



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Open Competition for Appointment to the Role of

Serological Assistant

in the

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

This competition will be run in compliance with the Codes of Practice prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Codes of Practice are published by the CPSA and are available on www.cpsa.ie.

Contact: Competitions & Recruitment Section Tel: 057 8680471
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Please Read Carefully

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**Serological Assistant
in the
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine**

Section 1: Overview of the Department

The Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) has an embedded laboratory service comprising a central laboratory complex at Backweston, a network of regional laboratories in 5 locations (Cork, Limerick, Athlone, Kilkenny and Sligo) and a research farm facility. DAFM laboratories have an overall staff compliment of approximately 300 persons engaged in work relating to animal health, food safety and plant and environmental sciences. The laboratories are currently undergoing a significant transformation underpinned by the vision statement, “Scientific Excellence – Safeguarding and Enhancing Public, Animal and Plant Health and our Environment”.

Vacancies

The Department currently has vacancies for the role of Serological Assistant at the Department’s central laboratory complex at Backweston Campus, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. This panel may also be used to fill vacancies in regional locations if the need arises.

It is planned to interview potential candidates to fill these vacancies. Following an assessment process, candidates who achieve the qualifying standard will be placed on an Order of Merit and assigned to fill vacancies as they arise. The Order of Merit remains in force for a period of up to two years from the date of the first appointment or until exhausted.

Candidates who refuse an offer of appointment to a specific location will retain their placing on the panel but forfeit their right to be offered any further appointment to that location.

Temporary Vacancies

If temporary vacancies for this post arise during the lifetime of the Order of Merit, the Department reserves the right to offer such temporary posts based on the results of this competition. Candidates who accept such a temporary post retain their placing on the Order of Merit and the acceptance of such a temporary appointment in no way interferes with the normal process of appointing candidates to permanent posts that may arise.

Section 2: Job Specification

The role

Serological Assistants are a laboratory support role within DAFM laboratories, whose primary role is to receive and process serum samples.

Principal duties of the post.

- (1) Receipt and logging of samples.
- (2) Processing samples prior to testing, primarily serum samples.
- (3) Carry out various serological tests and use of robotic instrumentation.
- (4) Assist in preparation of reagents and solutions.

- (5) Dispatch of samples within the laboratory service and to external laboratories.
- (6) Assist laboratory analysts and veterinary staff as required.
- (7) Read and recording of test results.
- (8) Assist in training of new serological assistants.

Section 3: Person Specification

Essential Requirements

Candidates must, on or before the 26th of March 2024, have obtained:

- (A) (i) an Irish Leaving Certificate with a minimum of grade D3 in five subjects at ordinary level including English with at least one science subject (Biology, Chemistry or Physics) and ordinary level Leaving Certificate Mathematics or
- (ii) a qualification that in the opinion of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is of a standard in terms of subjects, level and volume of learning, not lower than the standard of qualification specified in (i) above.

AND

- (B) Must have a proven proficiency in English. Such competency may be proven by achieving the relevant grades or qualifications specified in (A) (i) above.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will verify the validity of qualifications other than the Irish Leaving Certificate with QQI; applicant should not contact QQI directly.

Important to note: Candidates must meet the Essential Requirements listed above and must have obtained their qualifications on or before the date 26th March 2024. **If you do not meet the essential requirements, your application will not receive any consideration for the post.**

Desirable Requirements

- (1) Relevant post-secondary school laboratory experience.
- (2) IT skills that may be used in a laboratory setting.
- (3) A post-leaving certificate qualification in laboratory science (QQI/NFQ level 5 or higher).

Personal attributes required for the performance for this position.

- (1) Team worker.
- (2) Good Interpersonal and communication skills.
- (3) Methodical approach to organising work and managing time.

Competencies

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

1. Specialist Knowledge

- Develops and maintains the skills and expertise required to perform in the role effectively
- Is committed to self-development and continuously seeks to improve personal performance

2. Teamwork and Communication Skills

- Shows respect for colleagues and co-workers, courteous and professional, remaining composed, even in challenging circumstances.
- Develops and maintains good working relationships with others, sharing information and knowledge, as appropriate.
- Offers own ideas and perspectives, understands own role in the team, making every effort to play their part.
- Actively listens to others and tries to understand their perspectives/ requirements/ needs.
- Understands the steps or processes that customers must go through and can clearly explain these.
- Communicates clearly and fluently when speaking and in writing.

3. Information Management/Processing

- Approaches and delivers all work in a thorough and organised manner.
- Follows procedures and protocols, understanding their value and the rationale behind them.
- Keeps high quality records that are easy for others to understand.
- Draws appropriate conclusions from information.
- Suggests new ways of doing things better and more efficiently.
- Is comfortable working with different types of information, e.g. written, numerical, charts etc

4. Drive and Commitment

- Consistently strives to perform at a high level and deliver a quality service.
- Takes responsibility for work and sees it through to the appropriate next level.
- Completes work in a timely manner.
- Demonstrates initiative and flexibility in ensuring work is delivered.
- Is personally honest and trustworthy.

Candidates should note that admission to the competition does not imply that they meet the eligibility criteria. Therefore, candidates should satisfy themselves that they meet the eligibility criteria for this competition.

Section 4: Application and Selection Process

How to Apply

Application forms may be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/a6f25-dafm-upcoming-competitions/>

All sections of the form must be fully completed in **Word document format and submitted by way of email to Competitions@agriculture.gov.ie with the subject heading *Serological Assistant 2024*.**

Note: As outlined above, if you do not meet the Essential Requirements listed under Section 3, your application will receive no further consideration.

Closing Date

Your application must be submitted no later than **12pm (noon) on Tuesday 26th March 2024** to;

All queries relating to this recruitment campaign should be directed to Competitions@agriculture.gov.ie with the subject heading ***Serological Assistant 2024***.

Application acknowledgements:

All applications received will be acknowledged within 5 working days of the competition closing date. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within the 5 working days, please contact Competitions Section on 057-8680471 or by email: competitions@agriculture.gov.ie

Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

Selection Process

The methods used to select candidates for this post may include some or all of the following:

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

Communication

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

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

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

NOTE: Candidates should note that where a short-listing exercise based on the information supplied in the application form is applied, a board will examine application forms and assess them against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position as outlined in this booklet. It is therefore in candidates' interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of their experiences relevant to this post in the application form.

Candidates must produce satisfactory documentary evidence of all relevant qualifications and experience claimed by them, if required.

Section 5: Eligibility to Compete

Eligibility to compete and certain restrictions on eligibility

Citizenship Requirements

Eligible Candidates must be:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area. 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**
- (e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015, or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa **or**
- (f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa

***Please note that a 50 TEU visa, which is a replacement for Stamp 4EUFAM after Brexit, is acceptable as a Stamp 4 equivalent.**

To qualify candidates be eligible by the date of any job offer.

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 re-employment 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 re-employment 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 employment.

Employer of Choice

As an Employer of Choice the Civil Service has many flexible and family friendly policies e.g. Worksharing, Shorter Working Year, Remote Working (operated on a 'blended' basis), etc. All elective policies can be applied for in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and are subject to the business needs of the organisation.

Section 6: Principal Conditions of Service

General

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

Pay

The salary scale for this position, with effect from 1st October 2023 is as follows:

Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) Pay Rate:

€625.45, €665.93, €682.18, €708.43, €731.45, €761.56, €792.30, €823.61, €855.40, €887.79, €920.76, €954.14 (NMAX), 971.77 (LSI1).

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 not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increment (LSI1) may be payable after 3 years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Important Note:

Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and will not be subject to negotiation and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Increments may be awarded annually subject to satisfactory performance.

Different terms and conditions may apply, if, immediately prior to appointment the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant 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 an officer's choice. Payment cannot be made until a bank account number and bank sort code has been supplied to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Statutory deductions from salary will be made as appropriate.

An officer appointed to the post of Serological Assistant 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/Formers Staff Members/Pensioners.

Tenure and Probation:

The successful candidate who is appointed to the post will be required to give a written undertaking that they will remain in the assigned post for a minimum of two years before being eligible for transfer. However, in certain circumstances the business needs of the Department may dictate that an officer be transferred earlier.

The appointment is to a permanent position as Serological Assistant and will be subject to a probationary period of 12 months from the date of appointment. During the period of probation, an officer's performance will be subject to review by the appropriate supervisor(s) to determine whether the officer:

- (i) has performed in a satisfactory manner
- (ii) has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- (iii) is suitable from the viewpoint of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Prior to completion of the probationary period a decision will be made as to whether or not the officer will be retained. This decision will be based on the officer's performance assessed against the criteria set out in (i) to (iii) above. The detail of the probationary process will be explained to the officer by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on commencement of employment.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs in this section, the probationary period 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 employer 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 employee's 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 one-year probationary period. 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.

Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2015:

The Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2015 will not apply to the termination of this employment by reason only of the expiry of this probationary contract without it being renewed.

Duties:

The employee will be required to perform any duties appropriate to the position which may be assigned from time to time. The officer may not engage in private practice or be connected with any business which would interfere with the performance of official duties or conflict with their role in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Headquarters:

The employee's headquarters will be such as may be designated from time to time by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. When absent from home and headquarters on duty appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances will be paid, subject to the normal civil service regulations.

