

P18/074/05

29 March 2006

Circular 3/2006: Civil Service Pension Schemes

Extension of time limit for option for access outlined in Circular 20/2005, and clarification of revised pension arrangements for part-time service

A Dhuine Uasail,

I am directed by the Minister for Finance to refer to this Department's Circular of 20/2005 regarding revised arrangements for part-time staff in the public service.

1. Extension of time limit on option for access

Paragraph 33 of Part B of Circular 20/2005 outlines the arrangements to apply regarding the option for access to the Civil Service Pension Schemes for part-time staff.

It has become apparent that notifying part-time staff of their options under the Circular is taking longer than envisaged. In light of this and in order to give staff sufficient time to consider the options involved, the time limit for the exercise of the option for access is now being extended.

Accordingly, the option of access to the Civil Service Pension Schemes offered on foot of paragraph 27 of Circular 20/2005 will now be available until **Monday 2 October 2006**. Departments should note that no further extension will be considered. The time limits set out in paragraphs 33 and 41 of Circular 20/2005 regarding the payment of 'back' contributions are not affected and will remain available until 31 December 2007.

2. Clarification regarding two issues:

(a) Spouses and Children's Scheme membership

The option for access outlined in paragraph 27 of Circular 20/2005 relates to membership of the relevant Main Pension Scheme (i.e. the Civil Service Pension Scheme for Established Civil Servants or the Non-Contributory Pension Scheme for Non-Established State Employees). Membership of the relevant associated Spouses and Children's Pension Scheme is compulsory for all staff who avail of the option for admission to the Main Pension Scheme.

(b) Reckoning of prior part-time service by full-time staff

Part C of Circular 20/2005 outlines the arrangements for the reckoning of prior part-time service served prior to 20 December 2001. It is hereby confirmed that these terms can also be applied, with effect from 20 December 2001, to the reckoning of prior part-time service by full-time staff.

3. Circulation

Departments are asked to bring this Circular to the attention of all staff.

4. Queries

Any cases of doubt or difficulty arising in connection with this Circular should be referred in writing by Personnel Sections to Ms Joan Connaughton, Pensions Section, Department of Finance, 73-79 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2 (e-mail : joan_connaughton@finance.gov.ie). **Queries from individual**

staff members should be directed to the Personnel Sections of their own Department/Office in the first instance.

Mise le meas

John O'Connell

Assistant Secretary