

Reference No: E109/130/34; **Date:** 22/03/84

Circular 6/1984:- Private Secretaries and Confidential Clerical Assistants

A Dhuine Uasail

I am directed by the Minister for the Public Service to say that he has decided for convenience of reference to issue the following up-to-date and comprehensive instructions concerning private secretaries and confidential Clerical Assistants.

A Private Secretaries and Confidential Clerical Assistants to Ministers and Ministers of state

2. The persons selected to act as private secretaries should be drawn from the grades of Executive Officer, Higher Executive Officer or Administrative Officer. In no case should the officer be of a grade with a maximum salary in excess of that of the grade of Administrative Officer. Confidential Clerical Assistants should, of course, be drawn from the Clerical Assistant (Typist) grade.

3. The current rate of allowances (additional to normal salary) payable to a private secretary and to a confidential Clerical Assistant are £3,293 a year and £5.40 a week, respectively.

4. When a Minister or Minister of State vacates office, the private secretary and confidential Clerical Assistant may, provided they have served for at least one year in that capacity, be paid the full amount of their allowances for a further period not exceeding one month.

5. Officers who are promoted while serving as private secretaries should take up the duties of their new posts as soon as possible. The transfer of a promoted private secretary may, however, be deferred for a period not exceeding three months where this is necessary for the efficient discharge of the work of the private office.

B Private Secretaries to Heads of Departments

6. Private Secretaries to Heads of Departments should, as far as possible, be drawn from the grades of Clerical Officer, Executive Officer, Higher Executive Officer or Administrative Officer. In no case should the officer be of a grade with a maximum salary in excess of that of the grade of Administrative Officer. The current rate of the allowance which may be paid, in addition to the normal salary, is £1,743 a year.

C Provisions applicable to A and B

7. All of these allowances will attract any future general increases in allowances in the nature of pay.

8. The allowances payable to private secretaries include payment for all extra duties and expenses attaching to the post. In no case, therefore, should payment be made to a Private secretary for extra attendance.

9. Subject to what follows, the allowances will be temporary. Allowances held at the date of retirement will, for pension purposes, be dealt with in accordance with paragraph 2(b) of Circular 24/73 (Allowances in the Nature of Pay).

10. When the appointment of a private secretary or confidential Clerical Assistant is terminated otherwise than (a) as a disciplinary measure or (b) in consequence of the officer's promotion, a "special addition" to salary may be granted of an amount equal to either one half or one quarter of the allowance

received as private secretary or confidential Clerical Assistant. To qualify for the retention of half the allowance the officer must have served as private secretary or confidential Clerical Assistant for at least one year. To qualify for the retention of quarter the allowance the officer must have served in such a capacity for at least six months.

11. This "special addition" is not affected by the officer's progression along the incremental scale and it may be increased in line with any subsequent general increases in allowances in the nature of pay. The amount of the addition shall not, however, exceed the difference between the maximum of the scale of the grade in which the officer is serving and the maximum of the scale of the grade to which the officer is promotable in the normal course. Where the amount of a "special addition" is being calculated for purposes of applying the provisions of paragraph 5(2)(i) of Circular 34/77, such amount should not exceed the difference between the maximum of the scale of the grade in which the officer is serving and the maximum of the scale of the grade to which the officer is promoted.

12. The following arrangements will apply to an officer who has been granted a special addition to pay in accordance with paragraphs 10 and 11 and is still benefiting in pay from the special addition.

(a) If later appointed to a post as private secretary or confidential Clerical Assistant, the normal allowance for such appointment and any special addition to pay which, in accordance with paragraphs 10 and 11, might otherwise be granted on termination of that allowance, will be reduced by the amount of the pensionable addition which is still reflected in pay.

(b) If later appointed to any other post carrying an allowance, the normal allowance payable in respect of such post will be reduced by the amount of the pensionable addition which is still reflected in pay: on subsequent termination of the appointment no part of the allowance so reduced will be added to the officer's substantive salary.

(c) If promoted at any time subsequently, the terms of paragraph 5(1) and (3) of Circular 34/77 will apply.

13. If an officer who has acted as private secretary or confidential Clerical Assistant for not less than six months is promoted while so acting, the terms of paragraph 5(2) of Circular 34/77 will apply.

14. The second sentence of paragraph 8 in Circular 34/77 no longer applies.

E Previous Circulars

15. Circulars 8/76 and 11/79 are superseded accordingly.

Mise le meas
William P Smith