

# Candidate Information Booklet



**Recruit Prison Officer in the Irish Prison Service**

134

**Closing Date:** 3pm, Thursday 8th October 2026





## Competition Overview

### Salary

As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026, following salary scale applies to Recruit Prison Officers:

PPC €38,413.00      €39,7189.00    €42,789.00 (NORMAL MAX)

Entry will be at the minimum point of the scale.

### Selection Process – Carried out by publicjobs

#### Stage 1

This will consist of a number of assessments which will be completed online. The assessments can be taken at any time during the testing window. We recommend taking the assessments on a laptop or PC. Familiarisation material, including some practice examples will be provided to you before you take the assessments. Further information regarding the selection process can be found [on page 24](#).

#### Stage 2

Those candidates who are successful at Stage 1 will be invited to the next stage in order of merit. Stage 2 will consist of an interview and role play exercise, carried out remotely via Zoom. You will receive further information about this stage of the process prior to your interview.

**Important:** Before you apply for this competition, please ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria set out on page 9 of this booklet. Your application will not be progressed if you do not.

### Appointments Process – carried out by the Irish Prison Service

If you are successful at Stage 2 and it has been confirmed that you meet the eligibility criteria, your name and contact details (such as name, phone number, email, home address) will be forwarded to the Irish Prison Service. You will then be invited to a medical examination. Further information on the medical assessment and physical competency test and standards required can be found [on page 26](#).

### Training

Training as a Recruit Prison Officer involves the completion of an intensive apprenticeship programme, which is accredited by South East Technological University | Waterford (SETU) as the Higher Certificate in Custodial Care (HCCC), over a 2-year period. Prison Officers must successfully complete this training programme in order to progress to the rank of Prison Officer.

Further information on the training programme can be found [on page 27](#).

## **Introduction**

The Irish Prison Service is responsible for the provision of safe and secure custody, dignity of care and rehabilitation to people in custody for safer communities. The Irish Prison Service operates as an executive office within the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration (“the Department”). It is headed by a Director General supported by a number of Directors. The Irish Prison Service is a key component in our country’s Criminal Justice System. It employs some 3,700 uniformed and civilian staff.

Currently, the Irish Prison Service estate (the Estate) is made up of 13 prisons; 10 closed Prisons (Arbour Hill, Castlerea, Cloverhill, Cork, Dóchas, Limerick, Midlands, Mountjoy, Portlaoise, and Wheatfield), the Training Unit (Mountjoy) and two Open Centres (Loughan House and Shelton Abbey). Typically, the Irish Prison Service manages approximately 6,000 people in custody at any one time, both male and female, aged 18 and over. Irish Prison Service Headquarters (HQ) is located in Longford. HQ is made up of five Directorates including Care and Rehabilitation, Operations, Human Resources, Finance and Estates, and Corporate Services, Governance and ICT.

## **Our Mission**

Providing safe and secure custody, dignity of care and rehabilitation to prisoners for safer communities.

## **Our Vision**

A safer community through excellence in a prison service built on respect for human dignity.

## **Our Values**

Teamwork - We achieve more by working together than we can as individuals working alone.

Integrity - We must always have the courage to do the right thing, the decent thing, even when no one else is watching.

Potential - Everyone has the potential to be a better person, and we actively seek to provide staff and those in custody with opportunities to realise and achieve this.

Safety - We actively contribute to maintaining an environment in which staff and those in our custody feel emotionally and physically safe and ultimately, contribute to a safer community.

Support - We actively seek to provide supports to staff and support rehabilitation of those in custody.

These values foster and support the courage to make a difference in all that we do and to ensure that the Irish Prison Service is:

- an open, inclusive, diverse and proud organisation which focuses on teamwork and collaboration and encourages supportive and positive relationships.
- an ethical and accountable organisation where the highest standards are expected, promoted and adhered to and which is open to external scrutiny and adheres to human rights.
- a competent organisation where staff are equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to reach their potential, behave appropriately and have a clear understanding of their role in the organisation.
- a supportive organisation which promotes the safety and the physical and mental health of all staff, where staff are valued and recognised and there is a focus on “those that do” rather than “those that don’t”.
- a rehabilitative organisation which supports positive change, improved resettlement and reintegration opportunities for prisoners through targeted action and interagency collaboration and support.
- a more aware organisation where the rights and needs of the citizen, especially victims, are always supported, recognised and listened to.

## **The Prison Environment**

A prison is not a usual environment for any human being. It is a complex and dynamic environment which has the potential to be stressful for both prisoners and for staff. The normalisation of the prison environment is largely dependent on effective management and on the development of appropriate relationships by our prison staff with our prisoners. Prisons operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. A list of all Prison Estates can be found in Appendix 1.

## **Our Prisoners**

While each prisoner’s personal life story is unique, many of our prisoners have mental illnesses, behavioural issues and addictions. They have been subjected to sexual, domestic and social abuse, and/or have neglected their own physical health. Some prisoners have committed serious crimes. Some have come from disadvantaged and minority groups in society, and some have had little or no opportunity or encouragement to participate in education or training programmes.

## **Our Staff**

In Ireland, recent years have required Prison Officers to undertake increasingly complex and diverse tasks, balancing their traditional security focussed role with a renewed emphasis on facilitating rehabilitative interventions that address offending behaviour. Prison Officers are the frontline staff who interact most with prisoners on a daily basis and as a result, have the potential to positively influence prisoners to engage in training, education, psychology and community in-reach services within the prison system. Knowledge of the legal framework which governs the management of prisoners and skills such as searching and restraint techniques are important competencies for prison staff, however, the most important aspects of operating as an effective Prison Officer is the capacity to relate to and engage with prisoners, act with professionalism, tolerance and humanity and the ability to role model positive social behaviour. Such traits stem from life experience and personal values.

## **Role Profile**

Prison Officers conduct the majority of the face to face interactions with people committed to prison throughout their sentence including transportation from court; committal; safety; security; accommodation; supporting access to healthcare, psychology, in reach services, work training, education and visits by family friends and legal representatives; maintaining good order and discipline; and supporting their care, progression, desistence and rehabilitation in order that they can safely reintegrate back into their communities on completion of their sentence. Given that prisoners spend the majority of their sentence in the presence of Prison Officers, building appropriate relationships with prisoners and actively role modelling positive behaviours in general appearance, demeanour and in daily interactions with colleagues and prisoners are fundamental aspects of the role.

Prison Officers must always secure and account for every prisoner in their care, whether inside the prison or when on prisoner escorts. An overview of the wide variety of accountabilities associated with the role of Prison Officer, both within a prison context and across the wider organisation are outlined below:

- a) Ensure the safe and secure custody of prisoners by
- Accounting for and securing all prisoners, prisoner information, keys and radios in your custody at all times.
  - Setting clear expectations of behaviour for prisoners, utilising the Incentivised Regime Scheme to reflect the consequences of their behaviour and initiating disciplinary proceedings when the Prison Rules are breached by prisoners.
  - Vigilantly monitoring prison cells and infrastructure for damage, tampering, breakage, or for potential risk of injury on a daily basis and report any potential threats to security or safety to the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) and Trades Officer immediately.
  - Monitoring yards, visits, gates, nets, external perimeters and overhead airspace utilising CCTV and other measures and reporting any suspect activity to the ACO.

- Quickly identifying and interpreting warning signs, indicators, changes in prisoner behaviour, routines and habits, regarding potential threats to the good order and safe and secure custody of prisoners and promptly acting to resolve or prevent incidents and communicating to other staff if there are any unresolved issues.
- Identifying and reporting evidence of possession or use of prohibited articles, drugs or substances within the prison.
- Preventing non-compliant and violent conduct and the unlawful escape of prisoners in a manner consistent with the Prison Rules.
- Maintaining familiarity with and rehearsing or implementing contingency plans in order to effectively respond to a prison emergency or critical incident.

b) Contribute to the care, progression, desistence and rehabilitation of prisoners by

- Actively role modelling positive behaviours in your general appearance, demeanour, in your daily interactions with colleagues and prisoners and by ensuring that decisions relating to prisoner requests are responded to quickly and the prisoner understands the justification for the decision.
- Monitoring and recording indicators regarding the physical and mental health of prisoners in accordance with policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and when concerns are identified alert the appropriate healthcare staff.
- Engaging and communicating effectively with line managers, Integrated Sentence Managers (ISMs), healthcare staff, psychologists, Work Training staff, teachers, in reach services, etc., regarding prisoners in your care.
- Supporting and promoting, in-reach prison community initiatives such as the Red Cross, Samaritans Listener programme, Men's Shed, Gaisce, Toastmasters, Park run, etc.
- Cultivating appropriate relationships (right relationships rather than good relationships) with prisoners by setting out and maintaining clear security and personal boundaries and managing tensions between security, care and rehabilitative objectives.
- Providing evidence to investigation teams, inspection and monitoring bodies, courts, etc when requested.
- Respecting, protecting and explaining to prisoners their statutory entitlements and human rights.
- Implementing safe work practices in accordance with the safety statement, ensuring that the standard of cleanliness and hygiene control in your work area is maintained at a high level in accordance with Irish Prison Service policy and identifying, reporting and recording health and safety hazards and work-related injuries and take any necessary action to eliminate, isolate or minimise hazards.
- Maintaining familiarity and complying with relevant legislation, policies, SOPs and orders.
- Monitoring your own mental health and the mental health of your colleagues, particularly in times of stress and following involvement in or observation of critical incidents and recognising when support is required.

c) Be prepared to conduct a broad range of additional tasks including:

- Operating Irish Prison Service vehicles
- Escorting prisoners to courts, hospitals, funerals, etc,
- Screening and searching prisoners, their property, visitors into prison, cells, vehicles, visiting areas and other locations
- Supervising visits to prisoners by families, friends and legal representatives
- Safely escorting psychologists, maintenance teams, probations service staff, in-reach service staff in the performance of their roles
- Monitoring prisoner written correspondence
- Assisting in the committal of prisoners and the management of prisoner property
- Verifying the identity and confirming the authorisation of prisoners and visitors to enter and exit the prison and recording these movements
- Supporting education and work training activities
- Implementing Irish Prison Service drug testing procedures
- Night duty
- Operating the prison control room
- Any other tasks as directed by the Prison Governor or a line manager.

### **About the Recruit Prison Officer Job**

The Recruit Prison Officer (RPO) is the entry level to the Service and it is proposed to set up a panel from which vacancies arising in the Irish Prison Service may be filled.

Vacancies will be filled at Recruit Prison Officer level initially. Following the successful completion of 3 years' service including probation and a Higher Certificate in Custodial Care, the Recruit Prison Officer will be appointed as an established Prison Officer.

Prisons operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As a result, Recruit Prison Officers will be required to work a basic 2,035 hours per year based on an average roster of 39 hours a week and will be required to work shifts including night duties, every second weekend, some public holidays and over festive seasons. Recruit Prison Officers will also be required to work Additional Hours (AH) over and above basic rostered hours up to 360 hours per annum.

Working as a Recruit Prison Officer can be complex and difficult, but it can be varied, challenging and highly rewarding. We are looking for individuals who have the capacity to relate to and engage with prisoners, act with professionalism, tolerance and humanity and the ability to role model positive social behaviour. They must also have the ability to think on their feet in dealing with situations which require security and control.

Information in relation to the competencies required of a Recruit Prison Officer is set out at Appendix 2.  
These include:

- Adaptability
- Information Handling and Communication
- Supporting Others
- Conscientiousness
- Directing Others
- Resilience

By the closing date for application to this competition, 3pm, Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2026 you must:

### Age

Be at least 18 years of age i.e., must have been born on or before the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

### Nationality

You must, by the closing date for application to this competition be:

- a) a citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- d) A non-EEA citizen who has a stamp 4 visa; or a stamp 5 visa

### Education

You must have obtained the following, by the closing date for application to this competition:

- i. have obtained in the Established Leaving Certificate a minimum of grade D3 (O6 post 2017) at Ordinary level, or C3 (F5 from 2017) at Foundation Level, in at least 5 subjects\*; or
- ii. (ii) hold a minimum of a Level 5 Major award\*\* (**120 credits**) on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ); or
- iii. (iii) hold a recognised qualification (**at Level 5 or greater**), deemed comparable to the above in terms of both level and volume of learning as determined by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

In certain cases, a Pass in the Leaving Certificate Applied **may be** deemed equivalent to a Leaving Certificate.

\*A Pass or above in the Links Modules subject may be counted as one subject.

\*\* A QQI Level 5 or 6 major award will have 120 Credits (Please note any certificate which has a lower number is only a Minor Award and is not sufficient to determine eligibility).

**Note:** A combination of two or more exam sittings may be permitted in determining eligibility.

#### Recognition of other qualifications

publicjobs may verify the validity of qualifications other than the Leaving Certificate with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). Candidates may refer to the [National Academic Recognition Information Centre](#) which offers advice on the academic recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland.

**Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants**

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the Public Service by any Public Service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility).

**Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER)**

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are not eligible to apply for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

**Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010)**

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for reemployment in the public health sector or in the wider Public Service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years. People who availed of the VER scheme are not eligible to compete in this competition. People who availed of the VRS scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility).

**Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG (P) 06/2013)**

The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular Letter LG (P) 06/2013 introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for Local Authorities. In accordance with the terms of the Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants dated 28 June 2012 as detailed above, it is a specific condition of that VER Scheme that persons will not be eligible for reemployment in any Public Service body [as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011 and the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012] for a period of 2 years from their date of departure under this Scheme. These conditions also apply in the case of engagement/employment on a contract for service basis (either as a contractor or as an employee of a contractor).

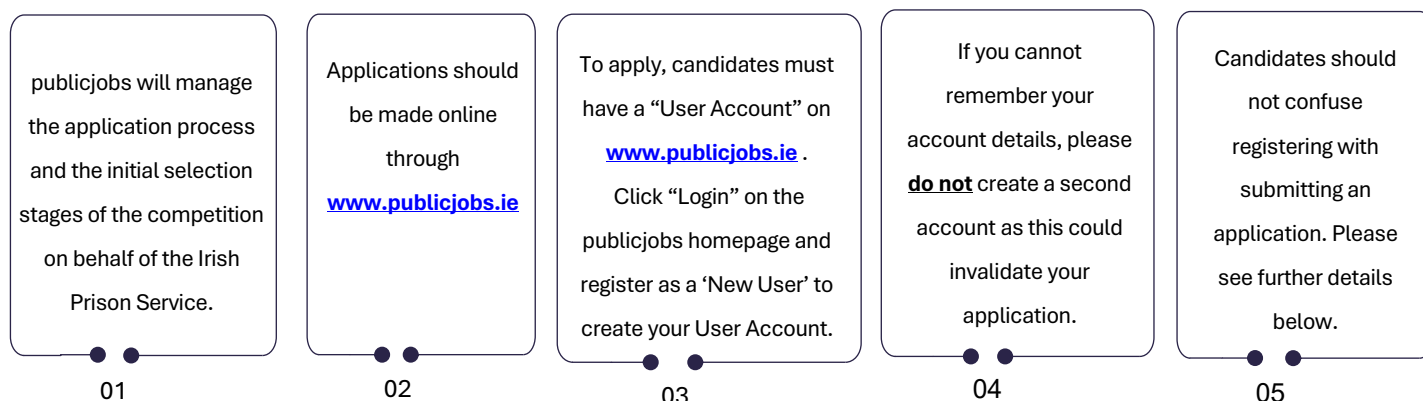
**Declaration**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a Public Service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service Appointment.

## Determining eligibility requirements

You should note that candidates' qualifications/eligibility may not be confirmed until the latter stages of the selection/appointments process. Therefore, candidates who do not possess the essential requirements on the closing date and who proceed with their application will not be eligible to be selected or offered a position in this competition. Candidates who are unable to show that they hold the required qualifications may be withdrawn from the competition at any stage. An invitation to tests, interview or any element of the selection process is not acceptance of eligibility.

## The Application Process



## How to Apply

Applications should be made online through [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

At publicjobs, we have transitioned to a new recruitment platform with the aim of enhancing our services and the candidate experience. The new service will give you more visibility and control of your application.

When accessing our new recruitment platform for the first time, candidates must register as a New User to create an account ("Register"). To do so, please access the vacancy you wish to apply for on our Jobs Board by clicking on the title of the position. You will be brought to the vacancy where you can click on "Apply" in the right-hand section of our website, or at the bottom of the advertisement. Candidates who have not previously registered on our new recruitment platform will be required to enter some personal details to continue with their application. Account verification will be required, and you must check your email inbox and follow the instructions to verify your account. Please do not confuse registering (creating an account) with submitting an application. Candidates who have already registered will have an account and should select 'Login' from the top right-hand section of the registration page or through the link at the bottom of the page.

Once registered and after your email address has been verified, you must then access the application form, ensure all sections of the application form are fully completed and submit it.

To do this, you will be required to return to the vacancy you wish to apply for, in this instance, **Recruit Prison Officer 2026**, on the jobs board on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie) and click on “Apply”. This time, you should select the “Login” option in the top right-hand section of the Login Page. Your username is the e-mail address associated with your account. Please note that your username and password are case sensitive.

**Please carefully note the following instructions.**

As you progress through the application, at the bottom of every page, there will be an option to “Save and Continue”. The information that you enter is only saved once you click on the 'Save and Continue' button. If you close the browser before clicking 'Save and Continue' or are inactive on the system for 30 minutes or more, you may be logged out of the application form, and your information could be lost.

It is imperative that all sections of this application form are completed in full. The mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk\*. These fields must be completed before you can submit the application form. **You may save the form and come back to it later, however, please note that, you must submit the form in order to be considered for this competition as unsubmitted applications will not progress to the next stage.**

All sections on the application form Progress Tracker must show a green checkmark before you can apply. Return to any section on the Progress Tracker missing a green checkmark where guidance on the missing information will be displayed. Please ensure all information is correct before submitting your application as no changes can be made after submission. Once you have submitted your application form, you will be brought to a page confirming the status of your application as “Application received”. You can view the status of your application at any time by logging in, selecting your name in the top right-hand section of the page and selecting “View all applications”. At this point you should consider adding **@publicjobs.tal.net** to your safe senders or contact list within your email account to avoid not receiving emails because a publicjobs email has been blocked.

Only fully completed and submitted applications will be accepted into the competition. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that publicjobs or any other body is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements.

Visit the [Help Centre](#) if you have questions or encounter technical difficulties navigating the site

**Communication with publicjobs**

You should check your **publicjobs.ie Application Centre** on a regular basis as email notifications about updates/tests/Interviews etc. published in the “**Review Communications**” area can sometimes be filtered into your Junk/Spam email folders. You are also advised to check all these folders regularly.

**Closing Date**

The closing date and time for receipt of completed applications is **3pm on Thursday October 8<sup>th</sup> 2026.**

It is suggested that you apply well in advance of the closing date in case you experience any difficulties.

The onus is on you to ensure that you have correctly submitted a completed application form **as any requests to submit an application after the closing time/date will not be considered.**

**Only one application per person is permitted.**

### **Candidates with Disabilities – Reasonable Accommodations for the Selection Process**

publicjobs and the Irish Prison Service are committed to equality of opportunity for all candidates. publicjobs has a key role to play in attracting candidates from all sectors of society, ensuring that routes to career opportunities are accessible to all who are interested. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all candidates.

If you have a disability or need reasonable accommodations made during the selection process, we strongly encourage you to share this with us so that we can ensure you get the support you need.

Reasonable accommodation in the selection process refers to adjustments and practical changes which would enable a disabled candidate to have an equal opportunity for this competition. Please note, this relates only to the selection process (e.g. online tests, interviews, etc.) and not workplace accommodations. Examples of adjustments we provide include the use of assistive technology, extra time, scribes and/or readers or a range of other accommodations.

Please be assured that having a disability or requiring adjustments will not impact on your progress in the selection process carried out by publicjobs; you will not be at a disadvantage if you disclose your disability or requirements to us. Any information you disclose will only be used to establish whether reasonable accommodations can be provided to assist you to progress in the competition. Your disability and/or adjustments will be kept entirely confidential.

Should you be successful, the disclosure of a disability for this stage of the process will not be passed onto the Irish Prison Service unless you request that we do so.

**If you have indicated on your application/account that you require reasonable accommodations, you should upload a copy of your psychologist/medical report directly to your online application before submitting your application.** You are required to include a copy of your medical/psychologist report before the closing date of the competition (**3pm on Thursday October 8<sup>th</sup> 2026**). Please do not email a copy of your report to the recruitment unit mailbox.

The purpose of the report is to provide publicjobs with information to act as a basis for determining reasonable accommodations, where appropriate. The information within these reports that is useful for us to see includes the outcome of any diagnostic tests conducted by your psychologist/doctor, and their summary of recommendations in relation to your requirements. You may redact (block out) parts of medical reports/psychologist's reports that you feel are sensitive or unnecessary for the decision to make reasonable adjustments.

**If you have previously applied for a competition with publicjobs and submitted a report (within the past 3 years), there will be an area on the online application where you can provide details of the previous competition and/or your previous candidate/application ID number. A member of the Assessment Services unit will check if your report is still on file (if you consented to this information being retained).**

If you have any queries about the reasonable accommodations process or the accommodations you have received, or if you have any difficulty with sourcing your medical/psychologist report by the closing date, please contact [ASU@publicjobs.ie](mailto:ASU@publicjobs.ie).

If you would like to talk about your application or any accommodations that may be of benefit during the recruitment process, please contact our Disability Champion, Amanda Kavanagh, at [edi@publicjobs.ie](mailto:edi@publicjobs.ie)

For further information on the accessibility of our service please visit our [Accessibility page](#).

## **Principal Conditions of Service**

### **General**

The appointment is to a permanent 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 and Allowances Salary**

As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026, the following salary scale applies to Recruit Prison Officers:

PPC €38,413.00                      €39,7189.00                      €42,789.00 (NORMAL MAX)

Entry will be at the minimum point of the scale.

Work on Saturday, Sunday, public holidays and nights attract premium payments. Recruit Prison Officers will also receive other allowances e.g., Operational Allowance (8% of annual salary). The allocation of up to 360 additional hours will attract further premium payments.

