

**Circular 11/2016**

**Interdepartmental Competition for Employee Assistance Officer  
in the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service  
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform**

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to say that the Public Appointments Service (PAS) will be holding an interdepartmental competition for the full-time post of Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) in the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS). It is envisaged the first vacancy will be in Cork.
2. Future vacancies arising in any of the CSEAS office locations (outlined at para 4 below) may be filled from the panel of suitable candidates resulting from this competition. *It is not envisaged that appointments will be made from this competition after 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018.* Candidates will be asked to indicate their location preferences in order of preference, on the application form. A candidate who refuses an offer of appointment to a location will not be considered further for that location but may remain eligible for consideration for appointment to their other preferred locations. Acceptance of a position will automatically eliminate a candidate from being considered for positions in other selected regions. Candidates should be aware that vacancies may not arise in all of the locations while the panel is active.
3. Officers appointed to CSEAS positions based outside Dublin may be required to undergo a preliminary training period in Dublin.
4. **CSEAS Headquarters and Regional Locations**  
CSEAS headquarters is located in Dublin, with regional hubs in Castlebar, Cork, Limerick, Sligo and Tullamore.
5. **Background**  
The CSEAS is a centralised service within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), with a number of regional offices. It is a key element of the Human Resource (HR) structure in the Civil Service, and supports the employer's duty of care for its employees' welfare under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

It is a staff support service for civil servants, which plays a key role in promoting employee wellness and organisational effectiveness. The CSEAS augments and supplements the work of HR Divisions and line management. Working with HR Divisions, the CSEAS aims

to assist in HR strategies to maintain/enhance performance, minimise sick leave absences and provide help in return to work interventions. The CSEAS also has a role to play in Civil Service policies that address dignity at work and the fostering of a positive working environment, alcohol and drug misuse, managing underperformance and managing sick leave. Confidential<sup>1</sup> assistance is provided to staff and management across the Civil Service which aims to assist staff in managing work and/or life difficulties which, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance. Provision of a service of this nature arises from a recognition that staff are a valued resource, whose continued well-being contributes to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Civil Service. Further information on the CSEAS can be found at [www.cseas.per.gov.ie](http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie)

While the use of active listening skills is core to the job, the CSEAS is not a counselling service.

## **6. CSEAS Structure**

EAOs appointed will report to the CSEAS Manager who oversees the day-to-day running of the Service. The line management structure is within DPER.

Governance is provided by the CSEAS Advisory Committee (AC) whose role is:

- To advise on and approve the overall strategy for CSEAS policy development
- To review and advise on the operation and effectiveness of the CSEAS.

## **7. Role of the Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) in the CSEAS**

The work of the EAO in a modern, dynamic, effective and high quality employee assistance service includes:

- Undertaking the full range of duties necessary to provide a confidential<sup>1</sup> employee assistance support and referral service to Civil Servants, line management and HR Divisions on a wide variety of issues arising in the psychosocial area, including personal and/or work-related issues, thus contributing to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Civil Service.
- Providing one to one support in relation to a wide range of work-related and/or personal challenges such as interpersonal difficulties at work, health and mental health issues, financial problems, addiction, bereavement, etc.
- Managing case-loads appropriately, while delivering on other duties.
- Working in a line management structure, and effectively balancing working as part of a team while operating on an individual basis in the day-to-day delivery of service.
- Developing and maintaining contacts with a range of specialist services and welfare agencies.
- Co-ordinating and disseminating practical advice and information to staff and management on a wide range of issues, both in written format and through making presentations to staff groups.
- Participation in required CPD programmes.

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<sup>1</sup>See para 15 below on confidentiality and exceptions to this

- Active participation in the CSEAS communications strategy and business development work, and undertaking other relevant work as may be assigned by the CSEAS manager.
- Undertaking official travel as required - the extent of travel required will vary depending on the geographical spread of the Department(s)/Office(s) for which the EAO is responsible and the requirements of management, and will include attendance at CSEAS Head Office in Dublin on a monthly basis for team business meetings, peer support sessions and other business activities as may arise.
- Undertaking work which does not always conform to normal working hours.
- Compliance with Circular 26/04: Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour, in particular paragraph 14 of the Code - Conflicts of interest, available to view at <http://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/finance/2004/26.pdf> and adherence to the current Civil Service Employee Assistance Service – Code of Practice for Employee Assistance Officers available to view on the CSEAS website [www.cseas.per.gov.ie](http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie).

