

DPE196-001-2017

4 September 2017

**Circular 16/2017**

**Inter-Departmental competition for promotion to**

**Health and Safety Officer**

**in the**

**Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine**

A Dhuine Uasail,

I am directed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to inform you that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will hold an inter-departmental competition for the purpose of selecting a suitable candidate for promotion to the role of **Health and Safety Officer** (Assistant Principal Officer equivalent).

**Section 1: Overview of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine**

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) is a multi-functional organisation whose remit includes economic, social and environmental issues related to the ongoing development of Ireland's agri-food sector. The Department has a staffing complement of over 3,000 full-time equivalents represented by administrative, professional, technical and veterinary grades.

Staff are located in the six headquarter offices: Dublin, Portlaoise, Cavan, Wexford, Clonakilty and Backweston Campus, Co Kildare. The Department also has sixteen regional offices in locations throughout the country, six Fisheries Centres, ten laboratories and five farms as well as Border Inspection Posts at Dublin Airport, Dublin Port, Rosslare, Shannon Airport and Cork port. In addition professional and technical staff are located at approximately seventy food processing premises.

Staff duties include office management, laboratory and veterinary work as well as the inspection of farms, food business operators, fishery harbours, forestry, lairages and animal transport systems. Given the wide range of duties a comprehensive health and safety risk management system is essential to protect the health and safety of all employees and other persons affected by their work activities.

The Department seeks to employ a Health and Safety Officer by way of an inter-departmental promotion competition. The role is equivalent to the grade of Assistant Principal. The post will be located in Department offices in **Portlaoise** but will involve the provision of best advice on health and safety at all Department offices throughout the country and at all other locations and work environments where Department staff operate. The Health and Safety Officer will report to the Principal Officer in charge of Management Services/Services Division.

Following an assessment process, candidates who achieve the qualifying standard will be placed on an Order of Merit from which one appointment will be made. The post will be offered to the candidate ranked first and, if refused, to the remaining candidates in sequence until the post is filled. The Order of Merit relates solely and exclusively to the current post of Health and Safety Officer and expires on the appointment of the successful candidate.

## **Section 2: Job Specification**

---

The staff of the Department operate in a wide variety of business areas and work environments including administration, laboratories, veterinary, food processing factories and other commercial operators, sea-fishing ports, forestry and on farms. Each of these environments presents its own unique challenges in terms of health and safety. The core objective of the Health and Safety Officer is to develop and secure the effective implementation of Health and Safety policy and to promote a positive safety and health culture in DAFM.

The principal objectives of the Health and Safety Officer are:

- To provide technical guidance and support to DAFM for the development, implementation and ongoing review of Health and Safety, ensuring continuous improvement based on systematic organisational learning
- To set up, maintain and improve systems that underpin an effective integrated Health and Safety governance system at a corporate level
- To provide specialist advice, guidance and instruction regarding health and safety matters to the Management Board, senior managers and others, ensuring that DAFM meets statutory obligations and achieves high standards of health and safety.

### **Principal Duties and responsibilities**

#### ***Corporate Governance***

- Establish and maintain procedures, including monitoring and other means such as review and auditing, to ensure that the Management Board is accurately appraised on the management of health and safety in the Department
- Provide guidance to all managers and staff and contribute to the development of corporate policy and decision making activity so as to ensure that health and safety is a key consideration
- Respond to changes in legislation and national policy in relation to health and safety and develop policies to ensure compliance and implementation
- Establish systems to allow for appropriate organisational responses to national recommendations from appropriate regulatory bodies
- Act as lead liaison with the Health and Safety Authority on health and safety management matters
- Act as liaison with the State Claims Agency on health and safety management strategies aimed at reducing the incidence of harm and providing support to claims management structures to reduce cost to the Department
- Act as liaison with insurers in relation to health and safety issues.

