to qualify for time off, for working additional attendance an officer must have built up credit as follows:

- 3 hours 30 minutes (3.5 hours) allows an officer to be absent for one morning core period (or one half day a.m.)
- 3 hours 27 minutes (3.45 hours) allows an officer to be absent for one afternoon core period (or one half day p.m)
- 6 hours 57 minutes (6.95 hours) allows an officer to be absent for one full day.

Officers with enquiries in relation to Flexi Time should consult their respective Personnel Division.



Entrance Hall - Government Buildings, Dublin 2

Overtime (Extra Attendance)

Overtime is pay in respect of extra attendance by staff in grades up to and including Higher Executive Officer.

Extra attendance arrangements vary between grades. For illustration purposes, the arrangements which apply to certain grades during the normal working week are as follows:

Executive Officer, Staff Officer, Clerical Officer, Services Officer

- First 3 hours – rate plus one-quarter (time and a quarter) or time off in lieu at the flat rate
- Next 5 hours – rate plus one-half (time and a half) or time off in lieu at the flat rate
- Thereafter – double rate (double time) or time off in lieu at the flat rate.

Circular 27/99 refers – Extra Attendance.

TRAVEL PASS SCHEME

Under the Finance Act 1999, an employer may incur the expense of providing an employee with an Annual Travel Pass without the employee having to pay tax or PRSI on the salary sacrificed. The Travel Pass Scheme underpins the Government's policy on the wider use of public transport (Bus, Rail, LUAS). Travel Passes are issued annually. The cost of the pass is dictated by the travel options selected. Deductions from salaries are calculated evenly across all pay dates in the tax year. *Circular 50/2001 refers – Travel Pass Scheme for the Civil Service* and is available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

Travel Allowances are paid to officials for travel in a private car on official business, subject to certain conditions, e.g. no suitable public transport is available for the journey.

The travel rates payable vary depending on the number of kilometres travelled in any one year and the engine volume of the car. Subsistence Allowance rates payable are defined in circulars issued periodically by Department of Finance.

All official travel must be approved by management in advance.

The general regulations governing the payment of travel and subsistence allowances are set out in *Circular 11/82 refers – Travelling and Subsistence Regulations* as amended by *Circular 22/05, Subsistence Allowances*. The up to date travel and subsistence rates payable are given in circulars issued periodically by the Department of Finance and are available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

REMOVAL EXPENSES

Removal expenses may, in exceptional circumstances, be paid to Civil Servants permanently transferred on duty from one station to another within the State. Officers being transferred are advised to raise any queries they may have with their respective Personnel Division.

Circular 6/89 refers – Removal Expenses available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie



CHAPTER FOUR

STAFF WELFARE



Entrance Hall - Government Buildings

STAFF WELFARE

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE

The Employee Assistance Service is a work-based support service, designed to assist staff in managing personal difficulties. Left unattended, such difficulties may adversely affect their work performance, attendance and/or their quality of life. Employee Assistance Officers (EAOs) provide a confidential support and referral service to Civil Servants, of all grades, on a wide variety of problems and difficulties arising both within and outside the workplace. This includes:

- Assisting Civil Servants in evaluating and assessing personal difficulties and problems
- Supporting them in planning ways to resolve such difficulties
- Following up with contact and support.

EAOs promote, co-ordinate and disseminate practical advice and information to Civil Servants and management on a wide range of issues relating to health and welfare. EAOs also develop contact with a range of welfare agencies and specialist services outside their Department, and maintain effective liaison with line management and staff on a wide range of issues relating to health and welfare.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Civil Service Policy relating to these matters is set out in *A Positive Working Environment – an anti-Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy for the Civil Service*.

Under the policy every officer has a right to carry out his/her duties free from any form of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying. Civil Servants are expected to treat colleagues with dignity and respect.