## 8. Eligibility

Candidates applying for this competition must

- a) be serving in an established, unestablished or acting (see para 9.i) below) capacity in the Civil Service in a grade equivalent to or below that of Higher Executive Officer,
- b) on or before the closing date of 23rd June, 2016 have not less than two years' service in the Civil Service. Unestablished officers and officers serving in an acting capacity in the eligible grades may compete in the competition provided they fulfil the eligibility requirements set out above,
- c) fulfil the requirements in respect of health and sick leave as set out in Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 12/2015,
- d) PMDS Rating  
have received a minimum PMDS rating in their 2015 end of year review evaluation of at least "Fully Achieved Expectations",
- e) Be suitable in terms of work performance and general conduct.

In considering a successful candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Public Appointments Service will have regard to the relevant Department of the Public Expenditure and Reform Circulars. Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

The Public Appointments Service will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates under consideration at the latter stages of the selection process. Personnel Officers will be required to certify a candidate's suitability for consideration with regard to

- performance of work in the present grade;
- verification that the candidate has received an evaluation of at least "Fully Achieved Expectations" at PMDS End-of-Year Review;
- general conduct;
- health, especially sick leave.

- f) Demonstrate that they possess the qualifications, skills and competencies identified at paragraph 11, 12 and 13 below.
  - g) Where an officer was acting or serving on a Fixed-Term contract and was subsequently appointed in a substantive capacity, eligibility may be based on the aggregate service, e.g. six months in an acting capacity or on contract and eighteen months in a substantive capacity, can be aggregated to give two years' service. For the purpose of deciding eligibility, officers must be serving on the closing date of **23rd June, 2016**.
  - h) Officers on probation are not eligible to compete except where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade. Periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose.
  - i) Grades equivalent to the Higher Executive Officer grade (i.e. salary scales are less than or equal to the HEO max) are **eligible to compete in this promotion competition**.
9. Officers on special leave with pay may apply if otherwise eligible. Officers on career-break may apply if their career break conforms to the terms of Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 04/2013 and if they are 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 33/1991 with this Department.

## 10. Essential Qualifications, Skills and Requirements for the Role of EAO/HEO in the CSEAS.

Candidates should have the following:

- A recognised third level qualification at minimum level 7<sup>2</sup> on the National Framework of Qualifications in a relevant discipline related to employee assistance such as Psychology, Counselling, Psychotherapy, Employee Assistance or Social Work.
- Relevant work and/or voluntary experience, within the last 5 years supporting adult users of one-to-one services in managing psychosocial challenges that might impact on the workplace (for example workplace interpersonal issues, substance abuse, bereavement, financial problems, mental health issues, stress, relationship and domestic problems)<sup>3</sup>.
- Proven experience which demonstrates the administrative and organisational skills required to operate at Employee Assistance Officer/Higher Executive Officer (HEO) level in the Civil Service, e.g. managing workloads, budgets and resources; project work; planning and organising; use of IT skills.
- A thorough understanding and appreciation of the role of the EAO in the CSEAS.

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<sup>2</sup> It will be the responsibility of candidates to provide evidence of the NFQ level 7 recognition in relation to the qualification(s) listed

<sup>3</sup> In assessing a candidate's experience at shortlisting the board will take account of the duration of experience, the context in which the applicant has gained the experience, and the range of issues involved.

- Good interpersonal skills including the capacity to empathise with others and their situations and circumstances, while using an objective and non-directive approach.
- Active listening skills and the ability to adapt one's approach and style as required to each individual situation.
- An ability to remain calm and exercise sound judgement taking account of the wider environment.
- Proven ability in displaying initiative and efficiency in setting priorities and balancing demands.
- An aptitude for communicating effectively, in particular for developing relationships of trust and confidence.
- A high level of proficiency in delivering presentations.
- Proven resilience, self-reliance and self-motivation in managing challenging situations.
- An ability to quickly learn and acquire the knowledge required for the job.
- A high level of proficiency in MS Office applications.
- A full clean driving licence (Category B) and use of own vehicle.

#### **11. Desirable Criteria**

Additional relevant qualification(s) or training, including continuous skill development, which demonstrates a commitment to ongoing professional development, in areas specifically related to the EAO role, e.g. psychology, counselling skills, psychotherapy, employee assistance.

#### **12. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they possess the skills and competencies for the role.** The competency framework is as follows:

- Team Working
- Judgement & Decision Making
- Management & Delivery of Results
- Interpersonal & Communication Skills
- Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values
- Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development.

See Appendix 1 for full details on these competencies.

#### **13. Probity**

EAOs are subject to the provisions of Circular 26/04; Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour as stated; particular, paragraph 14 of the Code relating to conflicts of interest which prohibits civil servants from engaging in or being 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 tend to impair their ability to carry out their duties as civil servants.

In accordance with the Code of Standards and Behaviour, EAOs must not engage in private practice which could reasonably be deemed by management to be in any way related to the Employee Assistance Profession.

Where referral to outside agencies is under consideration, EAOs must remain impartial and not refer service users to private professional practitioners or suggest private services with which the EAO or other CSEAS staff may have a personal or business relationship.

EAOs in the CSEAS occupy a 'designated position' under the Ethics in Public Office Acts which requires the disclosure of any interests held.

#### **14. Confidentiality**

EAOs must comply with CSEAS confidentiality requirements. Information and personal data disclosed by service users to the CSEAS remain confidential (exceptions are listed below) and will not be disclosed to a third party outside of the CSEAS without the prior knowledge and consent of the individual. This is in keeping with normal professional standards in relation to confidentiality.

##### **Exceptions to Confidentiality**

- Life-threatening situations to the individual, other parties or the public.
- Where there is a statutory responsibility to report.
- Where required by a court or legal process to do so.
- Where non-disclosure of information could compromise the CSEAS.
- Where the CSEAS becomes aware of a breach in criminal law, disclosure may be necessary.

#### **15. Principal Conditions of Service**

The appointment is to an established post in the Civil Service and is subject to the Civil Service Regulations Acts 1956 to 2005, the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil Service.

##### **Pay**

The Higher Executive Officer (HEO) Standard Salary scale will apply to this position.

##### **Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) Pay Rate:**

The salary for this position, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 is as follows:

**€46,081,            €47,458,            €48,831,            €50,204,            €51,581,            €52,955,**

**€54,329 (NMAX), €56,314 (LSI1), €58,294 (LSI2)**

This rate will apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 and is required to make a personal pension contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3 (LSI1) and 6 (LSI2) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

### **Non-Personal Pension Contribution (Non-PPC) Pay Rate**

The salary scale for the position with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 is as follows:

€43,816,            €45,125,            €46,426,            €47,730,            €49,035,            €50,347,  
€51,653 (NMAX), €53,532 (LSI1), €55,415 (LSI2)

This rate will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 who **is not required** to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3 (LSI1) and 6 (LSI2) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

### **Important Note**

Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy. (See Haddington Road Agreement paragraph 2.19.)

### **Allowance**

The post of EAO attracts an allowance, additional to pay, as follows: €5,803 per annum for officers on Non PPC scale and an allowance €6,108 per annum for officers who are making a Personal Pension Contribution and are on the PPC Scale. In the event that officers are to be redeployed from the CSEAS, to another part of the public service at HEO level in accordance with the Civil Service mobility policy in place at the time this allowance ceases.

### **Hours of attendance**

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time but will amount to not less than 43 hours 15 minutes gross per week. The successful candidate will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations. The rate of remuneration payable covers any extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

### **Conditions of Appointment**

Appointment to the post of EAO/HEO in the Civil Service will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. On appointment the appointee will serve a one-year probationary period in the post EAO/HEO. Prior to the end of this probationary period a decision will be made on substantive appointment to the position of EAO/HEO. Where an appointee is made substantive, that officer will be expected to serve in the CSEAS for at least five years from date of appointment, subject to ongoing satisfactory performance in the EAO/HEO role. Appointment to the CSEAS will be subject to review at the end of the five-year period. In the event that officers are to be assigned elsewhere, this will be to another part of the public service at HEO level, in accordance with the Departmental mobility policies in place at the time.

Candidates should note that the provisions of Circular 6/89, Removal Expenses, will not apply to any offers of appointment arising from this competition.

An officer who retires, resigns, etc. from his or her position in the Civil Service will cease to be eligible for appointment from this competition.

Officers not promoted at the expiry of the panels, will have no claim to appointment as EAO thereafter because of having been on the panels.

### **Annual Leave**

The annual leave for this position is 29 days, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service. This leave is on the basis of a five day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

### **General**

The additional annual EAO allowance, as set out in above, takes account of the following:

- an EAO may be required to undertake work which does not always conform to normal working hours,
- Flexi-time arrangements are not available as they are not compatible with the exigencies of CSEAS work,
- overtime payments are not available,
- an EAO may encounter challenges, not normally associated with general HEO assignments, in assisting CSEAS service users with psychosocial issues.

## **16. Information on Panels**

The information on panel(s) formed as a result of this competition will be made available to Personnel Officers in all Departments/Offices and Workforce Planning Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. In addition, candidates may be asked to agree to the same information being made available to the relevant civil service unions for **the purpose of monitoring the operation of the scheme.**

## **17. Circulation and Further Information**

HR Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their Departments and associated Offices without delay, including eligible fixed term workers, officers on term time, secondment, maternity leave, career break, contract, and all other relevant forms of leave.

- 18.** If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact their HR Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed directly to PAS.

The Civil Service is an equal opportunities employer.



## 19. Application Process

### How to Apply

Applications should be made **online** through [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie). All sections of the form must be fully completed.

Before applying candidates should log-on to [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie) and if you have not already done so you must register as a **'New User'** to create your profile (register a new account). Please do not confuse registering (creating a profile) with submitting an application. Once you have created a profile you must then access the application form, complete and submit it.

Once you have submitted your application form it is suggested that you return to your publicjobs account and ensure that it has been successfully submitted via 'My Applications'.

Only applications fully submitted online will be accepted into the campaign. **Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.**

### Closing Date

**Your application must be submitted on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie) not later than 3.00 pm, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016.** If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within 24 hours of applying, please contact: **Linda Bridger** at (01) **8587482** or [linda.bridger@publicjobs.ie](mailto:linda.bridger@publicjobs.ie).

**The interviews for these posts are likely to be held in July/August 2016.**

Campaign updates will issue to your publicjobs.ie Message board after each selection stage.

You are advised to check your messageboard on a regular basis as email notifications of updates/tests/Interviews etc issued to your Messageboard may sometimes be filtered into your Junk/Spam email folders. You are also advised to check all these folders regularly.

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that she/he is in receipt of all communication from the Public Appointments Service (PAS).

The PAS accept no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the PAS and should make sure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

### Selection Methods

The selection may include:

- shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application,
- a competitive preliminary interview,
- completion of online questionnaire(s),
- presentation or other exercises,
- a final competitive interview,
- Any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

**Shortlisting**

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the Public Appointments Service may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, the Public Appointments Service provide for the employment of a short listing process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application forms against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience on the application form.

