



Circular Letter 0038/2011

To the Chief Executive Officer of each Vocational Education Committee

Cycle to Work Scheme for VEC Employees

1 INTRODUCTION

The Minister for Education and Science wishes to inform CEOs of the revised terms and conditions for the Cycle to Work Scheme. The scheme will apply to all staff employed by VECs.

Legislation was introduced in the Finance (No. 2) Act 2008 which allows an employer to incur the expense of providing an employee with a new bicycle¹ without the employee being liable for benefit-in-kind taxation. The legislation also permits the benefit-in-kind tax exemption to apply in the context of salary sacrifice, that is, where an employee agreed to forego or sacrifice part of his/her salary in lieu of the provision of new bicycle by the employer. The employee will not pay tax, PRSI, income levy or pension related deduction on the remuneration sacrificed.

The scheme allows an employer to purchase a new bicycle and/or bicycle safety equipment up to a value of €1,000 once every 5 years on behalf of an employee.

A guidance note on the scheme including a series of Questions and Answers provided by the Revenue Commissioners can be found at: <http://www.revenue.ie/en/practitioner/law/bik-exemption-for-bicycles.pdf>

The scheme applies only to new bicycles and bicycle safety equipment purchased from approved suppliers. [A list of suppliers is available on the OPW web site at <http://www.opw.ie/en/OurBusinessUnits/GovernmentSuppliesAgency/Cycle-to-WorkScheme/>.

2 REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHEME

Salary sacrifice by an employee in respect of the bicycle will be acceptable to the Revenue Commissioners as being effective for tax purposes under the following conditions:

1. There must be a bona fide and enforceable alteration to the terms and conditions of employment, i.e. exercising a choice of benefit instead of salary.
2. The alteration must not be retrospective and must be evidenced in writing.
3. There must be no entitlement to exchange the benefit for cash;
4. The choice exercised (i.e. benefit instead of cash) cannot be made more frequently than once in a five-year period
5. The choice exercised must be irrevocable for the relevant year for which it is made.

The salary sacrifice will have no impact on pension contributions or on pension benefits.

¹ The scheme also applies to safety equipment relating to cycling.

3 APPLICATION FOR THE SCHEME

Individuals wishing to avail of the Cycle to Work Scheme are required to:

1. Read and agree to the conditions governing the scheme (Appendix 3).
2. Complete an Application Form (Appendix 1) which outlines the **bicycle and/or bicycle safety equipment** to be purchased.
3. Sign the Salary Deduction Authorisation Form (Appendix 2 which sets out the salary sacrifice for the items requested, i.e. the **total cost** of the bicycle and/or bicycle safety equipment as stated on the invoice

Applications may be submitted to the administration office in the appropriate VEC at any time during the year.

The Department recommends that, if possible, the forms were made available to staff on the each VEC's website.

The application must be completed in conjunction with the supplier. It will contain information on the new bicycle/cycle safety equipment supplied and the details of the supplier. The supplier must attach the relevant invoice. The supplier must also accept that the payment from the VEC will be made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) only.

4. SALARY DEDUCTION

The Salary Deduction Authorisation Form sets out the salary sacrifice for the items requested. The following criteria should be noted regarding the deductions from salary:

1. Salary deductions will commence from salary on the earliest possible salary payment date following receipt of the application form.
2. All salary deductions **must** be completed by the last payroll in November of the calendar year in which they commence.
3. An employee may opt to complete the salary deductions over a shorter period.
4. When an employee is scheduled to come off the payroll on a date before November of the year they apply for the scheme, the entire salary sacrifice must be recovered by their last salary payment.

Once the salary deduction arrangements have been put in place, the bicycle / cycle safety equipment may be collected from the supplier. The employee should be notified in writing when the deductions will commence.

5. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

You are requested to bring the contents of this Circular to the attention of all staff in your VEC. This circular can be accessed on the Department of Education and Skills web page: www.education.ie.

6. QUERIES

Queries regarding the operation of this scheme should be directed by email to the VEC Financial and Administrative Personnel Section at: financialvec@education.gov.ie.

7. PREVIOUS CIRCULAR

This circular supersedes circular 0051/2010.

M. Ryan.
Principal Officer.
VEC Financial and Administrative Personnel
June 2011

**Cycle to Work Scheme
Application Form**

To: Cycle to Work Scheme
Enter VEC address

Please clearly mark envelope "Cycle to Work Scheme"

Please circle as appropriate:

Current post: Teacher or Non teaching staff

1 Employee Personnel Details

Name: *(as on payslip)* _____

Home Address _____

Contact Telephone No. _____ School roll number _____

PPS No.: *(as on payslip)*

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Payroll No.: *(as on payslip)*

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2 Supplier details

Supplier Name _____ VAT Number _____

Supplier's Bank details for EFT Payment:

Bank Account No.

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Bank Sort Code

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Bank Name & Address _____

Please ensure that the bank account is within the Republic of Ireland and will support the Electronic Money Transfer System.

3 Details of Bicycle /Cycle Equipment Ordered

Goods	Description	Price inclusive of VAT
Bicycle		
Cycle helmet conforming to European standard EN1078		
Bells and bulb horn		
Lights including dynamo packs		
Mirrors and mudguards		
Cycle clips and dress guards		
Panniers, luggage carriers and straps		
Locks and chains		
Pumps, puncture repair kits, cycle tool kits and tyre sealant		
Reflective clothing along with white front reflectors and spoke reflectors		
<u>Total</u>		

Attach Invoice For Bicycle /Cycle Equipment of Total Ordered.

**Cycle to Work Scheme
Salary Deduction Authorisation Form**

I hereby authorise a salary sacrifice of €_____ as per invoice of my annual basic salary in lieu of the provision of new bicycle/cycle safety equipment by *enter name of VEC* VEC. I realise that this arrangement will operate until the salary sacrifice has been recouped and that the deductions will be reflected in my pay slips over one of the periods below (please indicate your selected deduction period):

Start date to November	
Start date to August*	
Start date to _____(please specify)	

* August in the case of applicants employed under a fixed term or regular part time contract due to expire in August.

I declare that the bicycle / cycle safety equipment supplied under this scheme is for my personal use and will be used primarily for qualifying journeys, i.e. journeys to or from work and/or between places of work and that such use is subject to any rules or conditions that are in force concerning the operation and use of the equipment.

I understand that I should use the bicycle in line with all rules and regulations as set out by the Road Safety Authority (RSA) and make use of proper cycle safety equipment at all times.²

I have read and I agree to Cycle-to-Work Scheme conditions and circular 0038/2011.

I certify that I have entered into an agreement with the supplier named in the invoice that they will supply me with the bicycle / cycle safety equipment as per the invoice submitted.

Where the supplier's bank account is not based in the Republic of Ireland there may be an additional nominal fee to facilitate the payment to the supplier by the Electronic Money Transfer System, which will be included in the salary sacrifice figure.

NAME _____
BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

PPSN _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

² Please see RSA web site <http://www.rulesoftheroad.ie/rules-for-pedestrians-cyclists-motorcyclists/index.html>

Data Protection

Name of VEC will treat all personal data you provide on this form as confidential and will use it solely for the purpose intended. The information will only be disclosed as permitted by law or for the purposes listed in the VEC's registration with the Data Protection Commissioner - REF 10764/A

If the information you have provided is to be used for purposes other than outlined in the VEC's registration with the DPC your permission will be sought.

Cycle to Work Scheme Conditions

1. The applicant must be employed in a Permanent, Contract of Indefinite Duration (C.I.D), fixed term, or Regular Part Time capacity at the date of application. The employment must be capable of lasting until the salary sacrifice has been recouped. It is not possible for casual or non casual employees to avail of the scheme.
2. The employee must sacrifice or forego part of his/her annual basic salary in lieu of the provision of new bicycle/cycle safety equipment by the VEC. This arrangement will operate until the salary sacrifice has been recouped and this will be reflected in his/her pay slips over that period.
3. The new bicycle/cycle safety equipment acquired under the scheme must be used primarily for the purpose of transport to or from work and/or traveling between work places.
4. When purchasing a new bicycle, the employee must be aware that the National Safety Authority of Ireland implements on behalf of the European Commission certain bicycle safety standards. Bicycles that comply with such standards are presumed to comply with the EU General Product Safety Directive 2001/96/EC which lays down an obligation on producers to place safe products on the market. The relevant standards are;
I.S. EN14764:2006 - city and trekking bikes,
I.S. EN14766:2006 – mountain bikes,
I.S. EN14781:2006 – racing bicycles.
More information on these matters can be accessed at <http://www.nsai.ie>
5. The employee will not be able to cease his or her participation in the scheme prior to the expiry of the salary sacrifice arrangement, except in cases of termination of employment. Where employment is terminated before the expiration of the salary sacrifice arrangement, the employee must pay the balance due to the VEC, which may be deducted from any outstanding payment due in termination of the employment. Where this is not possible, it may be then necessary for the VEC to recover the balance due from the employee.
6. Participation in the scheme will be limited to once in each five-year period. Accordingly any person who availed of the scheme in 2010 under the terms of Circular 0063/2009 cannot re-apply in 2011.
7. The scheme applies only to new bicycle/cycle safety equipment purchased from approved providers. A full list of providers is available from the OPW website: <http://www.opw.ie/en/OurBusinessUnits/GovernmentSuppliesAgency/Cycle-to-WorkScheme/>.
8. The payment for the bicycle / cycle safety equipment will be made to the supplier by the VEC. It will be a requirement of the scheme for participating suppliers that all warranties relating to the bicycle/bicycle safety equipment will be for the benefit of the employee and all issues arising in relation to the warranties will remain between the employee and the supplier.
9. The processing of applications will only commence after the closing date for each application option. At the time of purchasing the bicycle or safety equipment the supplier should be advised that payment will only issue subsequent to the closing date.

10. The employee acknowledges that the VEC is not responsible or liable for the security, disposal, maintenance, repair and use of the bicycle or bicycle safety equipment.
11. The VEC accepts no responsibility for misuse of bicycles or equipment by the employees and asserts that bicycles and bicycle safety equipment acquired by virtue of the scheme are strictly non transferable.