The Additional Hours System provides for extra attendance by staff. It involves the allocation of up to 360 hours maximum per person per annum. (Under this system a lower number of hours may be allocated, i.e., 240 hours, 112 hours, or nil hours.).

### **Personal Pension Contribution (PPC)**

The PPC pay rate applies when the individual is required to pay a Personal Pension Contribution (otherwise known as a main scheme contribution) in accordance with the rules of their main/personal superannuation scheme. This is different to a contribution in respect of membership of a Spouses' and Children's scheme, or the Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC).

A different rate will apply where the appointee is a civil servant or public servant recruited before 6th April 1995 and who is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

### **Important Note**

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale, and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Different terms and conditions may apply if you are a currently serving civil or public servant. Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy.

Payment will be made weekly in arrears by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) into a bank account of the appointee's choice. Payment cannot be made until a bank account number, bank sort code, IBAN (International Bank Account Number) and BIC (Bank Identifier Code) has been supplied to the Human Resources Division of the Irish Prison Service. Statutory deductions from salary will be made as appropriate by the Department.

The appointee will agree that any overpayment of salary, allowances, or expenses will be repaid by you in accordance with Circular 07/2018: Recovery of Salary, Allowances, and Expenses Overpayments made to Staff Members/Former Staff Members/Pensioners.

### **Tenure and Probation**

The appointment is to a permanent position on a probationary contract in the Civil Service.

The probationary contract will be for a minimum period of 9 months-from the date specified on the contract. Notwithstanding this paragraph and the paragraph immediately following below, this will not preclude an extension of the probationary contract in appropriate circumstances.

During the period of your probationary contract, your performance will be subject to review by your supervisor(s) to determine whether you –

- (i) Have performed in a satisfactory manner,
- (ii) Have been satisfactory in general conduct, **and**
- (iii) Are suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Prior to the completion of the probationary contract a decision will be made as to whether or not you will be retained pursuant to Section 5A(2) Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956–2005.

This decision will be based on your performance assessed against the criteria set out in (i) to (iii) above. The detail of the probationary process will be explained to you by the Irish Prison Service, and you will be given a copy of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's guidelines on probation.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs in this section, the probationary contract may be terminated at any time prior to the expiry of the term of the contract by either side in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts, 1973 to 2005.

In the following circumstances your contract may be extended, and your probation period suspended.

- The probationary period stands suspended when an employee is absent due to Maternity or Adoptive Leave.
- In relation to an employee absent on Parental Leave or Carers Leave, the employee may require probation to be suspended if the absence is not considered to be consistent with the continuation of the probation.
- Probation may be suspended in cases such as absence due to a non-recurring illness and
- Any other statutory provision providing that probation shall - (i) stand suspended during an employee's absence from work, and (ii) be completed by the employee on the employees return from work after such absence.

Where probation is suspended the employer should notify the employee of the circumstances relating to the suspension.

All appointees will serve a minimum probationary period of 9 months. If an appointee who fails to satisfy the conditions of probation has been a serving civil servant immediately prior to their appointment from this competition, the issue of reversion will normally arise. In the event of reversion, an officer will return to a vacancy in their former grade in their former Department.

#### **Hours of Attendance**

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time, but basic attendance will be 2,035 hours per year on an average 39-hour week (on a 12-hour shift pattern).

A Recruit Prison Officer will have a 7-day week liability including night duties, every second weekend and some public holidays and over festive seasons. Recruit Prison Officers will also be required to work Additional Hours (to a maximum of 360 per annum) which will attract additional payment.

#### **Assignment**

Following Phase 1 of Training, Recruit Prison Officers will be assigned to vacancies in the major prisons. Recruit Prison Officers will be liable to be assigned to other areas of the Irish Prison Service from time to time according to the exigencies of the Service.

Recruit Prison Officers may seek to transfer to other locations in the service - **see Appendix 1**.

Transfer list priority is based on seniority. Based on existing transfer waiting lists, Prison Officers may expect to wait a minimum of 5 years before progressing to the top of a transfer list for particular prisons and in some cases more than 10 years. The length of time is dependent on the number of staff seeking a transfer and the number of retirees in a particular location. The Irish Prison Service cannot predict the duration of the wait for any location, given the factors involved.

#### **Annual Leave**

The annual leave allowance is 160 hours (20 days) per year. The arrangements which currently apply in the Service in respect of “unearned rest days” and “free days” in lieu of public holidays will also apply. To ensure that sufficient staffing is available annual leave is granted in a structured and planned manner.

#### **Outside Employment**

The position will be whole time, and appointees may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which would interfere with the performance of official duties.

**Uniform**

The Irish Prison Service is a uniformed organisation. Staff are obliged to comply with standards relating to dress, appearance and deportment, which are a critical element of pro-social modelling.

**Social Media and Mobile Phones**

Prisons are secure environments and as such Prison Officers are legally prevented from bringing certain personal possessions into their workplace on a daily basis including mobile phones and other electronic forms of communications.

**Sick Leave**

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars. Officers who will be paying Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts directly to the employing Department/Organisation. Payment during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

**Superannuation and Retirement**

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil Service at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Full details of the Scheme are at [www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie](http://www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie).

Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable (non-Single Scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or is currently on a career break or special leave with/without pay different terms may apply. The pension entitlement of such appointees will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

- **Retirement Age:** Scheme members must retire on reaching the age of 70. However earlier compulsory retirement ages may apply to certain occupations, and in the case of Prison Officers, retirement on reaching age 62 years is compulsory. The Prison Officer grade has a maximum retirement age of 62 and may retire from age 55 with immediate payment of pension.
- Career average earnings are used to calculate benefits (a pension and lump sum amount accrue each year and are up-rated each year by reference to CPI).
- Post retirement pension increases are linked to CPI.

### **Pension Abatement**

- If the appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during his/her re-employment that pension will be subject to abatement in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.

### **Please note:**

In applying for this position, you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Department/Office will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.

- However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil or Public Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER), the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS or the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular letter LG(P) 06/2013, any of which renders a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements may, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

### **Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007**

The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular documentation, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the ceasing of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e., the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

### **III-Health-Retirement**

Please note any person who previously retired on ill health grounds under the terms of a superannuation scheme are required to declare, at the initial application phase, that they are in receipt of such a pension to the organisation administering the recruitment competition.

Applicants will be required to attend the CMO's office to assess their ability to provide regular and effective service taking account of the condition which qualified them for IHR.

### ***Appointment post ill-health retirement from Civil Service***

If successful in their application through the competition, the applicant should be aware of the following:

1. If deemed fit to provide regular and effective service and assigned to a post, their civil service ill-health pension ceases.
2. If the applicant subsequently fails to complete probation or decides to leave their assigned post, there can be no reversion to the civil service IHR status, nor reinstatement of the civil service IHR pension, that existed prior to the application nor is there an entitlement to same.
3. The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

### ***Appointment post ill-health retirement from Public Service***

1. Where an individual has retired from a public service body his/her ill-health pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement under that scheme.
2. If an applicant is successful, on appointment the applicant will be required to declare whether they are in receipt of a public service pension (ill-health or otherwise) and their public service pension may be subject to abatement.
3. The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

Please note more detailed information in relation to pension implications for those in receipt of a civil or public service ill-health pension is available [via this link](#) or upon request to publicjobs.

### **Pension Accrual**

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one pre-existing public service pension scheme (i.e., non-Single Scheme) as per the 2012 Act shall apply. This 40-year limit is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

### **Additional Superannuation Contribution**

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. **Note:** ASC deductions are in addition to any pension contributions (main scheme and spouses' and children's contributions) required under the rules of your pension scheme.

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme please see the following website: [www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie](http://www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie).

**Secrecy, Confidentiality and Standards of Behaviour****Official Secrecy and Integrity**

During the term of the probationary contract, an officer will be subject to the Provisions of the Official Secrets Act, 1963, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2014. The officer will agree not to disclose to unauthorised third parties any confidential information either during or subsequent to the period of employment.

**Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour**

The appointee will be subject to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.

**Ethics in Public Office Acts**

The Ethics in Public Office Acts will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

**Prior approval of publications**

An officer will agree not to publish material related to his or her official duties without prior approval by the Chairperson of the Authority or by another appropriate authorised officer.

**Political Activity**

During the term of employment, the officer will be subject to the rules governing public servants and politics.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

## Competition Overview

### Selection Process - Carried out by publicjobs

#### Timeline of the Recruit Prison Officer Selection Process



#### Note

As outlined, Stages 1 and 2 of the selection process will be conducted by publicjobs with Stage 3 being conducted by the Irish Prison Service. Candidates who qualify and meet the eligibility requirements following interview will go forward for consideration for appointment by the Irish Prison Service.

#### Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of applications is **3pm on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2026**.

It is suggested that you apply well in advance of the closing date in case you experience any difficulties.

**Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.**

#### Selection Process

The selection process for the Recruit Prison Officer competition will comprise a number of stages. These may include one or more of the following:

- Completion of an online Assessment Questionnaire;
- Online and/or paper-based assessment test(s);
- Shortlisting;
- Presentation exercise;
- Work sample exercise;
- An online video interview(s);
- Reference checks
- Any other tests/exercises deemed appropriate

It is strongly advised that each candidate reviews any communication or familiarisation sent to them prior to the commencement of each stage.

**N.B.** Please note that observations from the Gardaí will be sought on all candidates who come under consideration for a position prior to being accepted or offered a position by the Irish Prison Service.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment, all such enquiries as are deemed necessary to determine the suitability and eligibility of that candidate, will be carried out. **All offers of appointment are at the discretion of the Irish Prison Service.**

### **Overview of the Recruit Prison Officer Selection process**

Applicants must successfully complete and be placed highest, in order to be considered for advancement to the next stage of the selection process. The number to be called forward will be determined from time to time depending on the requirements of the Irish Prison Service. The chart, on the next page, outlines the selection process that candidates can expect to participate in, should they apply.

Candidates who progress through the competition will be required to attend a briefing/orientation event and/or attend for a prison visit during the selection process.

Arrangements will be notified to the relevant candidates as required.

### **Guidelines on Test and Process**

Detailed information on each selection stage will be made available at the appropriate time to candidates being invited to that particular stage of the process. Candidates must be prepared to make themselves available at short notice, to undertake and attend test(s) and interview and provide any supporting documentation required.

### **Stage 1 Assessment Tests**

Stage I will be conducted online and will be remotely proctored via webcam. Initial online assessments may be taken in a venue of your choice, wherever you have access to a computer with a webcam and a reliable internet connection. All eligible candidates who have successfully applied for this competition will be invited to complete Stage I. Candidates must complete and pass all elements of Stage 1 Assessments tests to progress in the competition. Candidates will be ranked based on their assessment scores. Those ranked highest on the order of merit will be invited to undertake the next stage of the selection process. Candidate may only sit the Stage 1 tests of the selection process once. AS all competitions are standalone, any scores/results you may have achieved previously will carry forward.

### **Subsequent Stages of Selection Process**

More detailed information on Stage 2 Online Interview will be made available to the relevant candidates as they progress through the process via their **publicjobs.ie Application Centre**.

### Online Test-Taking Environment

Please be aware that taking these tests within a secure IT network e.g., a network such as your work or college that may have firewalls or other security technology in place may cause you technical difficulties. You should consider taking the tests in your home or other environment, where access to the internet is not restricted to the same level. The onus is on you to ensure that you have full internet access to complete the tests. You should ensure that they can complete the tests in a quiet environment alone, where you can concentrate without being disturbed for the duration of the tests.

### Links to the online Stage I Assessments

Following the closing date and before Stage I commences, a Pre-test Information Booklet will be sent to your **publicjobs.ie Application Centre**.

A link to the actual online assessment tests will be sent to candidates' **publicjobs.ie Application Centres** in advance of the assessment-taking window. It is anticipated that this link will be sent during October 2026. This link will allow you access to all assessments.

### Preparing yourself for the selection process

Familiarisation material will be made available in advance of each assessment stage. Please note that the assessment tests require no other special preparation and that past papers are not available.

### Preparation Courses

publicjobs wishes to make it clear that neither publicjobs nor the Irish Prison Service have a function or involvement in the provision of, and do not endorse any preparation courses relating to the selection process for the role of Recruit Prison Officer.

### Communication

Interaction with candidates during the selection process will primarily be conducted online. publicjobs will communicate with you primarily through your **publicjobs.ie Application Centre**. However, some correspondence may be issued by email. The onus is on the candidate to keep a regular check on your You should check your **publicjobs.ie Application Centre** on a regular basis as email notifications about updates/tests/interviews etc. published in the “**Review Communications**” area can sometimes be filtered into your Junk/Spam email folders. You are also advised to check all these folders regularly.

publicjobs accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address or mobile phone number in the course of this recruitment campaign, as any email will be sent to the email address number originally supplied.

**Candidates must use their own valid email address. Email addresses from third parties will not be accepted and may invalidate your application.** publicjobs will only communicate application information with the candidate and not with any third party.

## APPOINTMENTS PROCESS

### Medical Assessment

The job of the Recruit Prison Officer entails quite a high level of interpersonal contact in a supervisory capacity with responsibility for the care, safety and security of off enders. A Prison Officer needs to be very vigilant regarding security and have a good level of physical fitness. The physical demands range from walking, standing, climbing stairs to responding in emergency situations such as riots, fights and fires. Recruit Prison Officers receive training in control and restraint techniques (C&R) and in specialist fire equipment both as part of the initial training and throughout the course of their career. Therefore, Recruit Prison Officers need to be physically fit and have a standard of health such that neither their safety, the safety of their colleagues nor the safety of prisoners should be compromised.

The Irish Prison Service has a derogation under Part 5 of the Disability Act, 2005.

Candidates who have been successful at Stage 3 and have been placed high enough to be considered at Stage 4 of the selection process will be required to undergo a pre-employment medical examination. The medical examination will determine whether or not a candidate is medically fit to be considered for employment as a Prison Officer.

This will be followed by a Physical Competency Test (PCT) administered by the Irish Prison Service which aims to assess your level of fitness, strength and manual dexterity as well as your level of confidence in simulated exercises. Candidates called for the PCT test will also undergo illicit substance testing; see Illicit Substance testing below. Only Candidates who pass PCT and illicit substance testing will be considered suitable for progression.

The following standards must be met by all candidates in order to be considered to train as a Prisoner Officer:

- Candidates should have a body mass index (BMI) within the range 18.5 - 29.99. Those candidates whose BMI falls outside this range will be further evaluated in the CSOHD and will be asked to attend for an appointment. This will involve a more detailed assessment of weight and may involve a preliminary fitness test, known as a Chester Step Test.
- Candidates must have a minimum vision standard for distant visual acuity of no less than 6/36 uncorrected in each eye tested separately and corrected to at least 6/12 in each eye tested separately.
- Blood pressure & lung function must be within acceptable limits.
- Candidates must be able to communicate clearly, receive and give verbal instruction without impairment.
- Candidates may be requested to submit a confidential Doctor's reports from their GP or their treating Specialist, at their own expense, if they are currently suffering or have suffered in the past from a serious medical condition. Additionally, the candidate may have to attend an appointment in the CSOHD.

### **Illicit Substance Testing**

The role of prison officer is a safety critical role within a safety critical work environment, as a result candidate seeking to become recruits within the Irish Prison Service are asked to undertake Illicit Substance hair testing.

The testing process is voluntary; however, only candidates who have satisfactorily completed the testing process will continue within the recruitment process.

Following a satisfactory screening, candidates may proceed to contract offer and the final stages of the recruitment process.

Testing positive for an illicit substance is considered a serious matter and candidates who test positive will be deemed a risk to the Irish Prison Service. In the event of a candidate testing positive for an illicit substance, the candidate's application will be rejected.

Failure or refusal to provide consent or comply with the testing process is considered a serious matter and you will be deemed a risk to the Irish Prison Service. As a result, failure or refusal to provide consent or comply with the testing process will result in a candidate's application being rejected.

Illicit Substance hair testing is provided by an accredited provider.

### **Recruit Prison Officer Training**

Training as a Recruit Prison Officer involves the completion of an intensive programme over a 2-year period, which is accredited by South East Technological University | Waterford (SETU) Upon successful completion, the Recruit Prison Officer is awarded the Higher Certificate in Custodial Care (HCCC). Prison Officers must successfully complete this training programme in order to progress to the rank of Prison Officer.

The first year of the programme runs concurrent to the probationary period. The programme is broken into a number of modules:

|          |                                               |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Module 1 | Foundation of Practice                        |
| Module 2 | Crisis and Conflict Management                |
| Module 3 | Learning to Learn                             |
| Module 4 | Custodial Care Policy and Practice            |
| Module 5 | Equality and Diversity and Cultural awareness |
| Module 6 | Workplace Reflective Practice                 |
| Module 7 | Ethical Dimensions to Custodial Care          |
| Module 8 | Contemporary Healthcare issues in Ireland     |
| Module 9 | Introduction to Social Psychology             |

|           |                                            |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------|
| Module 10 | Human Rights                               |
| Module 11 | Penology, Criminology and Criminal Justice |
| Module 12 | Workplace Reflective Practice              |

### **Phase I Training**

Modules 1, 2 and 3 are delivered over an intensive 12-week period in the Irish Prison Service College. The focus of training over this initial 12 weeks is on providing recruit Prison Officers with the foundation skills, communications and conflict management skills and to develop and assess their character and overall suitability to operate effectively in a prison.

### **Phase 2 Training**

Recruit Prison Officers are posted to an operational Prison Phase 2 of training.

Simultaneously Recruit Prison Officers are required to complete a further two modules of training relating to Human Rights, Ethics, Psychology and Healthcare which are delivered by SETU in a blended format of online and face to face training. Recruit Prison Officers will be required to attend all structured lectures and examinations/assessments during this Phase as part of their employment contract. However, reading, study, reflective journals and assignments must be completed in the Recruit Prison Officer's own time.

Given the demands of commencing a new role and engaging in academic study, this phase of training is often deemed to be the most challenging for Recruit Prison Officers.

### **Phase 3 Training**

During Phase Three, Recruit Prison Officers will be expected to operate autonomously in their roles. Recruit Prison Officers will be required to work shifts, including night duties, weekends and some public holidays and over festive seasons. Recruit Prison Officers may also be required to work Additional Hours (to a maximum of 360 per annum).

In addition, Recruit Prison Officers will also be required to complete all remaining modules of training relating to Human Rights, Ethics, Psychology and Healthcare which are delivered by SETU in a blended format of online and face to face training.

### **Assessment**

Recruit Prison Officers must complete all modules of the HCCC programme in order to graduate and progress to the rank of Prison Officer. Prison Officers will graduate at a formal ceremony in SETU.

Recruit Prison Officers who fail practical or written assessments will be provided with one repeat opportunity to complete and pass any module.

Recruit Prison Officers who do not pass ALL modules of the programme as outlined above will be deemed to be in breach of the contract of employment and will be dismissed from the Irish Prison Service.

**General Information**

publicjobs and Irish Prison Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates. The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result letter, is not to be taken as implying that publicjobs or the Irish Prison Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position publicjobs and the Irish Prison Service will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary 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.

Placement on any panel from this competition is no guarantee that a position will be offered. All offers of appointment are at the discretion of the Irish Prison Service.

**Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not complete the required stages before the specified date; or do not attend/undertake any subsequent stage of the selection process as requested, attend for interview or other test/appointment when and where required by publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Candidates are expected to provide all requested documentation to publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service, including all forms issued by publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service for completion, within the time specified. Failure to do so will result in the candidate being deemed to have withdrawn from the competition and their candidature will receive no further consideration.

Qualifications/eligibility may not be confirmed until the final stage of the process, therefore, those candidates who do not possess the essential requirements, by the closing date for receipt of applications, and proceed with their application are putting themselves to unnecessary effort/expense and will not be offered a position from this competition.

Given the volume of applications, publicjobs cannot consider or offer advice on the qualifications/eligibility of individuals unless they come under consideration. The onus is on the candidate to ensure they fulfil the eligibility requirements as set out. publicjobs reserves the right to deem an applicant ineligible at any stage if it is apparent that the candidate does not hold the required eligibility/qualifications e.g. from the submitted application form. Candidates who are unable to demonstrate that they hold the required eligibility criteria by the closing date for receipt of applications may be withdrawn from the competition at any stage.

An invitation to tests, interview or any element of the selection process is not acceptance of eligibility.

Candidates will be required to provide documentary evidence of their eligibility, including qualifications. Please be aware a transcript of results and translations may be required; therefore, the onus is on candidates to have this information available if requested by publicjobs.

### **Reschedule Requests**

Reschedule requests may only be considered under exceptional circumstances as deemed acceptable by publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service (e.g., Bereavement/Illness). Reschedules cannot be guaranteed as there are often strict time frames around the running of competitions and publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service may request supporting documentation as evidence. Candidates who are afforded an opportunity to reschedule will be processed in the next candidate batch invited to test/interview/appointment.

Candidates will not be re-inserted into their original batch. Please note that candidates who are permitted to reschedule will be given only one opportunity to do so.

Requests must be emailed to [prisonofficer2026@publicjobs.ie](mailto:prisonofficer2026@publicjobs.ie) within the timeframe as specified or [ipsrpo@irishprisons.ie](mailto:ipsrpo@irishprisons.ie) in respect of the latter stages of the competition.

publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service accept no responsibility for communication not accessed by an applicant. All candidates must ensure that they regularly check their designated email and access all communications from publicjobs/the Irish Prison Service.

It is envisaged that successful applicants from this campaign may be considered for intakes during 2026. Deferrals will only be accommodated in exceptional circumstances.

### **Expenses**

Candidates will be responsible for any expense incurred in connection with their candidature.

### **Appointments from panels**

It is envisaged that a panel of qualified individuals will be established following Stage 2, should your place be reached, your details will be forwarded to the Irish Prison Service. Qualification and placement on a panel is not a guarantee of appointment to a position. Please note that once a candidate has been assigned, they will no longer remain on the panel for further consideration.