### ***Service development***

- Develop, maintain and monitor the ongoing implementation of the Department's occupational Health and Safety management action plan and report on progress to the Management Board
- Develop fit for purpose safety and health policies, not just for existing activities but also with respect to new activities or processes where identified or requested by service areas
- Ensure that systems are in place to evaluate and review performance against agreed targets and performance indicators
- Ensure appropriate and effective procedures for reporting, investigating, recording and analysing incidents
- Develop and maintain effective systems for Department wide learning and improvement with regard to health and safety
- Ensure effective processes for document management
- Liaise with key internal stakeholders to identify strategies and prioritise actions for managing risk.

### ***Communication***

- Ensure that senior managers are informed of changes to legislation and actions required to ensure compliance
- Promote DAFM health and safety information programmes and work with key stakeholders to develop safe working conditions
- Foster a fair and just culture where staff learn from incidents and are willing to report adverse events
- Work in partnership with other internal work groups/colleagues, leading and directing areas of work as appropriate.

### ***Health & Safety***

- Comply fully with all aspects of the Health and Safety Policy employee liability requirements
- Ensure all staff working within the department are regularly updated on health and safety matters.

**The above is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all duties involved and consequently the post holder may be required to perform other duties as appropriate to the post which may be assigned to him/her from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post while in office.**

## Section 3: Eligibility

---

### a. Eligible Service Requirements

Officers who on 20 September 2017 are serving Civil Servants and have two or more years of service, either continuously or in aggregate, in the Civil Service are eligible to apply.

Serving officers who on 20 September 2017 are employed on a fixed-term contract and who have two or more years of service, either continuously or in aggregate, in the Civil Service are eligible to apply.

Grades equivalent to assistant principal (i.e. have the same maximum pay scale – PPC €73,846, Non-PPC €70,281) or higher are not eligible to compete in this promotion competition.

### b. PMDS

Candidates must have received a rating of 'Satisfactory' at their 2016 PMDS Annual Review to be considered eligible to apply for this post. Please note that, in order to allow the PMDS ratings submitted as part of competition applications to be confirmed, **2016 ratings must have been notified to PeoplePoint prior to submission of this application.**

### c. Health and Sick Leave

Eligibility in relation to health and the level of sick leave will not be determined until a candidate is being considered for appointment to the post.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will contact Personnel Divisions in respect of candidates invited/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 "Satisfactory" at 2016 PMDS Annual Review
- general conduct
- health, especially sick leave.

<p><b>Candidates should note that admission to the competition does not imply that they meet the eligibility criteria. Therefore candidates should satisfy themselves that they meet the eligibility criteria for this competition.</b></p>
---

## **Section 4: Person Specification**

---

### **Essential Requirements**

On the closing date for this competition candidates must:

- Hold a third level qualification of at least level 8 on the National Qualification Framework in Health & Safety (relevant documentary evidence must be submitted)
- Have expert knowledge of Health and Safety statutory requirements, systems and processes and demonstrate the ability to interpret the law in the context of a large Government department
- Have at least two years' experience of successfully establishing and implementing health and safety management systems in a complex, multi-site organisation
- Possess strong planning and organisation skills including flexibility, adaptability and openness to working effectively in a changing environment, the ability to lead and achieve results and to look ahead and forward plan for developments
- On date of appointment, possess a current full driving license (Category B) and/or access to a car (which shall not be a hired vehicle).

### **Desirable Skills and Experience**

- Have experience of leading an organisation through internal/external enforcement and compliance audits
- Knowledge and/or experience of public sector organisations and health and safety governance
- Evidence of project management skills and the achievement of key objectives and priorities - the ability to manage concurrent projects and conflicting priorities.

## Section 5: Application and Selection Process

---

### How to apply

Application forms may be downloaded from:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/customerservice/customerservice/careers/currentcompetitions/>

- All sections of the form must be fully completed and submitted as an attachment to an email with the subject title of: **DAFM Health and Safety Officer Application to:**

[competitions@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:competitions@agriculture.gov.ie)

### Closing Date

Your application must be submitted no later than **4pm on Wednesday, 20 September 2017**. Applications will not be accepted after this date.

### The Selection Process

It should be noted that the selection process may include some, or all, of the following:

- completion of online Assessment Questionnaire(s);
- online and/or paper-based assessment test(s);
- shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application
- a competitive preliminary interview
- presentation or other exercises
- a final competitive interview which may include a presentation and/or additional assessment exercise(s)
- any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

**NOTE: Candidates should note that during any short-listing exercise that may be employed, a board will examine the application forms and assess them against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position as outlined in this booklet. It is in candidates' interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of their qualifications, skills and experiences relevant to this post in the application form.**

### Competencies

Applicants should have all the attributes required for the effective implementation of the role of Health and Safety Officer and in particular they must demonstrate, by reference to specific examples from their career to-date, that they possess or have the capacity to acquire the qualities, skills and knowledge required for the role as identified in the following competency framework.

<b>Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of the role of Health and Safety Officer as specified in the job description in the context of a large Department</li> <li>• Has integrated into his/her professional profile the learning obtained from previous experience in the Health and Safety area (as specified in the sections of the booklet dealing with <i>Essential Requirements</i> and <i>Desirable Skills and Experience</i>)</li> <li>• Has a clear understanding of Department and Governmental issues and is sensitive to wider political and organisational priorities</li> <li>• Is considered an expert by stakeholders in own field/area</li> <li>• Is focused on self development, seeking feedback and opportunities for growth to help carry out the specific requirements of the role</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively contributes to the development of the strategies and policies of the Department</li> <li>• Brings a focus and drive to building and sustaining high levels of performance, addressing any performance issues as they arise</li> <li>• Leads and maximises the contribution of the team as a whole</li> <li>• Clearly defines objectives and goals and delegates effectively, encouraging ownership and responsibility for tasks</li> <li>• Develops the capability of others through feedback, coaching and creating opportunities for skills development</li> <li>• Identifies and takes opportunities to exploit new and innovative service delivery channels</li> </ul>
<b>Analysis &amp; Decision Making</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researches issues thoroughly, consulting appropriately to gather all information needed on an issue</li> <li>• Understands complex issues quickly, accurately absorbing and evaluating data</li> <li>• Integrates diverse strands of information, identifying inter-relationships and linkages</li> <li>• Makes clear, timely and well grounded decisions on important issues</li> <li>• Considers the wider implications of decisions on a range of stakeholders</li> <li>• Takes a firm position on issues s/he considers important</li> </ul>
<b>Management &amp; Delivery of Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes responsibility for challenging tasks and delivers on time and to a high standard</li> <li>• Plans and prioritises work in terms of importance, timescales and other resource constraints, re-prioritising in light of changing circumstances</li> <li>• Ensures quality and efficient customer service is central to the work of the division</li> <li>• Looks critically at issues to see how things can be done better</li> <li>• Ensures controls and performance measures are in place to deliver efficient and high value services</li> <li>• Effectively manages multiple projects</li> </ul>
<b>Interpersonal &amp; Communication Skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents information in a confident, logical and convincing manner</li> <li>• Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues</li> <li>• Promotes teamwork within the section, but also works effectively on projects across Departments and Sectors</li> <li>• Maintains poise and control when working to influence others</li> <li>• Instills a strong focus on Customer Service in his/her area</li> <li>• Develops and maintains a network of contacts to facilitate problem solving or information sharing</li> <li>• Engages effectively with a range of stakeholders, including members of the public, Public Service Colleagues and the political system</li> </ul>
<b>Drive and Commitment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is self motivated and shows a desire to continuously perform at a high level</li> <li>• Is personally honest and trustworthy and can be relied upon</li> <li>• Ensures the citizen is at the heart of all services provided</li> <li>• Through leading by example, fosters the highest standards of ethics and integrity</li> </ul>

## **Communication**

Candidates should note that all communications relating to this competition from Competitions & Recruitment Section, including the provision of results, will issue by way of email only. Candidates should ensure that a valid email address is provided on the application form and should check that email address on a regular basis.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and ensure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

## **Section 6: Offers of Appointment**

---

Candidates should note that health and the level of sick leave are not verified until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. Admission to the competition process does not imply acceptance that a candidate is eligible to compete in the competition.

In considering a successful candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Department will have regard to Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 12/2015.

In line with the requirements of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004, the successful candidate will not be appointed to a post unless they:

- agree to undertake the duties attached to this 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 this position.

Should a person recommended for appointment not meet eligibility or sick leave requirements, not take up the appointment or decide to revert to the grade in which he or she served prior to promotion, the Department may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment based on the results of this selection process.

Appointment to the post of Health and Safety Officer will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. On appointment the appointee will serve a one-year probationary period. Prior to the end of this probationary period a decision will be made on substantive appointment to the grade. An officer whose service is not satisfactory may, at the end of the first twelve months, be returned to duties in his/her former grade.

## **Section 7: Special Requirements**

---

Officers should indicate on the application form if they have any special requirements relative to their participation in any stage of this competition.

## **Section 8: Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process**

---

The selection process for this competition is being carried out in accordance with the principles set out in the Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. This Code of Practice can be accessed through the Commission for Public Service Appointments website at [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie).

Information regarding review procedures is set out in Sections 7 and 8 of the above Code of Practice. (The two procedures are mutually exclusive other than in the most exceptional circumstances which will be determined by the Commission at its sole discretion.)



- **Informal Review:** Where possible, and only with the agreement of the candidate, every effort will be made to resolve any issues/complaints by way of an informal process
- **Section 7 review** procedures apply in cases where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to his/her candidature (but does not believe there was a breach of the Code of Practice)
- **Section 8 review** procedures apply where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA's Code of Practice.

### Requests for Review

Requests for informal review should be submitted to competitions@agriculture.gov.ie. In the event that a formal process is invoked, the candidates should determine which procedure is appropriate to their circumstances, i.e. Section 7 or Section 8. The candidate must submit their request in writing to the Office Holder, i.e. the Secretary General, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine at email address SecGen@agriculture.gov.ie, clearly setting out the grounds for review and specifying the relevant Section of the Code. A request for a review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

## Section 9: Responsibility of Candidates

---

All sections of the Application Form must be completed and must reach Competitions & Recruitment Section of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in Portlaoise by **4pm on Wednesday, 20 September 2017.**

Late applications or incomplete applications will not be accepted under any circumstances. Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process. **The onus is on candidates to make themselves available for all stages of the selection process.**

### Salary

The salary scale for the position (rates effective from 1 April, 2017) is as follows:

#### PPC Scale

€65,093, €66,271, €67,962, €70,249, €72,530, €73,846(NMAX), €76,149 (LSI1), €78,451(LSI2)

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

#### Non-PPC Scale

€62,966, €65,257, €65,760, €66,874, €69,026, €70,281 (NMAX), €72,465 (LSI1), €74,657 (LSI2)

This rate will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6th April 1995 and 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:** The terms of *Circular 34/77: Starting Pay on Promotion or Establishment* will apply, as appropriate, to appointments under this competition.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy.

### Annual Leave

The annual leave for this position is 30 days. This leave is on the basis of a five day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

### **Candidates Obligations**

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- personate a candidate at any stage of the process
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the selection process, e.g. through social media or any other means, may result in you being disqualified from the competition.

### **Circulation and Further Information**

HR Units 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.

If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact Competitions & Recruitment Section of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine:

Telephone: 0761 064453

Email: [competitions@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:competitions@agriculture.gov.ie)

The Civil Service is an equal opportunities employer.

Mise le meas,



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