Hours of attendance:

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time. At present they amount to 41 hours 15 minutes gross per week (35 hours net of breaks). The successful candidate may be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of their duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations. Where extra attendance is necessary, overtime payments, or time off in lieu, will be allowed in accordance with the Civil Service overtime regulations.

Annual Leave:

The annual leave allowance will be 22 days per annum, rising to 23 days after 5 years' service, rising to 24 days after 10 years' service, rising to 25 days after 12 years' service and rising to 26 days after 14 years' service. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave and is on the basis of a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Health:

A candidate for and any person holding the office must be fully competent and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the office and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

The Organisation of Working Time Act 1997:

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

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 paying the 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 direct to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Payment of salary 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

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:

- Pensionable Age: The minimum age at which pension is payable is the same as the age of eligibility for the State Pension, currently 66.
- Retirement Age: Scheme members must retire on reaching the age of 70.
- 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 Consumer Price Index (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 their 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).
- **Ill-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 their 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 PAS.

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

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 Acts 1997, 2003 and 2014. The officer will agree not to disclose to 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 their 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 foregoing 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.

Section 7: Important Information

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014 applications will be treated in strict confidence. All aspects of the application and assessment process are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside of those persons directly involved in an aspect of the assessment process.

Clearance Procedure

Candidates who come under consideration for appointment to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will be required to undergo a clearance procedure that will include, but is not restricted to, security checks by An Garda Síochána on all addresses in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland at which the candidate resided, verification of identity, qualifications, experience, and medical status, and the provision of references. For a candidate who was permanently resident outside of Ireland for extended periods of time, they will be asked to obtain a Police Certificate from the country of residence confirming that they have no criminal record arising from their period of residence in that country. In addition the Department may make any other queries deemed necessary to establish the candidate's suitability for the post. 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.

Other important information

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or an invitation to attend any element of the selection process, is not to be taken as implying that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for selection tests/interview(s) you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Should the person assigned to a post decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises the Department may, at its discretion, select another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

Candidates' Rights - Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process

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

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

- **Informal Review:** Where possible, and only with the agreement of the candidate, every effort will be made to resolve any issues/complaints by way of an informal process.
- **Section 7** review procedures apply in cases where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their candidature.

- **Section 8** review procedures apply where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSCA's Code of Practice.

Requests for Review

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

Timelines for review requests are as follows:

Section 6 Informal Review	SECTION 7 Formal Review	SECTION 8 Formal Review
<p>Request for Informal Review – within 5 working days of the original selection decision: Decision to issue within 5 working days from receipt of the request.</p>	<p>Interim stage of competition Request for Formal Review – within 5 working days of receipt of decision</p> <p>Final stage of competition Request for Formal Review – within 5 working days of the candidate receiving notification of either the original decision or the decision on their informal complaint. Decision to issue within 25 working days.</p>	<p>Request for Formal Review – within 5 working days of the candidate receiving notification of either the original decision or the decision on their informal complaint. Decision to issue within 25 working days.</p> <p>Appeal to the CPSCA – 10 working days after receipt of decision arising from office holder's review</p>

Candidates' Obligations

- Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.
- Candidates must not:
 - knowingly or recklessly provide false information
 - canvass any person with or without inducements
 - interfere with or compromise the process in any way
- a third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process
- any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.
- in addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then: where they have not been appointed to a 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.

Specific candidate criteria

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

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

There is no obligation on DAFM to suspend an appointment process while a Review or Complaint is being considered. However, the CPSA expects that, where possible, DAFM will intervene in cases where it finds an error is likely to have occurred.

Section 8: Data Protection and Confidentiality Statement

By submitting an application form for the purpose of applying for recruitment to, or promotion or assignment within, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, candidates give consent for the personal data submitted to be processed as part of the selection process and administration of that competition. By consenting to this agreement, candidates give permission for the data submitted as part of this application form to be processed by DAFM's Competitions & Recruitment section for the purpose of administration and for relevant data to be made available to assessment boards for the purpose of assessing and selecting the most suitable candidate(s). The data submitted will not be used for any other purpose and will be retained in accordance with the Department's retention policy.

All such information will be maintained safely and securely in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/678 (GDPR). Personal information will be treated in confidence and will not be shared with any party outside of those outlined as part of the selection process and administration of the competition.

In line with the Data Protection Acts 19 88-2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, you maintain, among others, the following rights in this regard;

- To receive a copy of the personal data that we hold about you;
- To request that any inaccurate data that is held about you is corrected or, if we have incomplete information, you may request that we update the information such that it is complete;
- To request, in certain circumstances, that we erase your personal data;
- To restrict processing;
- To have your personal information sent directly to yourself or to another organisation;

A comprehensive Data Protection Notice for Competitions & Recruitment is available on the Department's website at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/ef9f6-data-protection/>

Internal candidates can access the document on the Competitions and Recruitment Home Page on Ezone.