An officer who considers that he/she is being harassed, sexually harassed or bullied, and wishes to make a formal complaint should report the matter to their line manager in the first instance. If that is not possible they can approach the Personnel Officer or the Employee Assistance Officer. Complaints are dealt with through informal resolution or, if that is not successful, through mediation or by way of a formal investigation. Civil Servants who are found to have harassed, sexually harassed or bullied other staff may be subject to disciplinary action. *Circular 23/05 refers - A Positive Working Environment: An Anti Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy for the Civil Service* available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

DISCIPLINE

The procedure in the Civil Service for dealing with disciplinary problems is explained in the Disciplinary Code (*Circular 14/06 refers - Civil Service Disciplinary Code* revised in accordance with Civil Service Regulation (Amendment) Act 2005), available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

The objectives of the Disciplinary Code are:

- To ensure that officers against whom allegations are made are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner
- To provide an adequate means by which misconduct, irregularity, neglect, unsatisfactory behaviour and failure to perform duties to an adequate or appropriate standard can be dealt with effectively to ensure that the highest standards of conduct are maintained.

Where it is considered, having followed the Disciplinary Code, that an officer is guilty of misconduct, irregularity, neglect, unsatisfactory

behaviour or underperformance, the Disciplinary Code allows management to propose disciplinary action. The seriousness of the misconduct or the degree of underperformance would generally determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action proposed under the Disciplinary Code may be appealed to the Civil Service Disciplinary Code Appeal Board.

GRIEVANCE

The Grievance Procedure is a process that seeks to deal in a fair, prompt and impartial manner with the complaints of members of staff that are within the scope of the procedure, but are not appropriate for discussion under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme. Procedures for dealing with grievance problems are outlined in

Circular 11/2001 refers - Revised Procedure for dealing with Grievance Problems available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

ALCOHOLISM

Circular 33/84 refers - A Programme to deal with the problem of Alcoholism in the Civil Service outlines the Civil Service Programme for dealing with alcoholism. The objective of the programme, which operates on a confidential basis, is to help the problem drinker:

- identify the problem
- receive appropriate treatment
- return to normal and productive work in the Department/Office.



CHAPTER FIVE

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND MOBILITY

PROMOTION IN THE IRISH CIVIL SERVICE

There are two routes to promotion:

- External via the Civil Service-wide promotion process, and
- Internal via the promotion processes within individual Departments.

EXTERNAL

The recruitment, assessment and selection body for the Civil Service is the Public Appointments Service (PAS). They advertise and arrange:

- Open Competitions
(open to existing Civil Servants and non-Civil Servants)
- Special Open Competitions relating to specific groups
e.g. disabled persons
- Confined competitions which are open to existing
Civil Servants only.

Further information is available on www.publicjobs.ie

INTERNAL

An interview-based system operates for promotion. This comprises of a competency-based competitive interview, for all grades up the level of Principal Officer.

TOP LEVEL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

The selection process for senior appointments at or above Assistant Secretary level or equivalent is conducted by a Top Level Appointments Commission.

Further information in relation to the TLAC is available at www.finance.gov.ie/documents/publications/other/tlacproc.pdf

Circulars 34/96, 32/91, 33/99 and 17/03 refer, available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

STARTING PAY ON PROMOTION

The rules governing starting pay on promotion to a higher grade are set out in Circular 34/77 refers – *Starting Pay on Promotion or Establishment*. Civil Servants promoted through internal confined competitions are entitled to the more favourable of the following:

- a) The minimum point of the new scale.
- b) Pay equivalent to their existing pay, including their accrued increment on the current scale, if any, plus an immediate increment on the new scale.

Civil Servants recruited from external competitions under Public Appointments Service (PAS) are entitled to the more favourable of the following:

- a) The minimum point of the new scale.
- b) Pay equivalent to their existing pay including any accrued increment.

Civil Servants with queries relating to starting pay on promotion should contact their Personnel Division in the first instance.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The Performance Management Development System (PMDS) is a way of describing how a person's individual work performance, career and development needs are managed. PMDS provides a framework for aligning individual and team performance with the goals of the organisation. This is achieved by greater clarity in setting objectives and related performance targets, and by monitoring progress of their achievement. It also provides a context in which the development needs of employees can be addressed.

The annual PMDS cycle comprises of three stages:

- Performance Planning
- Ongoing Management of Performance
- Annual Performance and Development Review.

PERFORMANCE PLANNING

The planning stage involves the employee and manager identifying at the beginning of the year the job's requirements, setting objectives and targets and agreeing a development plan to assist the employee in developing the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to carry out the job. This is recorded on a Role Profile Form.

ONGOING MANAGEMENT OF PERFORMANCE

During this phase a formal opportunity is given to the employee and manager to review how well the performance and development plans set out in the Role Profile Form are actually working, the outcome of this meeting is recorded on an Interim Review Form, mid year.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENTAL REVIEW

The annual PMDS cycle concludes with a formal review by the employee and the manager of achievements over the year. This is recorded on an Annual Review Form. This process involves the manager formally rating the employee's performance. The annual review meeting also provides an opportunity for the jobholder to give feedback to his/her manager.

PMDS ratings are used in decisions relating to the awarding of increments, assignments to higher scales and eligibility for promotion, as well as identifying under-performance.

UPWARD FEEDBACK

Feedback is an integral part of PMDS. Upward Feedback is voluntary from the employee perspective but it is compulsory for the manager to give the opportunity to each employee to engage in the process at each meeting.





TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

The Civil Service is committed to staff development by providing training that is relevant to the strategic objectives of the organisation, and to the career and personal development of staff. Civil Servants are provided with training and development opportunities throughout their career, from an initial induction training through to retirement planning.

The training and development needs of individual members of staff are identified by line managers as part of the yearly Performance Management Development System.

DEPARTMENTAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT UNITS

The role of Training and Development Units within Departments is to meet the training and development needs of the organisation through appropriate formal training events.

Examples of courses include:

- Induction Training
- Assertiveness and Communication
- Negotiating Skills
- Budget Management
- Presentation Skills
- Customer Service
- Project Management
- Health & Safety
- Telephone Skills.

If specialist training is required within an area the Training and Development Units can arrange such training.

CIVIL SERVICE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The Civil Service Training and Development Centre is part of the Department of Finance, with responsibility for coordinating policy in relation to training and development across the Irish Civil Service. It also provides a range of training programmes to enhance competency levels. The courses cover:

- Services and Programmes supporting Civil Service Modernisation
- Leadership and Management Development Programmes
- Technical and Knowledge based Programmes
- Language Development Services.

Further information on CSTDC programmes and course schedules is available at www.training.gov.ie

LANGUAGE TRAINING

The Civil Service Language Centre (CSLC) provides language training in a number of languages, including French, German, Italian, Spanish and Irish Sign Language. The CSLC is part of CSTDC.

Applications for these courses are made through the individual Department Training Units.

Further information on CSLC programmes and course schedules is available at www.training.gov.ie

THE IRISH LANGUAGE

The main legislation governing the use of the Irish language in the Civil Service is the Official Languages Act 2003. The Act provides a statutory framework for the delivery of services through the Irish Language.

The primary objective of the Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of services through Irish.

The Act affects all Departments as follows:

- All Acts of the Oireachtas must be published in each of the Official Languages simultaneously
- Written and oral correspondence received in Irish must be replied to in Irish.

Since 1 January 2007, Irish is recognised as an Official Language of the EU.

Each Department must ensure that there are a sufficient number of fluent officers available to conduct business through Irish when required.

The Civil Service strongly supports and encourages staff to study Irish, especially at Gaeleagras, the body established in 1971 to promote the Irish Language throughout the Civil Service.

In certain circumstances, the Civil Service gives extra credit for proficiency in Irish in promotion competitions.

Circular 43/75 refers – Irish Requirements in the Civil Service,

Circular 30/90 refers – Credit for proficiency in both Irish and English in confined promotion competitions.

TRAINING IN THE IRISH LANGUAGE (GAELEAGRAS)

Gaeleagras na Seirbhíse Poiblí is the Irish Language Training and Promotion body for the Civil Service. Gaeleagras is a constituent part of the CSTDC. In the context of the Quality Customer Service Initiative (under the Strategic Management Initiative) Gaeleagras provides the training required to enable Departments and Officials to offer services through Irish. Gaeleagras also provides training programmes to assist Departments to meet their obligations, under the Official Languages Act, 2003.

Further information on Gaeleagras programmes and course schedules is available at www.gaeleagras.gov.ie.

REFUND OF FEES, STUDY LEAVE AND EXAMINATION LEAVE

As part of its commitment towards the lifelong learning of its staff, the Civil Service also supports employees who wish to participate, in their own time, in relevant courses of study throughout their working careers. This is done under the Refund of Fees, Study Leave and Examination Leave Scheme. This scheme supports employees who participate in such courses by refunding fees, in full or in part. It also grants (limited) paid study and exam leave. The scheme is governed by the Department of Finance guidelines and is overseen by the Training and Development Unit within each Department.

Study and Examination Leave Chapter Three also refers: *Circular 23/07* is available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie.

MOBILITY

There are opportunities within the Irish Civil Service for officers to transfer from their current location to an alternative location, whether for reasons of convenience, promotion, decentralisation or as result of a management decision. Personnel Divisions of Departments will provide full details on request.

E-WORKING OR TELEWORKING

E-working or teleworking is available in most Civil Service Departments. The introduction of E-working is at the sole discretion of management in light of the Department's operational needs.

E-working was introduced on a pilot basis in 2003, and uses information and communication technology to allow employees to work independently of location. Such arrangements can include working:

- either full-time or part-time from home or a remote office
- part-time at home and part-time in the office, or
- outside the home or office, communicating by means of computer or telephone technology.

E-working offers substantial benefits to both management and staff in the Civil Service. For management, the efficient introduction of E-working can reduce overheads, increase productivity and improve the retention of staff. For staff, E-working can improve the work – life balance. It can also give people with a disability better access to employment. Management has the final decision on the introduction of E-working and on sanctioning all E-working applications. Management also has the right to terminate E-working arrangements, at any time. Civil Servants opting for E-working must have successfully completed their probation or the one year assessment contract following appointment.

Circular 4/2003 refers – Pilot schemes to promote E-working in the Civil Service.

CIVIL SERVICE CHILDCARE INITIATIVE

In Budget 2001, money was allocated to provide up to 15 crèches for children of Civil Servants. At present there are six crèches in operation.

Circular 28/2001 refers – Civil Service Childcare Initiative – Scheme Capital Grants.

WORKSHARING

The Civil Service embraces Family Friendly Policies including the operation of a Worksharing Scheme. Under the scheme staff may choose a daily/weekly work pattern which is different from the standard working day/week subject to management approval. All Civil Servants,

including those on probation and subject to certain conditions, may apply to Workshare. The minimum duration for Worksharing is twelve months. In general, worksharers enjoy *pro rata* arrangements with their full-time colleagues, in relation to pay and other conditions of employment.

A person participating in the Worksharing Scheme may take up other paid employment outside the Civil Service, subject to the same conditions that apply to full-time Civil Servants, providing that there is no conflict of interest and that the outside employment does not interfere with the proper performance of Civil Service duties.

Circular 31/01 refers – Civil Service Worksharing Scheme is available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS YEAR OUT

Administrative Officers (AOs) are assigned to a particular Government Department on appointment to the Civil Service. As part of their development they are required to serve in a temporary assignment with another Government Department/Office for a period of not less than one year, and not more than two. Temporary assignments of AOs are arranged by their parent Departments.

Circular 12/1986 refers – Administrative Officers Year Out.

SECONDMENT

Secondment means the transfer, on loan, of a member of staff from their parent Department/Office to another body for a specific period of time, generally to carry out a specific job.

In all cases the decision on secondment is a matter for the parent Department/Office.

DECENTRALISATION

The Decentralisation Programme announced in December 2003 is voluntary and Civil Servants wishing to decentralise to any of the locations listed under the decentralisation programme can register on the Central Applications Facility. This is administered on behalf of the Department of Finance by the Public Appointments Service.

www.decentralisation.gov.ie



Department of Finance, Tullamore, Co. Offaly



CHAPTER SIX

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

THE CIVIL SERVICE IS COMMITTED TO
PROVIDING AN ENJOYABLE,
STIMULATING AND SAFE WORKING
ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL EMPLOYEES IN DIVERSE
LOCATIONS COUNTRYWIDE.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

HEALTH & SAFETY

The main legislation providing for the health and safety of people in the workplace is the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. This Act consolidates and updates the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989. The Act sets out the rights and obligations of both employers and employees and provides for substantial fines and penalties for breaches of the health and safety legislation.

Under the Act both employers and employees have a responsibility to ensure that their work environment is safe. Even though the onus is on the employer to ensure a safe and healthy workplace, it is important that employees also take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

Safety Statement

Each Department/Office is required to have a Safety Statement and Evacuation Plan. A Safety Statement is a documented account of Health and Safety risks that exist in the workplace, together with a strategy to manage and monitor them. It also lists responsible persons and Health and Safety personnel for each area, including Fire Wardens and staff trained in First Aid, along with procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Office Notice 24/2005: *Circular 23/2005 refers – A Positive Working Environment: An Anti Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy for the Civil Service.* The Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) Regulations 2007 refer.

VISUAL DISPLAY UNIT TESTING

In accordance with the Safety and Health at Work General Applications Regulations 2007, all Civil Servants using a Visual Display Unit (VDU) as part of their work are entitled to regular free eye tests. Under *Circular 3/94*, officers under the age of 40 years are entitled to an eye test every five years, and officers over the age of 40 years are entitled to an eye test every two years. In addition, under *Circular 16/99*, where special corrective lenses for VDU users have been prescribed by an optometrist, the Department will recoup part of the cost of unifocal or bifocal lenses.

CHARTER ON DIGNITY IN THE WORKPLACE

The Civil Service recognises the right of all employees to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace and it is committed to ensuring that all employees are provided with a safe working environment which is free from all forms of bullying, sexual harassment and harassment. The Charter on Dignity in the Workplace was introduced in 2004. This is a public commitment to provide a workplace free of bullying, and to develop and maintain a workplace atmosphere where the inherent dignity of each individual is respected. *Circular 23/05 refers - A Positive Working Environment: An Anti-Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy for the Civil Service* available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The Civil Service is strongly committed to equality of opportunity in all its employment practices. Equality of opportunity means that:

- All Civil Servants can be confident that their rights under the Employment Equality Acts are guaranteed and that no one will receive less favourable treatment because of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling community

- All Civil Servants have a responsibility to create a working environment in which differences are respected and in which all people – staff, clients and customers – are valued as individuals
- As an employer the Civil Service strives to achieve real equality of opportunity by continually monitoring its employment practices to ensure that they do not perpetuate existing inequalities.

Circular 24/2002 refers - Diversity in the Civil Service – A Policy on Equality of Opportunity

Circular 42/2001 refers - Gender Equality Policy for the Civil Service

Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004 and Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 refer, available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

CIVIL SERVICE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Civil Service is strongly committed to the development and implementation of improved measures to promote and support the employment of individuals with disabilities.

Through its policies it aims to ensure that such individuals are placed in jobs that are matched to their skills and abilities, and are not disadvantaged by their disability. The Civil Service endeavours to meet the requirements of persons with disabilities so as to maximise access to employment and enable these individuals to make the fullest possible contribution to the work of their Department/Office.

Disability Liaison Officer

All Civil Service Departments/Offices are required to have a Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) whose role is to:

- Act as the point of contact for Civil Servants with disabilities, their managers and Personnel Units
- Assist and support Civil Servants with disabilities, in confidence, and their line managers by providing necessary information, appropriate contacts, guidance, suggestions and advice
- Assist in the implementation of best Human Resource practices in line with equality legislation
- Facilitate increased awareness of disability throughout the organisation
- Attend meetings of the Civil Service Disability Liaison Officers Network.

In addition, the Department of Finance has a Disability Advisory Officer who provides expertise and guidance in the formulation and implementation of policy and practice in this specialised area. All queries concerning disability issues should be addressed to the Disability Liaison Officer. *Circular 18/2004 refers – Career Progression of People with a Disability in the Civil Service*, Office Notice 27/2004 refers – *Disability Liaison Officer, Equality Facilitator*; Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004, Equal Status Act 2000 to 2004, Disability Act 2005 and *Code of Practice for the Employment of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service* refer available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie



CHAPTER SEVEN

TERMINATION OF SERVICE

TERMINATION OF SERVICE

SUPERANNUATION (OCCUPATIONAL PENSION)

As a Civil Servant, membership of the relevant pension scheme is a condition of your employment, unless you have a contract which says otherwise. These schemes provide an Occupational Pension on retirement and/or provide a pension for a spouse and any dependent children on death. There is also provision for a death gratuity in the case of death in service.

Full details of the Civil Service Superannuation Schemes are available on the Irish Civil Service Pensions Information Centre website:

www.cspensions.gov.ie. The section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on this website provides a good overview to the schemes and includes more detailed Handbooks and Guidance Notes as well as a Pensions Modeller, which will help to estimate the benefits payable under the Schemes.

If officers have further queries concerning their superannuation entitlements or the options available to them under the schemes, they should contact their Personnel Division.

Circular 10/2008 refers – Public Service Pensions Reform available on www.cspensions.gov.ie.

RESIGNATION

Resignation is the formal notification by a Civil Servant that he/she is leaving the employment of the Department and the Civil Service.

According to the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts 1973 to 2005, those who have been in continuous employment in the Civil Service for 13 weeks or more must, in general, give not less than

one week's notice of intention to terminate their employment. However, in order to facilitate all the necessary administrative arrangements as much notice as possible should be given, in writing.

If a Civil Servant resigns before reaching pensionable age and has at least two years' pensionable service, their pension entitlements will be "preserved" for them until they reach pensionable age. If they are resigning their position in the Department to take up employment with another public service employer who is part of the Public Service Transfer Network Scheme, arrangements can be made for the transfer of their pensionable service in the Civil Service to their new employer, subject to Department of Finance approval.

Circular 06/07/1983 refers - LP – Notice of retirement or resignation, Circular 30/08/1983 refers - LP – Conditions of Service, Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts 1973 to 2005.

Civil Service Regulation (Amendment) Act 2005 available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie

SHORT SERVICE GRATUITY

A Short Service Gratuity is payable to a person who is retiring on grounds of ill-health before minimum retirement age, with more than one but less than five years reckonable service.

When the person has more than two years qualifying service, they may opt for preserved benefits or the short service gratuity. When the person has more than one year but less than two years service, a short service gratuity is automatically payable.

The short service gratuity is calculated as 1/12th of pensionable remuneration for each year of reckonable service, plus, where service exceeds two years, an additional 3/80ths of pensionable remuneration for each year of reckonable service. Part years of reckonable service are included on a *pro-rata* basis, in the calculation of the short service gratuity.



Four Courts, Dublin

RETIREMENT

Civil Servants recruited before 1 April 2004 must retire at age sixty five. Newer entrants since that date have no compulsory retirement age.

For members serving in the Prison Officer grades the compulsory retirement age is sixty.

For officers approaching retirement age, or considering retirement, pre-retirement courses are provided by the Civil Service Training & Development Centre. Details of this course are available on www.training.gov.ie

Circular 06/07/1983 refers - LP – Notice of retirement or resignation

Circular 30/08/1983 refers - LP – Conditions of Service

Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts 1973 to 2005.

Civil Service Regulation (Amendment) Act 2005 available on www.personnelcode.gov.ie



CHAPTER EIGHT

PARTNERSHIP AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

PARTNERSHIP AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Social Partnership Agreements

Social Partnership Agreements are the result of negotiations and consensus on a National Agreement between the Government, Employers, Trade Unions, Farming Bodies, the Community and the Voluntary Sectors in areas such as annual pay awards, tax reform, housing, planning, training, life-long learning and commitments for the fulfillment of a series of economic and social objectives.

The overall goal of Partnership Agreements (the current agreement “Towards 2016”) is to keep the economy:

- Competitive in a changing world
- Environmentally sustainable
- Efficient through finding and implementing appropriate market and regulatory regimes in different areas
- Socially acceptable.

PARTNERSHIP IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

Partnership in the Civil Service involves the sharing of ideas and decision-making between staff and management in relation to resolving problems and agreeing what is to be done, to the mutual benefit of all concerned.

The key elements of Partnership are:

- an active relationship between all concerned based on a common interest in achieving the strategic goals and objectives of the Department/Office
- commitment by all Civil Servants to improve quality and efficiency
- acceptance by management that the rights and interests of employees, as stakeholders, must be taken into account regarding major decisions affecting their work
- common ownership of the resolution of challenges, involving the direct participation of staff and their representatives; and investment in training, development and the working environment.

Details available on Source

<http://finance.irlgov.ie/Viewprnt.asp?DocID=443&StartDate=01+January+2007>



INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Industrial relations in the Civil Service are dealt with through the Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme. Details are available on the Department of Finance website: www.finance.gov.ie

The Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme provides an acceptable platform for both the State and Civil Servants to deal with claims and proposals relating to Civil Servants pay and conditions of employment. In this respect, the scheme aims to secure the full co-operation of the State, as the employer, and the Civil Servant as the employee for the better discharge of public business.

The union or staff association which holds recognition for a grade, under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme, represents the views of the grade members at this forum. All new recruits to the Civil Service are given the name of the association/union representing their grade and the name of the branch official from whom information about the association/union may be obtained.

The table below displays trade unions/staff associations that are currently recognised to represent grades in the Civil Service.

| Trade Union | Represents | Email Address |
|--|--|--|
| AHCPS Association of Higher Civil & Public Servants | Principal and Assistant Principals | Email: info@ahcps.ie Website: www.ahcps.ie |
| PSEU Public Service Executive Union | Higher Executive and Executive Officers | Email: info@pseu.ie Website: www.pseu.ie |
| CPSU Civil & Public Service Union | Staff Officers and Clerical Officers | Email: headoffice@cpsu.ie Website: www.cpsu.ie |
| IMPACT Irish Municipal Public and Civil Trade Union | Professional and Technical Grades | Email: info@impact.ie Website: www.impact.ie |

Information about the various trade unions/staff associations can be found on their individual websites or directly from the union/association concerned. If an officer decides to join a trade union/staff association he/she will be required to authorise deductions from his/her salary for their union subscription. Membership application forms are available directly from the trade union/staff association concerned.





Department of Finance, Dublin 2



CHAPTER NINE

MISCELLANEOUS

SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUBS

Staff of various Departments, operate Sports and Social Clubs. These clubs organise and support various social, charity and sporting events and activities, which provides an opportunity for staff to socialise. Details of clubs and how to join are available within each Department.

PUBLIC SERVICE FRIENDLY SOCIETY

The Public Service Friendly Society is a non-profit organisation that operates within the Civil Service. It offers confidential independent support for Civil Servants.

Members of the Society pay contributions at a rate of 25c per €100 of basic salary. Using the contributions made by its members, the Society provides financial and finance related assistance to Civil Servants, as well as retired staff and their dependants.

Further information regarding the Society is available at www.psf.s.ie

CIVIL SERVICE CHARITIES FUND

The Civil Service Charities Fund supports selected charitable projects. It was established under the auspices of the Civil Service Unions. It is funded solely by voluntary contributions from Civil Service staff and retired Civil Servants. Decisions regarding projects to be supported are made by a Management Committee.

If you wish to contribute to the Civil Service Charities Fund, forms authorising deductions from your salary are available from the Secretary Committee of Management, Civil Services Charities Fund, 30 Merrion Square, Dublin 2. Or email: generalstaffpanel@eircom.net

COMBINED SERVICES THIRD WORLD FUND

The Combined Services Third World Fund (CSTWF) is a registered charity funded by subscriptions from employees and pensioners in the Civil Service and other agencies. It operates under the patronage of the trade unions and its goal is to promote development projects in Third World countries. Civil Servants can opt to contribute either 0.1% or 0.2% of their salary to the CSTWF.

Further information is available at www.cstwf.ie

CIVIL SERVICE CREDIT UNIONS

A Credit Union has been established specifically for Civil Servants, and members may have their savings instalments and loan repayments deducted directly from their salaries.

Further information is available from the Civil Service Credit Union, St. Stephen's Green House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2.
Telephone: (01) 6622177.



Corridor - Government Buildings

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND APPENDIX

| | |
|--------|---|
| AHCPS | Association of Higher Civil & Public Servants – represents Assistant Principal & Principal Officers |
| AO | Administrative Officer |
| AP/APO | Assistant Principal Officer |
| AVC | Additional Voluntary Contribution |
| CO | Clerical Officer |
| CPSU | Civil and Public Service Union – represents Clerical & Staff Officers |
| CSLC | Civil Service Language Centre |
| CSTDC | Civil Service Training and Development Centre |
| EAO | Employee Assistance Officer |
| EO | Executive Officer |
| FOI | Freedom of Information |
| HEO | Higher Executive Officer |
| HR | Human Resources |
| IMPACT | Irish Municipal Public and Civil Trade Union |
| IT | Information Technology |
| PAC | Public Accounts Committee |
| PAS | Public Appointments Service |
| PMDS | Performance Management and Development System |
| PO | Principal Officer |
| PRSI | Pay Related Social Insurance |
| PSEU | Public Service Executive Union |
| SO | Staff Officer |
| VDU | Visual Display Unit |

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THE CONSTITUTION LEGISLATURE/DIREACHTAS PRESIDENT
OF IRELAND DÁIL ÉIREANN SEANAD ÉIREANN
EXECUTIVE/GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF STATE DÁIL ÉIREANN
THE TAOISEACH THE TÁNAISTE MINISTER FOR FINANCE
JUDICIARY ADMINISTERS JUSTICE THROUGH THE COURTS
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