



**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**

**Technical Agricultural Officer**

**Select locations in Cork, Dublin, Kerry, Kildare, Meath and Waterford**

**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](http://www.cpsa.ie).

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## Section 1: Overview of the Department

The mission of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is to serve the government and people of Ireland by leading, developing and regulating the agri-food sector, protecting public health and optimising social, economic and environmental benefits.

The agri-food sector encompasses all primary agriculture, forestry and the food processing industry, including seafood.

The Department has a wide and diverse customer base which includes farmers, consumers, food processors and other commercial operators, those involved in sea fishing, forestry, bio-energy, research as well as EU institutions, other State Bodies and special interest groups.

The Department's mission is encapsulated in the following four goals:

- **Agri-Food and Fisheries Policy, Development and Trade:** Progressing, in collaboration with relevant sectors and State Bodies, the further development of the agri-food and marine sector including the achievement of Food Vision 2030 targets.
- **Food Safety, Animal Health and Welfare and Plant Health:** Maintaining the highest standards of food safety, consumer protection, animal health and welfare and plant health.
- **Rural Economy, Marine and Environment:** Promoting economic, social and environmentally sustainable farming, fishing and forestry.
- **Effective Delivery of Schemes and Services:** Further enhance our human and technological capabilities to provide effective and responsive services for all clients.

### Vacancies and Location of Posts

Appointments will be to current Technical Agricultural Officer vacancies that exist across the Department in the locations below.

The posts to be primarily filled from this competition will be located in the following locations;

- Bandon, Co. Cork
- Clonakilty, Co. Cork
- Cork City, Co. Cork
- Middleton, Co. Cork
- Mitchelstown, Co. Cork
- Timoleague Co Cork
- Watergrasshill, Co. Cork
- Swords, Co Dublin
- Tralee, Co. Kerry
- Backweston Farm, Co Kildare
- Kildare Town, Co. Kildare
- Moyvalley, Co Kildare
- Naas, Co. Kildare
- Navan, Co. Meath
- Grannagh, Co. Waterford

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.

Other vacancies that arise in Cork, Dublin, Kerry, Kildare, Meath and Waterford may be filled from this Order of Merit while it is in operation. These vacancies may be in any of the Department's offices/locations throughout these counties.

### **Temporary Vacancies**

In the event that temporary vacancies for this role arise during the lifetime of the Order of Merit, the Department reserves the right to offer such temporary posts on the basis of 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**

Technical Agricultural Officers are essential members of the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine team, entrusted with critical responsibilities related to various services, controls and schemes operated by the Department. They play a vital role in safeguarding animal welfare, public health, animal health and plant health and ensuring the smooth functioning of EU payment schemes.

Technical Agricultural Officers must have a good knowledge and understanding of these services, schemes, programmes and controls to ensure they are conducted to the required standard. The role of Technical Agricultural Officer can be in areas such as horticulture, plant health, forestry, animal health, animal welfare, food science/safety and engineering.

The following are some duties associated with the role of a Technical Agricultural Officer:

- Interacting with the public/customers on schemes and services;
- Supervision and/or monitoring of activities of food and feed business operators and ensuring compliance with all regulations;
- On farm controls and operator checks required under national and EU legislation;
- Dealing with animal welfare, public health and animal health (including disease control) in line with legislative requirements; and
- A range of other duties e.g. certification duties, crop evaluation, fisheries, forestry, pesticide control, poultry & eggs and wildlife duties.

### **Working Environment**

Technical Agricultural Officers may be required to work in industrial conditions, e.g. meat plants and rendering plants. Technical Agricultural Officers in other work areas may carry out both office and outdoor duties. Outdoor duties may include farm inspections under the various EU Schemes. Technical Agricultural Officers may be assigned work in more than one work area of the Department, depending on seasonal and geographical demands. Officers may also be required to transfer to other locations and work areas on a temporary basis. In-service training will be provided in the various work areas.

### **Health & Safety**

Technical Agricultural Officers must comply with the duties of employees as defined under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Technical Agricultural Officers must comply in full with all safety, health and welfare directions, policies and instructions issued by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine either centrally or by their line manager.

### **Special Equipment and Facilities provided in connection with the Duties**

Special equipment, as required, will be provided by the Department to carry out the various duties. All staff are provided with the necessary training including health and safety training and the necessary personal protective clothing for the tasks to be carried out. Familiarity with the equipment and procedures is not necessary as training is provided. Personal protective clothing must be worn as directed.

## **Section 3: Person Specification**

### **Essential Entry Requirements**

Candidates must have on or before **31 October 2024**:

1. (a) A Level 6 Award in Agriculture on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ);  
**or**  
(b) A qualification at minimum Level 6 or higher on the NFQ;
2. The candidate must demonstrate requisite knowledge and practical experience of the agri-food sector;
3. Ability to be adaptable and resilient;
4. Strong communication & interpersonal skills;
5. Experience of operating successfully both independently and in a team environment.

**Important to Note: Candidates must have their qualification on or before the 31 October 2024. Vacancies that arise before this date will be offered first to candidates that hold qualifications\* on the date of offer. Candidates must provide evidence of their Official Award from the associated Awarding Body upon request.**

**\*For the purposes of this competition, a candidate is deemed as holding a qualification when in receipt of their Official Award from the associated Awarding Body. Academic results transcripts do not constitute an Official Award. DAFM does reserve the right to seek submission of full academic transcripts should any queries arise relating to educational requirements.**

**In addition to the above, candidates must also be able to demonstrate the Key Competencies identified for effective performance in the role (see page 6).**

### **Desirable Skills and Experience**

- Knowledge of regulatory/control systems for Irish agri-food production;
- Knowledge of public health and food safety;
- Qualifications in areas such as horticulture, plant health, forestry, animal health, animal welfare or food science/safety and engineering;
- Good computer skills including the use of Microsoft Office;
- A current full clean driving licence (Category B) and/or access to a car.

## **Competencies**

Applicants should have all the attributes required of a Technical Agricultural Officer as identified in the following competency framework.

### **Team Work:**

- Shows respect for colleagues and co-workers
- 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

### **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

### **Delivery of Results:**

- Takes responsibility for work and sees it through to the appropriate next level
- Completes work in a timely manner
- Adapts quickly to new ways of doing things
- Checks all work thoroughly to ensure it is completed to a high standard
- Identifies and appreciates the urgency and importance of different tasks
- Demonstrates initiative and flexibility in ensuring work is delivered
- Is self reliant and uses judgment on when to ask manager or colleagues for guidance

### **Customer Service & Communication Skills:**

- 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
- Is respectful, courteous and professional, remaining composed, even in challenging circumstances
- Communicates clearly and fluently when speaking and in writing

### **Drive & Commitment:**

- Consistently strives to perform at a high level and deliver a quality service
- Is thorough and conscientious, even if work is routine
- Is resilient, persevering in the face of challenges and setbacks
- Is personally honest and trustworthy
- At all times, acts with integrity

### **Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development:**

- Develops and maintains the skills and expertise required to perform in the role effectively, e.g. relevant technologies, IT systems, relevant policies etc.
- Clearly understands the role, objectives and targets and how they fit into the work of the unit
- Is committed to self development and continuously seeks to improve personal performance

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<p><b>Candidates should note that admission to the competition does not imply that they meet the eligibility criteria. Therefore candidates should satisfy themselves that they meet the eligibility criteria for this competition.</b></p>
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## 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](mailto:competitions@agriculture.gov.ie) with the subject heading **Technical Agricultural Officer 2024**

### Closing Date

Your application must be submitted no later than **Friday 22 March 2024 at 12:00pm** to [competitions@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:competitions@agriculture.gov.ie);

All queries relating to this recruitment campaign should be directed to [competitions@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:competitions@agriculture.gov.ie) with the subject heading **Technical Agricultural Officer 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](mailto: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 must meet one of the citizenship criteria above 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. Work-sharing, 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.

The Civil Service also operates a Mobility scheme for all general service grades. This scheme provides staff with career opportunities to learn and partake in diverse roles across a range of Civil Service organisations and geographical locations.

## **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 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 is as follows:

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

€28,537.00, €30,007.00, €30,963.00, €32,576.00, €34,189.00, €35,475.00, €36,863.00, €38,076.00, €39,621.00, €41,176.00, €42,737.00, €44,297.00, €45,861.00, €47,376.00, €49,423.00(NMAX), €50,986.00(LSI1), €52,563.00(LSI2).

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 increments may be payable after 3(LSI1) and 6(LSI2) 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 fortnightly 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 Technical Agricultural Officer 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 a Technical Agricultural Officer 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 will 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.

### **Annual Leave**

The annual leave allowance will be 22 days per annum, rising to 23 days after 5 years' service, 24 days after 10 years' service, 25 days after 12 years' service and 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](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:

- 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 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](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 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.

Priority on offers of appointment will be to candidates who hold the qualification at the time of offer of appointment. For any candidate who achieves a place on the order of merit and does not meet the entry requirements at the time of offer of appointment, will retain their placing on the order of merit, and will be considered for any future posts, subject to meeting the entry requirement.

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.

### **Technical Agricultural Officer 2023 – Open Competition run by the Public Appointments Service (PAS)**

This competition remains active, any candidate that has either successfully passed interview and awaiting an offer of appointment from PAS, or any candidate waiting to be called for interview to their selected county retains their position on that competition. This TAO 2024 competition is open for all to apply and for the selected counties, as advertised.

### **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](http://www.cpsa.ie).

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

- **Informal Review:** Where possible, and only with the agreement of the candidate, every effort will be made to resolve any issues/complaints by way of an informal process.

- **Section 7** review procedures apply in cases where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their candidature.
- **Section 8** review procedures apply where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA's Code of Practice.

### Requests for Review

Requests for informal review should be submitted to [competitions@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto: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](mailto: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><b>Request for Informal Review</b> – within 5 working days of the original selection decision: Decision to issue within 5 working days from receipt of the request.</p>	<p><b>Interim Stage of Competition</b> Request for Formal Review – within 5 working days of receipt of decision</p> <p><b>Final Stage of Competition</b> 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><b>Request for Formal Review</b> – 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><b>Appeal to the CPSA</b> – 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:
  - (i) knowingly or recklessly provide false information
  - (ii) canvass any person with or without inducements
  - (iii) 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:
  - (i) have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned
  - (ii) be suitable on the grounds of character
  - (iii) 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
    - a) 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
    - b) 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 1988-2018 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.