Mise le meas

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Cagney', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**David Cagney**  
**Civil Service Chief Human Resource Officer**

## Appendix 1: Core Competency Framework

<b>EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE OFFICER/HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICER</b>
<b>Team Working</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively balances working as part of a team while operating on an individual basis in the day-to-day delivery of service</li> <li>• Understands the need to be accountable in a line management structure</li> <li>• Strives to develop and implement new ways of working effectively to meet objectives</li> <li>• Participates in team support processes including peer support, buddying, mentoring and shared learning</li> <li>• Is flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change</li> <li>• Demonstrates the capability to take the lead on issues as required and manage and coordinate the work of others to ensure team objectives are met</li> </ul>
<b>Judgement &amp; Decision Making</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displays discernment and sound judgement</li> <li>• Gathers and analyses information from relevant sources, weighing up a range of critical factors</li> <li>• Uses experience, knowledge and training to guide decisions and in the development and delivery of service</li> <li>• Puts forward practical and realistic suggestions to address issues requiring attention</li> <li>• Takes account of any broader issues and related implications when making decisions</li> <li>• Has the ability to make logical and well-reasoned decisions in difficult situations</li> <li>• Knows when to seek the input of the manager or other parties in making a decision</li> </ul>
<b>Management &amp; Delivery of Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practices and promotes a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service</li> <li>• Takes responsibility and is accountable for the delivery of agreed objectives</li> <li>• Is self-motivated and has strong self-management skills and can work without excessive guidance or support</li> <li>• Successfully prioritises, manages and balances caseload and a range of different work activities within appropriate timeframes</li> <li>• Uses the available skills and resources to deliver the best possible results for all stakeholders</li> <li>• Works effectively to balance competing demands while taking into account longer term issues and goals</li> <li>• Adheres to appropriate policies, procedures and processes to enable monitoring and reporting of output</li> <li>• Practices and promotes a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service</li> </ul>
<b>Interpersonal &amp; Communication Skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates effective communication skills, including active listening skills</li> <li>• Displays a proven interest in the well-being of others with a strong capacity to empathise whilst maintaining an objective perspective</li> <li>• Builds and maintains relationships of trust, confidence and respect with service users, colleagues and other stakeholders</li> <li>• Encourages open and constructive discussions around issues, adapting communication style and approach to the given situation</li> </ul>

- Demonstrates understanding, sensitivity, tact, courtesy and a non-judgmental approach when dealing with others, even in challenging circumstances
- Delivers information clearly, concisely and confidently in all communications written and verbal
- Displays excellent presentation skills

**Drive and Commitment**

- Demonstrates persistence, perseverance and commitment to achieving the objectives of the Department and/or Division
- Strives to perform at a high level, investing significant energy to achieve agreed objectives
- Demonstrates resilience in the face of challenging circumstances and high demands
- Uses appropriate strategies to handle the emotional impact of the work and seeks support when necessary
- Proactively identifies areas for improvement and offers practical suggestions for positive change
- Is personally trustworthy and can be relied upon to uphold high standards of honesty, ethics, confidentiality and integrity

**Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development**

- Has a thorough understanding and appreciation of the role of the Employee Assistance Officer/Higher Executive Officer
- Has a clear understanding of the roles, objectives and targets of self and team; how they fit into the work of the Division and Department, and effectively communicates this to others
- Possesses the necessary levels of expertise and experience to perform effectively in the role
- Focuses on self-development and reviews own performance regularly and with the CSEAS manager
- Displays flexibility, adaptability and openness to change
- Demonstrates enthusiasm for new developments and evolving work practices, embracing new technologies to enhance service delivery
- Is able to quickly learn and acquire knowledge relevant to the role and to the Civil Service

## **Appendix 2: Admission to a Competition**

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview or a successful letter, is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

### **Security Clearance**

You will be required to complete and return a Garda Vetting form should you come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to An Garda Síochána for security checks on all Irish and Northern Irish addresses at which you resided. However should your application for the competition be unsuccessful this form will be destroyed by PAS. If you subsequently come under consideration for another position, you may therefore be required to complete a further Garda Vetting Form.

### **Enquiries**

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to positions the Public Appointments Service or employing organisation will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary, e.g. employer references, to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

### **Specific candidate criteria**

In addition to fulfilling the eligibility criteria set out, candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned;
- Be suitable on the grounds of health & character;
- Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned;
- If successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:
  - Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be performed; and
  - Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

### **Non-Refund of Expenses**

Any expenses incurred by candidates whilst undertaking or attending any elements of the selection process will not be refunded.

### **Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required, or do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as required in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

### **Appointments from panels**

It is envisaged that a panel(s) of qualified individuals will be established from which vacancies may be filled. Qualification and placement on a panel is **not** a guarantee of appointment to a position. Please note that once an offer of appointment has been accepted a candidate will no longer remain on the panel.

### **Declining an offer of appointment**

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it, the PAS may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

### **Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003, the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, and any security clearance and/or enquiries, all aspects of the proceedings, to the extent that they are managed by the PAS or employing organisation, are treated in strict confidence and are not disclosed to anyone outside those directly involved in the selection process.

### **Quality Customer Service**

The PAS aims to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

### **Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003**

When your application is received, the Public Appointments Service creates a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and, should you be successful certain information you provide will be forwarded to the employing organisation. Where the services of a third party are used in processing your application, it may be required to provide them with information, however all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the security of your data. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003, please submit your request in writing to: The Data Protection Co-Ordinator, Public Appointments Service, Chapter House, 26-30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1 ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, or personal cheque, made payable to the "Public Appointments Service". Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.

## Appendix 3: Guidelines for dealing with Appeals/Requests for Review

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The Public Appointments Service will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of the codes of practice published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their application he/she can seek a review under **Section 7** of the code of practice governing the recruitment process by a person in the recruiting body (initial reviewer). Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following this initial review, he/she may seek to have the conduct of the initial review examined by a “decision arbitrator”.

As an alternative to the above, it is open to a candidate to seek to have the matter resolved on an informal basis, as set out below. If a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such discussion it is open to him/her to seek a formal review.

### Informal process:

- The candidate can avail of the informal review within 5 working days of notification of the initial decision, and should normally take place between the candidate and the person who communicated the decision (or relevant person).
- Where the decision being conveyed relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for informal review must be received within 2 working days of the date of receipt of the decision.
- Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such informal discussion, he/she may adopt the formal procedures set out below.
- If the candidate wishes the matter to be dealt with by way of a formal review, he/she must do so within 2 working days of the notification of the outcome of the informal review.

### Formal process: Initial review:

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive, setting out those aspects of the action or decision in relation to his/her candidature that he/she wishes to have reviewed.
- A request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the initial decision. Where the decision relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for review must be received within 4 working days.
- Any extension of these time limits will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint or request for review. The candidate will receive the outcome of the review by means of a written report.
- Should a candidate be dissatisfied with the outcome of the initial review, he/she may request a review by a decision arbitrator of the conduct of the initial review.

### **Review by the decision arbitrator**

The decision arbitrator is appointed by the Chief Executive. The decision arbitrator is unconnected with the selection process and he/she will adjudicate on requests for review in cases where a candidate is not satisfied with the outcome of the initial review. The decision of the decision arbitrator in relation to such matters is final.

- A request made to the decision arbitrator must be received within 7 working days of the notification of the outcome of the initial review.
- The outcome of the investigation must be notified to the candidate in the form of a written report within 10 working days.

Where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA's Code of Practice, he/she can have it investigated under **Section 8** of the code of practice.

### **Informal process:**

- The CPSA recommends that the candidate avail of the informal process to try to resolve the matter with the recruiting body. If the candidate is still dissatisfied he/she may resort to the formal process within 2 working days of receiving notification of the informal process.

### **Formal process:**

- If you are requesting a formal review you must write to the licence holder (Chief Executive, Public Appointments Service), providing details of the breach of the code of practice and enclosing any relevant documentation that might support the allegation.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint or request for review. If a decision cannot be made within this timeframe, the reviewer will keep the candidate informed of the status of the review.
- Should a candidate be dissatisfied with the outcome of this review, he/she may request a further review by referring the matter to the Commission for Public Service Appointments in the form of an appeal of the review of the licence Holder. He/She must write to the Commission for Public Service Appointments within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of the licence Holder's review.

### **Candidates' Obligations**

Candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned,
- Be suitable on the grounds of character,
- Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned

and if successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:

- Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed,
- Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information,
- canvass any person with or without inducements,



- interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

The codes of practice are available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments, [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie).