

**Reference No:** E109/121/06;      **Date:** 29/02/2008

**E109/121/06:- One Year Probation Contracts and General Council Agreement**

Our Ref: E109/121/06

29th February 2008

**Re: One Year Probation Contracts and General Council Agreement November 2007**

Dear Personnel Officer,

I am writing to inform you of an agreement reached between the Official Side and the Staff Side at General Council meeting of 28th November 2007 regarding a claim submitted by the CPSU “seeking to ensure that successful candidates from the last national Clerical Officer competition (2005) and any subsequent or limited CO competitions and who were appointed prior to the commencement of the probation period change on 1st September 2006 have their appointment terms and conditions brought in line with those appointed after that date”.

I wrote to you first on 3rd August 2006 informing you of our plans to implement the new probation arrangements for all new recruits to permanent positions in the civil service to take effect from 1st September 2006. You received a follow-up letter dated 4th December 2006 outlining amendments to the original text of the probation contract and clarifying the position with regard to the effective date of the new arrangements. This came about as a result of a meeting with the civil service unions in October.

Since then, Careers and Appointments Section received a small number of requests from Personnel Sections seeking advice regarding individuals appointed between 1st September 2006 and 4th December 2006 under the two year probation period arrangements, seeking to have their probation period reduced to one year in line with new arrangements. The Department of Finance has taken the view that decisions to change the probation arrangements are primarily for the line departments to decide provided that the individual has been performing satisfactorily since his/her appointment and is being monitored in accordance with the *Guidelines on Probation*.

Given the position taken by this Department in the individual instances referred to above the Official Side agreed at General Council on 28th November 2007 to update its instructions on the application of the one year probation policy to allow for

Departments/ Offices to use their discretion in cases where they are being asked to reduce the probation period from two years to one year so that it may be possible for individuals to bring forward the end of their probation period. The agreement is conditional and requires in all cases that:

- both parties are in agreement to the proposed changes;
- that a minimum of 12 months has elapsed since the appointment of the individual to the Department/ Office;
- that during this period the individual has performed in a satisfactory manner, has been satisfactory in general conduct, and is suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave;
- and that the individual has been monitored regularly by line management in accordance with the *Guidelines on Probation*.

Please note that the above arrangements are not confined to CPSU grades only and may be applied to any individual in a permanent post who is serving out a two year probation period. The onus is on the individual to seek the change in the probation arrangements.

Finally I would ask that you bring this information to the attention of all persons in your HR Unit dealing with recruitment of permanent civil servants.

Yours sincerely

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Pat McBride  
Principal  
Careers and Appointments Section