

NOTICE OF POSSIBLE IMPENDING CHANGES IN SUPERANNUATION PROVISIONS AND RETIREMENT AGES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Pension Arrangements and Retirement Ages in the Public Service

Candidates should note that changes are currently being made in the superannuation provisions and retirement ages for public servants and that such changes may apply to these appointments. Candidates will be informed of the position at the time an offer of appointment is being made. At present retirement is compulsory at age 65.

In this context, candidates should note that the Minister for Finance, in his Budget Speech on 3 December 2003, stated that, for new entrants to the public service, with effect from 1 April 2004:

- *the minimum pension age will be increased to 65 for most new entrants to the public service;*
- *this includes new entrant civil servants, teachers and staff in local government, the health services and non-commercial State Sponsored bodies;*
- *the present compulsory retirement age of 65 will be removed enabling staff to remain longer in work should they wish, subject to suitability and health requirements;*
- *the minimum pension age will be increased to 65 for members of the Oireachtas and Office Holders elected or appointed on or after 1 April 2004;*
- *the minimum pension age will be increased to 55 for new entrant Gardaí and Prison Officers and, in the case of new entrant Gardaí, the compulsory retirement age will be increased to age 60, subject to annual health and fitness certification after age 55;*
- *a minimum pension age of 50 will be introduced for new entrant Defence Forces personnel;*
- *the current minimum pension age of 55 for Fire-fighters will be retained for new entrants.*

Candidates should note also that, in the Summary of Budget Measures, the Minister states that, in respect of the generality of new entrants to the public service, including civil servants, staff in education (including primary and second level teachers), staff in local government (including officers in the Fire Service), staff in the health services (including psychiatric staff employed under the Mental Treatment Act) and staff in non-commercial State Sponsored bodies:

Pension benefits for new entrants will accrue on a standard basis (i.e. one year's credit for one year's service up to a maximum of 40 years' service). For some categories (psychiatric nurses and others covered by the Mental Treatment Act and officers in the Fire Service), this means that the doubling of service after 20 years for pension purposes (effectively allowing a full pension to be obtained after 30 years' service rather than the standard 40 years) will not apply to people recruited on or after 1 April 2004.