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

Should the person decline an assignment, or having accepted it, relinquish it, publicjobs and the Irish Prison Service may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

### **Requests for Feedback/Test Rechecks**

Feedback at certain stages of the selection process is available on request. There are no specific timeframes set for the provision of feedback or for carrying out rechecks.

However, please note that the Review Process as set out in the Code of Practice is a separate process with specified timeframes that must be observed. Receipt of feedback/recheck is not required to invoke a review. It is not necessary for a candidate to compile a detailed case prior to invoking the review mechanism. **The timeframe set out in the CPSA Code cannot be extended for any reason including the provision of feedback and/or the outcome of rechecks.**

### **Review Procedures Section 7**

A request for review may be taken by a candidate should they be dissatisfied with an action or decision taken by publicjobs or by the Irish Prison Service. publicjobs or the Irish Prison Service (whichever organisation carried out that part of the selection process) will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Practice for Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service published by the CPSA.

When making a request for a review, the candidate must support their request by outlining the facts they believe show that the action taken or decision reached was wrong. A request for review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

The Commission recommends that, subject to the agreement of the candidate, where the office holder (in this instance the Chief Executive Officer of publicjobs or the Director General of the Irish Prison Service) considers the matter could be resolved they should first seek to engage on an informal basis, before making use of the formal review procedure.

### **Procedure for Informal Review**

- A request for Informal Review must be made within 5 working days of notification of the decision and should normally take place between the candidate and a representative of publicjobs or the Irish Prison Service who had played a key role in the selection process.
- Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such informal discussion, they may adopt the formal procedures set out below.
- If the candidate wishes the matter to be dealt with by way of a formal review, they must do so within 5 working days of the notification of the outcome of the informal review.

### **Procedure for Formal Review of Selection Process**

- The candidate must address their concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive of Publicjobs or the Director General of the Irish Prison Service), outlining the facts that they believe show an action taken or decision reached was wrong.

- The Formal Review will be conducted by a person who is completely independent of the selection process.
- A request for review must be made within 5 working days of the notification of the selection decision.
- 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/Director General.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 25 working days of receipt of the request for review. If the investigation does not produce a decision within this time, publicjobs or the Irish Prison Service must keep the candidate informed of the status of the review and the reasons for the delay.

## Section 8 - Complaints

Where a candidate may believe there was a breach of the Code of Practice by publicjobs or the Irish Prison Service that may have compromised the integrity of the decision reached in the selection or appointment process, they can have it investigated under Section 8 of the Code. The complaints process enables candidates (or potential candidates) to make a complaint to the Chief Executive Officer of Publicjobs or the Director General in the Irish Prison Service (whichever is appropriate) in the first instance, and to the Commission subsequently on appeal if they remain dissatisfied.

The complainant must outline the facts that they believe show that the process followed was wrong. The complainant must also identify the aspect of the Code they believe has been infringed and enclose any relevant documentation that may support the allegation. A complaint may be dismissed if they cannot support their allegations by setting out how publicjobs has fallen short of the principles of this Code.

- A request for Informal complaint must be made within 5 working days of notification of the decision and should normally take place between the candidate and a representative of publicjobs who had played a key role in the selection process.
- Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such informal discussion, they may adopt the formal procedures set out below.

If the candidate wishes the matter to be dealt with by way of a formal review, they must do so within 5 working days of the notification of the selection decision or within 5 working days of the outcome of the informal complaint.

**For further information on the above Review and Complaint procedures please see the *Code of Practice for Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* which is available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments, [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie).**

There is no obligation on publicjobs or the Irish Prison Service to suspend an appointment process while it considers a request for a review. Please note that where a formal review of a recruitment and selection process has taken place under Section 7 of this Code of Practice, a complainant may not seek a further review of the same process under Section 8, other than in the most exceptional circumstances that will be determined by the Commission at its sole discretion.

### **Candidates' obligations**

In applying for this competition, candidates must accept a number of obligations.

#### **Candidates must**

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned,
- Be of suitable character for the post,
- 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, available to and capable of undertaking those duties.

#### **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 impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Any attempt, direct or indirect by an Applicant to use influence by way of canvassing in connection with their application will cause them to be disqualified from the competition.

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is committing an offence. **A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to prosecution that may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.**

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

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

**Confidentiality of Information and Materials**

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.

Please note that all assessment and test materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the test material (including passages of information, questions or answer options), associated materials or interview related information may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process.

Any person who contravenes this provision, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.

**Use of Recording Equipment**

publicjobs does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording equipment on its premises or any location where assessments/tests/interviews, etc. take place, e.g., video interviews, teleconference. This applies to any form of sound recording and any type of still picture or video recording, whether including sound recording or not, and covers any type of device used for these purposes.

Any person wishing to use such equipment for any of these purposes must seek written permission in advance. This policy is in place to protect the privacy of staff and candidates/clients and the integrity of our assessment material and assessment processes.

Unsanctioned use of recording equipment by any person is a breach of this policy. Any candidate involved in such a breach could be disqualified from the competition and could be subject to prosecution under section 55 of the Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act, 2004.

In addition, where a person found guilty of such an offence was or is a candidate, then;

- Where they have not been appointed to the post they will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- Where they have been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, they shall forfeit that appointment.

**Confidentiality**

Candidates can expect that all enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings to the extent that they are managed by publicjobs are treated as strictly confidential, subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014. However, candidates should note that all application material may be made available to the Irish Prison Service.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, may be extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

### **Quality Customer Service**

We aim 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.

Please note, if publicjobs is not notified of any issues you experience in advance of or on the day of your assessment/interview, we will not be in a position to address these after the fact. Feedback will be provided on written request. A request for feedback does not impact on the timeframe set out for seeking a review.

### **General Data Protection Regulation**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th of May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive.

When you register with publicjobs.ie or submit an application for a competition, we create a computer record in your name. Information submitted with a job application is used in processing your application. 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. If you are successful following Stage 2 of the selection process, the information provided on your application form (excluding any equality monitoring information), will be provided to the Irish Prison Service to facilitate further stages of the selection process.

Equality Monitoring Data will be collected by publicjobs on the Application Form. This information is collected for statistical purposes and will be anonymised. Where appropriate, this anonymised statistical information will be shared with AGS.

The personal data supplied by you will be managed confidentially, securely and in accordance with the (EU) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 (2018 Act).

The processing of personal data is necessary for the safeguarding against, and the prevention of, threats to National Security and Public Security elements of the definition of scope for EU Directive 2016/680 (the Law Enforcement Directive, or LED) processing detailed under [Section 70\(1\)\(a\)](#) of the 2018 Act, and therefore subject to [Part 5](#) of the 2018 Act.

To make a request to access your personal data:

In the case of publicjobs, please submit your request by email to: [dpo@publicjobs.ie](mailto:dpo@publicjobs.ie)

In the case of the Irish Prison Service, please submit your request in writing to The Data Protection Co-Ordinator IDA Business Park, Ballinalee Road, Longford.

Ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable identification of the relevant record(s). Information in relation to a candidate's personal data held by publicjobs are set out on the

Data Protection page of [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

### **Protected Disclosures**

publicjobs Protected Disclosures Policy (including Reporting Options for all those covered by the Policy) is available at: [Protected Disclosures Policy](#)

publicjobs is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and encourage applications under all nine grounds of the employment equality act.

publicjobs is advertising this post and conducting the selection process including the post interview stage on behalf of the Irish Prison Service in compliance with the code of practice for appointment to positions in the Civil Service and Public Service prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Codes of Practice are published by the CPSA and are available on [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie)

publicjobs refers to Public Appointments Service established under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Acts 2004-2013

**Contact:** Justice Recruitment, publicjobs

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**URL:** [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

## Appendix I - Information regarding Prison Estate

The following gives information regarding the Prison Estate.

**Mountjoy Prison:** A closed, medium security prison for adult males. It is the main committal prison for Dublin city and county.

**Dóchas Centre:** A closed, medium security prison for females aged 18 years and over. It is the committal prison for females committed on remand or sentenced from all Courts outside the Munster area.

**Training Unit:** Previously a semi-open, low security institution for males aged 18 years and over. In 2017 it was temporarily closed to be repurposed as a centre to accommodate older prisoners.

**Wheatfield Place of Detention:** A closed, medium security place of detention for adult males.

**Cloverhill Prison:** A closed, medium security prison for adult males, which primarily caters for remand prisoners committed from the Leinster area.

**Portlaoise Prison:** A closed high security prison for adult males. It is the committal prison for those sent to custody from the Special Criminal Court and prisoners accommodated here include those linked with subversive crime.

**Midlands Prison:** A closed, medium security prison for adult males. It is the committal prison for counties Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Offaly and Westmeath.

**Shelton Abbey:** An open, low security prison for males aged 19 years and over who are regarded as requiring lower levels of security.

**Cork:** A closed, medium security prison for adult males. It is the committal prison for counties Cork, Kerry and Waterford.

**Limerick Prison:** A closed, medium security prison for adult males and females. It is the committal prison for males for counties Clare, Limerick and Tipperary and for females for all six Munster counties.

**Loughan House:** An open, low security prison for males aged 18 years and over who are regarded as requiring lower levels of security.

**Castlerea:** A closed, medium security prison for adult males. It is the committal prison for remand and sentenced prisoners in Connaught and also takes committals from counties Cavan, Donegal and Longford.

**Arbour Hill:** A closed, medium security prison for adult males. The prisoner profile is largely made up of long-term sentenced prisoners.

**Stack House:** The Irish Prison Service Training College

**Prison Service Headquarters:** The main administrative centre for the Irish Prison Service located in Longford.

## Appendix 2

### Recruit Prison Officer Competencies

### Effective Performance Indicators

|                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adaptability                           | <p>Prison Officers work in rapidly changing environments where they may be required to adjust their plans at short notice, whilst constantly seeking to develop themselves.</p> <p>Seeks to develop and continually improve performance, learning from others and from their mistakes.</p> <p>Prepared to work flexibly in a rapidly changing environment.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Information Handling and Communication | <p>Prison Officers need to read, understand and record a range of information using Information Technology, written and oral communication. Situational Awareness requires them to constantly interpret their environment and the people around them and they will require numerical skills to manage e.g. resources and prisoners' money.</p> <p>Uses and records information effectively, writes clearly and has good basic numerical skills. Is observant and sensitive to their environment, solves problems and uses the rules effectively.</p> <p>Communicates clearly and ensures information is used and passed on appropriately.</p> |
| Supporting Others                      | <p>A Prison Officer needs to have a positive working relationship with, and sensitivity to the needs of, the prisoners they are responsible for and the colleagues they work with.</p> <p>Is sensitive to others, responds to their needs, is non-judgmental and treats people with dignity, fairness and respect. Actively engages with others, building rapport by conversing and listening.</p> <p>Works co-operatively with others, encouraging and motivating them to achieve and develop.</p>                                                                                                                                           |
| Conscientiousness                      | <p>Prison Officers need to be conscientious to ensure that safety and security measures are accurately completed and to meet their commitments to colleagues and prisoners alike.</p> <p>Meets their working obligations in a thorough, willing and responsible manner, achieving a high quality of work to the timescales set. Follows the rules and procedures, even when unsupervised, and sets high standards for themselves in the way they do their job and present themselves.</p>                                                                                                                                                     |
| Directing Others                       | <p>Prison Officers are required to provide a safe and secure environment, and this involves taking a firm, authoritative lead, dealing with conflict and standing your ground to ensure these needs are met.</p> <p>Is prepared to make rapid, objective decisions and give firm direction to maintain safety and security, even when such decisions and action may be unpopular. Remains independent and stands their ground, ensuring that all relationships remain professional.</p>                                                                                                                                                       |
| Resilience                             | <p>Prison Officers have to work in a potentially stressful environment, encountering conflict and distress and they need to be able to manage their own stress and emotions to protect themselves and act professionally.</p> <p>Manages stress and controls their emotions to ensure they act appropriately in routine as well as in challenging situations. Has sufficient self-assurance and clarity about their own and the Service's values to resist pressures to act unprofessionally.</p>                                                                                                                                             |

### Appendix 3

#### Self-Assessment Questionnaire

This short questionnaire encourages you to review how your interests, skills and experiences match the challenging requirements of the Recruit Prison Officer.

Please work through the statements below, and decide on the answer that best reflects your level of agreement with each statement in the context of where you are in your current career, and decide whether you:

- (a) Strongly Agree
- (b) Agree
- (c) Disagree
- (d) Strongly Disagree with each statement below.

Use your current and past experiences and your expectations for the future to help you decide on your response. You may feel that some of the statements are not relevant to you or you may find it difficult to choose an appropriate answer, however, try to choose the most relevant option presented.

While this questionnaire will not form any part of the selection process you are advised to answer all statements in advance of proceeding with your application.

| Could you:                                                                                                                                                               | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Do you have the sensitivity to deal with people when they are distressed, confused or being obstructive?                                                                 |                |       |          |                   |
| Can you take the responsibility for representing the Irish Prison Service when you are at work and when you are not?                                                     |                |       |          |                   |
| Do you have the belief that people have the capacity to change?                                                                                                          |                |       |          |                   |
| Do you think you are someone who “does the right thing” even when working alone/not being supervised?                                                                    |                |       |          |                   |
| Are you able to meet the demands of working in a disciplined, uniformed service?                                                                                         |                |       |          |                   |
| Can you take orders from other people?                                                                                                                                   |                |       |          |                   |
| Can you accept the need to keep to rules that tell you what you can and cannot wear and the standard of appearance you must maintain e.g. how you should wear your hair? |                |       |          |                   |

|                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Can you get on with people from different backgrounds and cultures?                                                                                                                    |  |  |  |  |
| Do you have the emotional strength and resilience to deal with a Death in Custody or other instances where there may be severe injuries or loss of life?                               |  |  |  |  |
| Can you work as part of a close-knit team?                                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |  |
| Can you work under pressure without letting the rest of your team down?                                                                                                                |  |  |  |  |
| Are you committed to maintaining and developing your skills?                                                                                                                           |  |  |  |  |
| Are you prepared to study on top of your normal working day?                                                                                                                           |  |  |  |  |
| Are you committed to maintaining your health and physical fitness?                                                                                                                     |  |  |  |  |
| Is regular exercise a part of your everyday life?                                                                                                                                      |  |  |  |  |
| Are you prepared to work day and night shifts, evenings, weekends, public holidays?                                                                                                    |  |  |  |  |
| Are you someone who can always be relied on to be punctual?                                                                                                                            |  |  |  |  |
| Are you someone that others see as dependable?                                                                                                                                         |  |  |  |  |
| Are you prepared to work even if you don't know when a job might finish?                                                                                                               |  |  |  |  |
| Are you someone who can cope with routine, knowing that you may have to do the same things at the same time on most days with the frustration of sudden interruptions to your routine? |  |  |  |  |

**Note: having completed the above, if you are still confident that a career as a Recruit Prison Officer is for you, proceed to complete your online application.**