



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

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Circular 29/2001: Competition for Promotion to Executive Officer in the Legal Aid Board

A Dhuine Uasail

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to say that in accordance with the Government's decentralisation programme most of the posts in the Head Office of the Legal Aid Board will be transferring to new offices in Cahirciveen, County Kerry.
2. A contract for the building of a new office in Cahirciveen, to accommodate Head Office staff of the Legal Aid Board, has recently been signed and it is envisaged that the office will be ready for occupation during the Spring of 2002. In the interim, the Board has obtained temporary office accommodation in Cahirciveen to facilitate the gradual transfer of some Head Office functions to that location over the coming months. This latter accommodation is currently being prepared for occupation by the Board with a view to relocating some Head Office sections to Cahirciveen during the second half of the current year.
3. There will be a number of vacancies arising in the Legal Aid Board at Executive Officer level as a result of the relocation to Cahirciveen. Accordingly, the Legal Aid Board will hold a confined competition to set up a panel from which appointments as Executive Officer will be made. Prospective candidates should note that, if they are offered an appointment, as result of the forthcoming competition, it is likely that they will be initially located in Dublin for the purposes of training and familiarisation with the work of the Board. The assignment of successful candidates to particular sections will be entirely at the discretion of the Legal Aid Board and transfers to Cahirciveen can take place any time from July 2001 onwards. The timing of such transfers will depend primarily on (i) the progress made with the preparation of accommodation for occupation by the Board and (ii) whether the sections to which successful candidates are assigned within the Board's Head Office are due to relocate to Cahirciveen during the current year. Prospective candidates should also note that removal expenses will not be payable.

Eligibility

4. The Civil Service is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

To/All departments, etc

5. Candidates for promotion to Executive Officer must :-

(a) on the date they apply for the competition be serving in an established capacity in the civil service, or on secondment to FAS from the civil service, in the grades of Staff Officer (General Service) or Clerical Officer (General Service). Previous service in the following grades will count as Clerical Officer service for the purposes of this competition:

- * Clerical Assistant (General Service) on clerical, shorthand-typing, typing or data entry duties, including previous service as Writing Assistant, Shorthand Typist, Clerk Typist,
- * Typist, Card Puncher or Key-Punch Operator
- * Departmental Clerical Officer (Customs & Excise)
- * Assistant Officer of Customs and Excise
- * Departmental Clerical Assistant (Customs and Excise)
- * Departmental Clerical Assistant (Taxes)
- * Paperkeeper

and

(b) on 1 June 2001 have not less than two years' service in eligible grades.

6. Officers on probation are not eligible to compete except where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and they have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a period of probation (periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose).

7. Officers on special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. Officers on special leave without pay (e.g. to serve with the EU) may be eligible; Personnel Sections should check cases not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91 with this Department. Officers on career break may apply if their career break conforms with the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible.

The competition

8. Selection will be by means of a competitive interview conducted by the Legal Aid Board. The interview board may, having examined the applications of all candidates, decide that a number only of the candidates will be invited to attend before the board for interview. In addition the board may, at its discretion, require candidates to undergo a preliminary interview and invite only those who reach the requisite standard to attend for competitive interview to select the candidates best qualified for appointment.

9. In determining the order of merit, at the competitive interview, the Legal Aid Board will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English in accordance with Circular 30/90 and Circular 43/75, to candidates qualified for the award of such credit on or before the date of the interview.

Applications

10. Candidates should obtain their application forms from the Personnel Section of their serving department; the Legal Aid Board will supply forms to Personnel Sections on request. Candidates should submit **four** copies of their completed application forms, each with a small passport photograph, through his/her own Personnel Section, to the **Personnel Officer, Legal Aid Board, St. Stephen's Green House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2.**

11. Completed application forms along with a duly completed Assessment Form **must** reach the Personnel Officer of the Legal Aid Board by **Wednesday 30 May 2001** at the latest. This closing date must be strictly observed. If there are no applications from a Department or Office a "nil" return should be forwarded.

12. The Head of the Department **should not send forward** candidates' applications unless satisfied that the candidates

- have been satisfactory and worked well in their present grade,
- have been satisfactory in general conduct,
- fulfil the conditions of eligibility specified in this Circular,

Health and Sick Leave

13. Eligibility to compete, and health and the level of sick leave, will not be verified by the Legal Aid Board until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. So admission to the competition and placement on a panel do not imply that a candidate meets the health and sick leave criteria. In considering a candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Legal Aid Board will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76, as amended by Department of Finance Circulars 32/91 and 33/99. Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

Conditions of Appointments

14. Officers who are placed on the panel and who are subsequently offered appointment will be required to take up duty on the date as directed by the Legal Aid Board. Otherwise the post cannot be assured. It will be a condition of the offer of appointment that successful candidates will be expected (if not further promoted elsewhere) to remain in Cahirciveen for at least three years from the date of taking up duty in that location.

15. Candidates offered promotion to Executive Officer will be appointed on an acting basis for at least one year. Starting pay on promotion will be in accordance with Circular 34/77 and any relevant subsequent instructions governing promotions to Executive Officer level. Officers who reject an offer of appointment will be ineligible to be considered for any future appointments that might arise from this competition.

16. An officer whose service is not satisfactory may, at any time up to the end of the acting period, be returned to his/her former Department in his/her former grade. In the event of this occurring, any additional salary, arising from appointment to the Executive Officer grade, will cease on the date of such return.

17. Offers of appointment will be contingent on the acceptance by candidates of the conditions set out in paragraph 3 of this Circular. **In the event of a successful candidate subsequently declining to relocate to, or remain in the decentralised location for the period specified in paragraph 14, s/he will have no entitlement to remain in the new grade.**

Circulation

18. Personnel Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their departments and associated offices without delay, including officers on maternity leave, career break and other relevant forms of leave. If candidates have any queries about the circular they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed to the Legal Aid Board.

Mise le meas,

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary