

# Welcome



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



Welcome to the Health Service Executive (HSE). You join us at a very exciting and challenging time. The organisation is changing rapidly with the emphasis on a client/patient centered approach. This will require a strong focus on team work and, particularly, interdisciplinary working.

This is our first Employee Handbook and we hope to add and expand on it over the coming years to reflect new legislation and agreements. The Internet site is currently being developed and we will be posting our policies and procedures there. Updates and amendments will also be posted on our Intranet site and your Manager will be informed.

The purpose of this Handbook is to outline for you the structures of the HSE, to guide you on our employment policies, learning and development opportunities and to help you understand what we expect from you and what you can expect from the HSE.

Please take time to read this Handbook. Any questions you have can be directed to your Line Manager in the first instance.

As an Employee of the HSE you will be an important member of your team contributing to our goal – the provision of a world class health system.

I wish you every success in your career with the HSE.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brendan Drumm".

**Professor Brendan Drumm**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Our Purpose = Our Mission**  
To enable people live healthier  
and more fulfilled lives

**Our Ambition = Our Vision**  
Easy Access  
Confidence  
Staff Pride

#### Transformation Priorities

Develop integrated services across all stages of the care journey.

Configure Primary, Community and Continuing Care services so that they deliver optimal and cost effective results.

Configure Hospital Services to deliver optimal and cost effective results.

Implement a model for the prevention and management of chronic illness.

Implement standards based performance measurement and management throughout the HSE.

Ensure all staff engage in transforming health and social care in Ireland.

The HSE recognises and values the diversity of all Employees and is committed to developing working practices which will allow every Employee to contribute his or her best, regardless of race, gender, family status, membership of travellers' community, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability or sexual orientation.

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# 01 Part 1

## Joining the HSE



02

## 1.1 Introduction

### Our Priorities are:

- **Focus on Customers**
  - Base all your decisions on what will deliver the best service
  - Always try to make it easier for people to access our services
  - Make sure we constantly provide high quality services
- **Efficiency**
  - Whatever you do, think HSE, not just your own area
  - Reduce the need for people to navigate the system by simplifying the way we deliver our services
  - Maximise the use of facilities and capacity by planning ahead
- **Teamwork**
  - Respect the skills and abilities of others, regardless of grade or demarcation
  - Challenge constructively; neither give nor take offence
  - Share resources and actively support each other
  - Actively acknowledge the efforts of others
- **Take the Initiative**
  - Take responsibility; "Its up to me – others are depending on me"
  - Don't just talk about problems or work around them, help solve them
  - Be innovative and set an example for others to follow
- **Your Colleagues**
  - Challenge each other to achieve the highest standards
  - Take an interest in the development of each member of staff
  - Above all, be courteous
- **Lead by Example**
  - Set challenging goals
  - Be accountable; do what you say you will do
  - Go the extra mile

### About this Handbook

**This is the first Employee Handbook that the HSE has produced. It sets about helping you understand your terms and conditions of employment.**

**Taking time to become familiar with the Handbook's contents will help you:**

- Get to know the organisation of the Health Service Executive – your employer
- Understand the policies and agreements surrounding your employment
- Know what you can expect from your colleagues and what they will expect from you
- Know what to do if you have a grievance
- Know about communication and consultation policies and procedures
- Understand leave from work, pay and pension
- Know about development opportunities

As this is the first Employee Handbook for HSE Employees it must be understood that in many areas a standard national policy has not been agreed. Accordingly, it will be necessary to check with your Line Manager for the local policy.

As national policies are agreed they will be communicated via Intranet updates and general notices to Line Managers and Employees.

## 1.2 Your first point of contact

**Your first point of contact for all aspects of your employment will be your Line Manager who will be able to help you with most questions or direct you to the appropriate department.**

### Your Contract

This Handbook, and your Contract, set out your employment terms and conditions with the HSE. Take time to read this Handbook and your Contract, and if you have any questions check with your Line Manager.

*Detailed information regarding terms and conditions of employment are available on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Hours of Work

Your hours of work are specified in your Contract of Employment and your times of attendance are as notified by your Line Manager.

Employees are expected to report for duty at the normal starting time and not to leave before the rostered finishing time.

Employees are expected to co-operate with the time recording systems in operation at their place of employment.

### How we work

Most people in the HSE work as part of a team. In addition to the performance management relationship which exists between the individual and the Line Manager, a strategic and integrated approach to teamwork, called Team Based Performance Management (TBPM) is being implemented. This will deliver sustained success by improving the performance of people who work in teams and by developing team capabilities and individual contributors. At the core of the process is the team, identifying and setting performance targets in line with the aims and objectives of the HSE.

## 1.3 Your Employer – The HSE

*Aims:*

- Understand the HSE
- See where you fit within the organisation
- Know who the senior Management Team are
- Find out who the local Management Team are

### Role of the HSE

The HSE is the first ever body charged with managing the Irish Health Service as a unified system, bringing together the roles of many agencies that previously operated as separate entities. As outlined in the Health Act 2004, the objective of the Executive is: "to use the resources available to it in the most beneficial, effective and efficient manner to improve, promote and protect the health and welfare of the public."

The establishment of the HSE represents the beginning of the largest programme of change ever undertaken in the Irish Public Service. Prior to this, services were delivered through a complex structure of ten regional Boards, the ERHA and a number of statutory agencies and other bodies. This structure had been in place since the early 1970's. The HSE replaces all of these organisations. It is now the single body responsible for ensuring that everybody can access cost effective and consistently high quality health and personal social services. The largest employer in the State, the HSE employs more than 71,900 (whole time equivalent) employees in direct employment and a further 35,000 employees are employed by Voluntary Hospitals and Bodies funded by the HSE. The budget of almost €12 billion is the largest of any Public Sector Organisation.

The HSE provides thousands of services to young and old, in hospitals, health facilities and in communities across the country. These services range from Public Health Nurses treating older people in the community to caring for children with challenging behaviour; from educating people how to live healthier lives, to performing highly-complex surgery; from planning for major emergencies, to controlling the spread of infectious diseases. At some stage every year everybody in Ireland will use one or more of the services provided. They are of vital importance to the entire population.

It is our goal to ensure that the money we spend employing people, buying services and investing in infrastructure delivers the maximum possible return in terms of the quality of the services we provide.

### Transforming Our Services

Beginning now, and during the next five years or so, the goal of the HSE is to build a world class Health Service in Ireland. At the heart of this transformation will be programmes that make it easier for people to access quality services and easier for the HSE to deliver these quality services. To do this the HSE will simplify its business so that it can more easily monitor what services are being delivered, and how.

While there are some challenging structural and process issues to address within the Irish Health Services, it is important to remember that, everyday, there are thousands of people delivering and receiving outstanding services around the country.

At an operational level the biggest challenge facing the HSE is the speed with which reliance on hospitals can be reduced and capacity to deliver care within the community setting can be built.

This emphasis must be changed by building a fully integrated and responsive local Health Service, so that people are confident that the vast majority of their health needs can be provided outside hospitals. As community-based services are strengthened, the barriers that currently exist between hospital care and community care will begin to dissolve and the gap between the two services will disappear.

Underpinning the Transformation Programme is the need for enhanced quality and safety for our service providers and service users. Employees should be involved in:

- Fostering a culture of quality and safety in your area of responsibility
- Keeping up to date with new practices in your area
- Following policies, procedures and guidelines that aim to assist staff in providing the highest level of service possible
- Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating practices to ensure continuous improvement of your service
- Reporting incidents/near misses in your service and to manage them in line with Risk Management procedures
- Identifying hazards in your workplace and managing them in line with Risk Management procedures



**HSE Board**

The Board of the HSE is the governing body of the Executive, providing direction and authority to the whole organisation, as set out in the Health Act 2004.

The Board is responsible for approving major strategic developments as well as overseeing the use of public funds and the management of the HSE. In so doing, it maximises value for money through ensuring that services are delivered in the most economical, efficient and effective way, within the available resources. Decisions of the Board are, at all times, taken with the interest of patients and clients in mind.

The Board consists of 11 non-executive members, including the Chairman, Liam Downey, and 10 ordinary members. These are appointed by the Minister for Health and Children. The Chief Executive Officer, Professor Brendan Drumm, is also a member of the HSE Board.

**Organisational Structure**

The HSE manages services through a structure designed to put patients and clients at the centre of the organisation. It has three clearly defined interdependent areas:

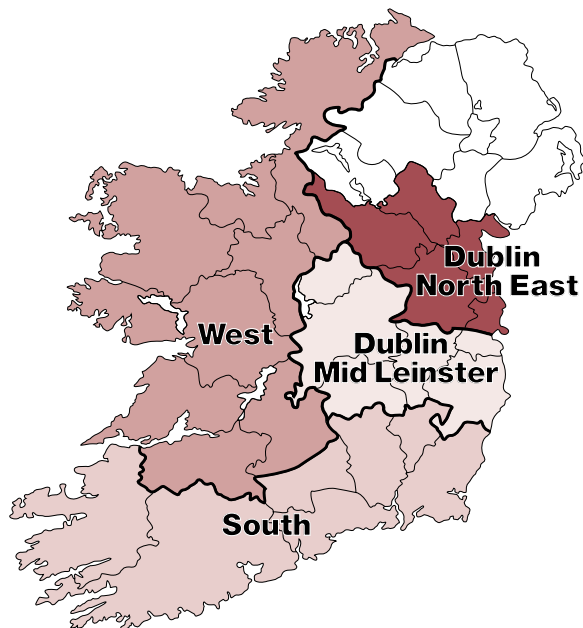
- Health and Personal Social Services
- Support Services
- Reform and Innovation

**Health and Personal Social Services**

Health and Personal Social Services are divided into three service delivery units:

- Population Health is responsible for promoting and protecting the health of the entire population and target groups, with particular emphasis on health inequalities
- Primary, Community and Continuing Care (PCCC) delivers health and personal social services in the community and other settings
- National Hospitals Office (NHO) provides acute hospital and ambulance services throughout the country

**The services delivered by PCCC, NHO and Population Health are organised through four administrative areas: HSE West, HSE South, HSE Dublin North East and HSE Dublin Mid Leinster.**



<p><b>HSE West</b></p> <p>Limerick Tipperary North Clare Galway Mayo Sligo Roscommon Leitrim Donegal</p>	<p><b>HSE Dublin North East</b></p> <p>Dublin North Louth Meath Cavan Monaghan</p>
<p><b>HSE South</b></p> <p>Kerry Cork Waterford Wexford Carlow Kilkenny Tipperary South</p>	<p><b>HSE Dublin Mid Leinster</b></p> <p>Dublin South Wicklow Kildare Laois Offaly Longford Westmeath</p>

The NHO services are delivered through eight hospital networks, comprising 52 acute hospitals and supported by 93 ambulance bases.

The PCCC services are delivered through 32 Local Health Offices.

There are six Population Health Functions:

- Health Protection
- Environmental Health
- Strategic Health Planning
- Health Promotion
- Emergency Planning
- Health Intelligence

These services are delivered across all of the HSE

**Support Services**

There are six Support Services Functions designed to support improved patient services and provide human and financial resources for use throughout the HSE:

- Human Resources – responsible, directly and indirectly, for more than 100,000 full-time Employees
- Finance – responsible for a budget of €12 billion
- Shared Services – delivers economies of skill and scale by consolidating multiple organisations and processes
- Information and Communications Technology – provides the technology for delivering quality services
- Estate Management – manages the organisation's €10 billion capital infrastructure and the annual capital plan
- Procurement – ensures that the HSE maximises its purchasing power

**Strategic Planning, Reform and Implementation (SPRI)**

SPRI is the new dedicated unit within the HSE designed to support the organisation in advancing the reform programme.

**Office of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**

The role of the Office of the CEO is to represent, advise and support the CEO in carrying out his functions. The Office has a number of key corporate functions including:

- HSE Board Affairs
- Corporate and Parliamentary Affairs
- Quality and Risk Management
- Consumer Affairs
- Communications
- Expert Advisory Groups
- Regional Health Offices

**Your Local Management Team**

During your Induction your Line Manager will advise you of the local management structures in your area.

*Further detail on the structures for each of the areas above is available on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

# 07 Part 2

## Working with the HSE



## 2.1 Employee Wellbeing and Welfare

*Aims:*

- Help you understand the various components of Employee Wellbeing and Welfare and the role that each play in the organisation
- Ensure that you know what services are available to you in the event of ill health or personal or work related problems throughout your career
- Ensure you understand your responsibility in compliance with Health and Safety legislation and co-operation with Occupational Health/Employee Assistance as required throughout your career
- Know about your responsibility in the area of Quality and Risk

The components of Employee Wellbeing and Welfare include:

- Occupational Health Service
- Employee Assistance Service
- Health and Safety
- Health Promotion

**Occupational Health Services look after the health and safety of all Employees. The emphasis is on preventing the development of occupational health related accidents and disease and empowering staff to promote and protect their own health. Services include:**

- Pre-employment screening assessment – to determine the health status of potential Employees, taking into account the demands of the job in question. The pre-employment assessment interview with Occupational Health also provides opportunity to discuss immunisation requirements and give specific advice on the hazards of the particular post
- The Occupational Health Department looks after the occupational health and welfare of staff with the emphasis on health promotion and preventing work related accidents and disease. This is done in various ways, e.g. pre-employment screening, vision screening, sickness absence management, manual handling advice, infectious disease prevention, work-place inspections with ergonomic advice, immunisation, health and surveillance, influenza vaccination, advice on compliance with legislation and hazardous substance assessments

*Your Line Manager will advise you of details of your local Occupational Health Department.*

**Employee Assistance Service provides a confidential counselling support and referral service for all staff with personal or work related difficulties. Advice and guidance is available to Managers in dealing with staff welfare issues. The Employee Assistance Service also provides formal structured support to groups of staff who have experienced stress reactions as a result of a critical incident in the work place.**

The HSE Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available to all Employees for support with both personal and work-related concerns.

- A wide range of issues is dealt with by EAP, including:
  - Stress at work
  - Difficult relationships in work (including bullying)
  - Traumatic events (e.g. assault, suicide)
  - Addictions
  - Personal issues outside of work (e.g. bereavement, relationships)

- The service provides, on a confidential basis:
  - Professional assessment
  - Personal support
  - Counselling
  - Referral onwards to other professional resources where appropriate
  - Trauma support
- EAP is a confidential service, and is free of charge to all HSE Employees
- The service is provided by trained and experienced counsellors who are professionally qualified and bound by the codes of conduct of the professional bodies to which they belong
- Managers may contact the service for advice and guidance on issues relating to Employee Wellbeing
- The service participates in the provision of lectures/training as required, in areas where the Employee Assistance Professional has relevant expertise, e.g. stress management, post trauma support, team building and management training
- The service provides feedback to the organisation regarding broad issues which may enhance Employee Wellbeing and the organisation's effectiveness

#### Access to the service

If you wish to access the service for information or an appointment, you can contact your local HSE EAP.

Managers and the Occupational Health Service can also refer clients with their consent.

*Your Line Manager will advise you of your local service contact details.*

**Health and Safety. The objective is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all Employees in compliance with legislation. This is done through provision of a safe place of work, safe systems of work and safe buildings and equipment.**

- The HSE policy 'Dealing with Violence in a Healthcare Setting' will be made available to you. It covers such areas as the causes of violence, how to recognise violence, advice on preventative action and useful guidelines on dealing with abusive phone calls or home visits
- Fire and Safety Training – all Employees receive instruction as necessary to ensure that they can perform their duty without threat to their own safety and health or that of others. Such training will be included at Induction stage and periodic intervals thereafter. Induction in emergency procedures, for example fire drills, is provided to all staff members. Staff seeking general technical or professional advice concerning the safety of their work place should contact their immediate supervisor
- Manual Handling – this includes lifting and putting down, pushing, pulling or carrying or moving of loads. Where lifting cannot be avoided, training in safe moving and handling is delivered at regular intervals in order to prevent accidents which result in back injury

*Your Line Manager will advise you of your local service contact details.*

**Health Promotion facilitates local management to provide a health promoting working environment for staff, consistent with the HSE's role as a health promoting organisation. Efforts to improve Employee health fall into three broad categories which require sustained commitment across the entire workforce:**

- Improving the work environment and conditions of work
- Focus on culture and policies within the organisation so that both their development and delivery are health promoting
- Raising awareness about health issues and building capacity of employees within the organisation to maintain and promote their own health

Health Promotion acts as a resource and support for employees in developing the health promotion aspects of their work. Towards achieving this, a programme of health promotion activities is delivered in each area. Service Units or teams wishing to further their health promotion endeavours may contact their local Health Promotion department for support and guidance with this process.

*Your Line Manager will advise you of your local service contact details.*

## 2.2 Equal Opportunities and Diversity

*Aims:*

- Help you understand the concept of equality and diversity
- Create awareness of legislation that governs the equality and diversity agenda
- Outline various policies/guidelines to support staff

#### Equality

Equality is about creating a fairer society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

#### Diversity

People are not alike. Everyone is different. Diversity, therefore, consists of visible and non-visible factors which include personal characteristics such as gender, race, age, background, culture, disability, personality and work-style. Harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, their talents are fully utilized and organisational goals are met. Diversity is about recognizing and valuing difference in its broadest sense.

#### Legislation governing Equality/Diversity

- Employment Equality Act 1998 and 2004
- Equal Status Act 2000 - 2004
- Disability Act 2005

*Details of the above Acts can be obtained at [www.oireachtas.ie](http://www.oireachtas.ie)*

### Equality and Diversity Policy/Guidelines

The following guidelines have been developed and are available at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

- Guidelines on Equality Legislation
- Equal Opportunity/Accommodating Diversity Booklet and C.D. Rom
- Equal Opportunity/Diversity Strategy and Policy Objectives
- Equal Opportunity aspects of Recruitment, Selection and Promotion
- Guidelines on the Employment of people with disabilities
- Dignity at Work Policy

## Policies, Behaviour and Discipline

*Aims:*

- Understand the National Management of Attendance Policy
- Understand the principles of Trust in Care
- Understand the conduct and behaviour expected of you
- Know about the Disciplinary Procedure

## 2.3

### Policies and Procedures

**Each former Health Board had well advanced the publication of policies and procedures throughout their areas of responsibility. Now that the HSE is a single employer it is beginning to introduce single policies for all aspects of employment.**

However, until these policies are finalised and agreed nationally the policies and procedures that existed for each former Health Board Area continue to be applicable. You will need to ask your Line Manager for the appropriate contact details so that you can check which local policy applies to you. As national policies are agreed these will be placed on the internet and communicated to your Line Manager.

**NB:** Please also refer to the Communications chapter to familiarize yourself with policies regarding media, electronic communications policy, data protection, Irish language etc.

### Attendance Management Policy

The HSE is committed to maintaining, in so far as is practicable, the safety, health and welfare of Employees while at work and doing all that is reasonably practicable to assist Employees who are absent from work due to injury or ill health to return to work at the earliest possible date.

The HSE will also do all that is reasonably practicable to assist Employees to remain at work through an increased focus on rehabilitation, injury prevention, Occupational Health Services, integrated collection of incident and accident data, and Employees' education.

Guidelines on Managing Attendance have been published which are designed to clarify the responsibilities of managers, Employees and support services (i.e. Occupational Health, HR) in the management of attendance.

*This policy is available on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Dignity at Work Policy

The HSE is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to treating its Employees equally irrespective of race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, family status and ethnic origin.

The Health Service recognises the right of all Employees to be treated with dignity and respect and is committed to ensuring that all Employees are provided with a safe working environment, which is free from all forms of bullying, sexual harassment and harassment. This Policy is designed to protect Employees from bullying, sexual harassment and harassment regardless of whether it is carried out by a work colleague, patient/client, member of the public, business contact or any other person with whom Employees might come into contact during the course of their work. It also sets out a complaints procedure, which ensures that complaints are dealt with promptly and with sensitivity.

Under this Policy all Employees, regardless of their position, have a responsibility to treat their colleagues with dignity and respect and to maintain a working environment where bullying and harassment are not tolerated. Managers and Line Managers have a particular responsibility to promote dignity in the workplace by being alert to inappropriate behaviour and dealing promptly with incidents or complaints of bullying and harassment.

Nothing in this policy is designed to prevent a person from exercising his or her statutory entitlements under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Industrial Relations Acts, 1946–2001.

*Full details of the policy can be obtained from your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Trust in Care Policy

The HSE has a duty of care to protect patients/clients from any form of behaviour which violates their dignity, and to maintain the highest possible standards of care. Equally, the HSE has an obligation towards Employees to provide them with the necessary supervision, support and training to enable them to deliver a high quality service, and to protect Employees from situations which may leave them vulnerable to allegations of abuse or neglect. The Trust in Care Policy for Health Service Employers on Upholding the Dignity and Welfare of Patients/ Clients and the Procedure for Managing Allegations of Abuse against Employees have been devised in response to this duty of care.

The aim of this policy is two-fold:

- a) **Preventative:** to outline the importance of the proper operation of human resource policies in communicating and maintaining high standards of care amongst Health Service Employees.
- b) **Procedural:** to ensure proper procedures for reporting suspicions or complaints of abuse and for managing allegations of abuse against Health Service Employees in accordance with natural justice.

*Full details of the policy can be obtained from your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Child Welfare and Protection

It is the function of the HSE to promote the welfare of children in its area who are not receiving adequate care and protection (Section 3(1) Child Care Act 1991).

It is the policy of the HSE that any Employee who is of the opinion that,

- (a) a child has been or is being assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or
- (b) a child's health, development or welfare has been or is being avoidably impaired or neglected, (Section 18 (1) (a) and (b) Child Care Act 1991)

must complete the standard reporting form entitled "Initial Referral of Welfare Concern or Suspected Child Abuse" and forward it to the Principal Social Worker within 24 hours, in consultation with their Line Manager; in the event of an out-of-hours emergency An Garda Síochána should be contacted, the Referral form to follow.



Additionally, in accordance with the requirements of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 the CEO has designated officers of the HSE as 'Designated Officers' to receive reports of child abuse from any person who is of the opinion that,

- a) a child has been or is being assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or
- b) a child's health, development or welfare has been or is being avoidably impaired or neglected (Section 18 (1) (a) and (b) Child Care Act 1991).

#### Designated Officers:

Social Workers, Child Care Workers, Public Health Nurses, Hospital Consultants, Psychiatrists, Non Consultant Hospital Doctors, All other Health Board Medical and Dental Personnel, Community Welfare Officers, Speech and Language Therapists, All Health Board Nursing Personnel, Psychologists, Radiographers, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Health Education/Health Promotion Personnel, Substance Abuse Counsellors, Care Assistants, Child Care Managers, Family Support Co-ordinators, Family Support Workers, Environmental Health Officers, Pre-school Services Inspectors, Childminder Co-ordinators, Managers of Disability Services, Residential Care Managers/Residential Child Care Workers, HIV and AIDS Services, Counsellors in Services for AVPA, Children First Information and Advice Officers, Children First Implementation Officers, Quality Assurance Officers, Advocacy Officers, Access Workers, Project Workers, Training and Development Officers

Any officer who receives such reports must complete the standard reporting form entitled "Initial Referral of Welfare Concern or Suspected Child Abuse" and forward to the Principal Social Worker within 24 hours, in consultation with their Line Manager.

#### All Employees should make reference to:

1. **Chapter 3 and Appendix 1 of Children First** – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (DOH&C 1999) with regard to definitions of and signs and symptoms of child abuse; and Chapter 4 which outlines the basis for reporting and the standard reporting procedure.
2. **Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.** In accordance with the power granted to him under Section 2, subsections (2) and (3) of the Act, the Minister has directed (1<sup>st</sup> April 2003) that the designated officers listed in the letter of 21<sup>st</sup> January 1999 be amended to the list of designated officers.

#### Work Life Balance Schemes

The HSE has a number of policies which are designed to support Employee Work Life Balance in a manner which is conducive to the recruitment and retention of Employees of the highest calibre, whilst seeking at the same time to make available attendance patterns which, in so far as possible, aim to balance both domestic and work requirements and obligations.

#### Flexible Working

The Flexible Working Scheme provides for the implementation of part-time pensionable working arrangements in the Health Service, by allowing Employees to apply to reduce their hours working to between a minimum of 8 hours per week and a maximum of 39 hours per week (depending on the whole-time hours for the particular grade involved). Applications are subject to service management approval and granting of flexible working hours is conditional on there being no adverse impact on the capacity of Health Service employers to meet their operational requirements.

*Details and application forms for this scheme can be obtained through your Line Manager or viewed at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

## Conduct and Behaviour

**The purpose of this section is to set out the principles that govern the conduct of Employees employed by the HSE. Its purpose is to maintain a high level of public confidence in the organisation as a public body and as an employer with statutory responsibility to deliver a Health Service. If you need clarification on any aspect of conduct, you should seek guidance from your Line Manager.**

#### Courtesy, Impartiality and Honesty

Employees have a duty to deal with members of the public with the utmost courtesy, impartiality and honesty. In dealing with the public and in effectively performing their duties, Employees should unfailingly observe the requirements of courtesy, consideration and promptness and should at all times give their names.

#### Dress Code

The majority of the HSE's Employees wear a uniform while at work. All Employees are expected to dress neatly and appropriately, consistent with maintaining public confidence in the services we provide.

#### Political Opinion

The HSE does not discriminate against Employees on the basis of political beliefs or opinions. However, political opinion should not compromise an Employee's obligations to the HSE nor should they be expressed/ disseminated in the workplace.

#### Outside Occupation

Involvement in outside occupations during off duty time should not be engaged in if contractually prohibited or if such employment could be deemed to be in conflict with his/her employment.

You should not engage in matters unconnected with your work during work hours, unless it is provided for in your employment Contract.

Involvement in other occupations during time off should not impair performance or energy on duty, be inconsistent with your employment in the public service or be outside limits set under the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

#### Unjust Enrichment

Unjust enrichment must be strictly avoided. This principle prohibits an Employee from gaining any advantage, other than official remuneration in respect of his/her duties, e.g. acceptance of special facilities or discounts on private purchases from suppliers with whom Employees have official dealings.

#### Acceptance of Gifts

An Employee may not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly from any person, firm or association, anything of economic value such as a gift, gratuity or favour which might reasonably be interpreted as being of such nature that it could affect his/her impartiality in dealing with the donor.

### Ethics in Public Office Acts

The Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995–2001 determines that all positions in the HSE, across all grade categories and work streams where the minimum salary point is equal to or above the minimum point of the Grade VIII, are “designated positions of employment” for the purposes of this legislation. This means that an Employee holding such a position should on an annual basis declare in writing to the Chief Executive Officer of the HSE if they have a registerable interest in accordance with the legislation. If an Employee does not have a registerable interest the guidelines issued by the Standards in Public Office Commission recommend that a nil statement be returned by the Employee.

*Guidelines on this legislation can be viewed at [www.sipo.gov.ie](http://www.sipo.gov.ie)*

### Use of Influence

In matters relating to an Employee’s position and advancement in the service, applications should be made through normal channels. Employees should not otherwise make, or cause to be made, representations in their favour.

### Declaration of Interest

Employees are duty-bound to disclose any interest, financial or otherwise, which is likely, or would if publicly known, be perceived as being likely to influence the exercise of that individual’s independent judgement.

### Confidentiality

In the course of your employment you may have access to, or hear information concerning, the medical or personal affairs of patients and / or Employees, or other Health Service business. Such records and information are strictly confidential and, unless acting on the instructions of an authorised officer, on no account must information concerning Employees, patients or other Health Service business be divulged or discussed except in the performance of normal duty. In addition, records must never be left in such a manner that unauthorised persons can obtain access to them and records must be kept in safe custody when no longer required.

### Workplace Collections

Unauthorised gambling, betting, collections, money lending and distribution of literature or goods is not allowed.

### Improper Use of Property

All Employees are expected to do his/her best to prevent the waste of resources or improper use of HSE’s stores, or other property. If you detect any abuse of this kind you should report the circumstances to your Line Manager.

### Personal Mail Policy

Personal mail should be directed to your home and the HSE mailing system may not be used in any circumstances for personal mail. All mail directed to HSE offices will be opened by an appropriate Employee.

### HSE Identity and Security Cards

All Employees who are issued with identity cards are required to attach the identity cards to their clothes/uniform in such a fashion that they will be visible to fellow Employees and members of the public. Employees must also take care of their identity cards, as often these cards also provide access to premises. Lost or stolen cards should be reported to the administrator/ person with responsibility for your building immediately.

### Employee Property

The HSE is not responsible for loss of Employee property when on the work premises. This extends to damage to cars. You should report all property lost or found to your Line Manager.

### Disciplinary Procedure:

**The HSE expects good standards of conduct and work performance from all of its Employees. Should Employees fall below these expected standards they will have a fair opportunity to resolve the problem. To this end the HSE operates a Disciplinary Procedure. This procedure is designed to help and encourage Employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance consistent with the expectations of the HSE. The aim is to ensure prompt, consistent and fair treatment for all staff and to assist in enabling both the individual and the HSE to be clear about the expectations of both parties.**

The Disciplinary Procedure is a staged procedure. The following principles underpin the procedure:

- Every effort will be made by the Employee’s immediate Manager to address shortcomings in work standards, conduct or attendance through informal counselling without invoking the Disciplinary Procedure
- While the Disciplinary Procedure will normally be operated on a progressive basis, in cases of serious misconduct the Manager may bypass Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the Procedure
- No decision regarding disciplinary action will be made until a formal disciplinary hearing has been convened and the Employee has been afforded an opportunity to respond
- The Employee will be advised of his or her right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at any meeting under the formal Disciplinary Procedure
- The Employee will be advised in advance of the disciplinary hearing of the precise nature of the complaint against him or her and will be given copies of any relevant documentation
- The Employee will be afforded the opportunity to state his or her case and challenge any evidence that may be relied upon in reaching a decision
- An Employee may appeal the outcome of the disciplinary hearing

The following are the four stages of the procedure

1

#### Oral Warning

An Employee whose work, conduct or attendance falls below the required standards will normally be issued with a formal oral warning by their Manager. The Employee will be advised of the precise nature of the complaint, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement. She/he will be advised that the warning constitutes the first stage of the Disciplinary Procedure and failure to improve may result in further disciplinary action under Stage 2 of the Disciplinary Procedure.

A record of the warning will be kept on the Employee's personnel file and will be removed after six months, subject to satisfactory improvement during this period. The Employee will have a right to appeal the oral warning to a level of manager higher than the original decision-maker. This appeal must be made within 7 days of the oral warning.

2

#### Written Warning

If the Employee fails to make the necessary improvements or if the poor attendance, work or conduct is more serious, she/he will normally be issued with a formal written warning by his/her Manager. The written warning will give details of the complaint, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement. The Employee will also be advised that failure to improve may result in the issuing of a final written warning under Stage 3 of the Disciplinary Procedure.

A record of the warning will be kept on the Employee's personnel file and will be removed after nine months, subject to satisfactory improvement during this period. The Employee will have a right to appeal the written warning to a level of manager higher than the original decision-maker. This appeal must be made within 7 days of the written warning.

3

#### Final Written Warning

If the Employee fails to make the necessary improvements, she/he will normally be issued with a final written warning by his/her Manager. The warning will give details of the complaint, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement. The Employee will be advised that failure to improve may lead to dismissal or some other sanction short of dismissal under Stage 4 of the Disciplinary Procedure. The warning will be removed after the specified period, subject to satisfactory improvement during this period.

A record of the warning will be kept on the Employee's personnel file and will be removed after twelve months, subject to satisfactory improvement during this period. The Employee will have a right to appeal the final written warning to a level of manager higher than the original decision-maker. This appeal must be made within 7 days of the final written warning.

4

#### Dismissal or action short of dismissal

Failure to meet the required standards of work, conduct or attendance following the issuing of a final written warning will lead to a disciplinary hearing under Stage 4. The decision-maker will be the relevant National Director. The National Director, PCCC may delegate authority to an Assistant National Director PCCC and the National Director NHO may delegate authority to an Assistant National Director NHO. The outcome of the disciplinary hearing may be dismissal or action short of dismissal.

*The Disciplinary Procedure can be accessed through your Line Manager or it can be downloaded from [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

## 2.4 Grievance

Aims:

- Understand what a grievance is
- Know how to make a complaint under the Grievance Procedure
- Know who to appeal to if you are not satisfied
- Know the different stages of the Grievance Procedure

The HSE is committed to promoting and maintaining good employee relations and fostering the commitment and morale of all staff. The purpose of the Grievance Procedure is to enable Employees to raise any complaints concerning work-related matters so that the issue may be addressed promptly and as close as possible to the point of origin without disruption to patient/client care. It establishes a process for Employees to express and resolve concerns or grievances in relation to their employment in a fair and equitable manner.

#### Definition of Grievance

A grievance may be defined as a complaint which an Employee(s) has concerning his/her terms and conditions of employment, working environment or working relationships. This procedure covers individual and collective grievances, i.e. complaints raised by or on behalf of a group of Employees.

#### Scope of the Procedure

The type of issues which are appropriate for referral under this procedure include:

- Allocation of work
- Assignment of duties
- Rostering arrangements
- Granting of all forms of leave, i.e. Annual Leave, Compassionate Leave, Study Leave
- Interpretation and application of national/local agreements including matters relating to pay-related benefits
- Granting of overtime
- Access to courses
- Health and Safety issues
- Acting-up/deputising arrangements
- Conduct of disciplinary proceedings
- Relationships with work colleagues
- Organisational change/new working practices

**NB:** *This list is not exhaustive.*

#### Informal Discussions

Most routine complaints are capable of being resolved on an informal basis without recourse to the formal Grievance Procedure. Before invoking the Grievance Procedure an Employee may raise the matter formally with his/her immediate Line Manager. If the complaint relates to the immediate Line Manager, the Employee may discuss the matter informally with another Manager.

If the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily through informal discussions, an Employee may raise a formal complaint under the Grievance Procedure.

## Grievance Procedure

### 1 Stage 1

The Employee should refer the complaint to the Line Manager. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter not later than seven working days following receipt of the complaint. The Employee will be advised of his/her right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union representative. Following this meeting, the decision will be conveyed in writing to the Employee within seven working days. The Employee will also be advised how to move to the second stage of the procedure.

## Working Under Protest

Where the grievance relates to an instruction issued by the Supervisor/Manager arising from a service imperative the Employee is obliged to carry out the instruction "under protest". A meeting with Senior Management will be held within 3 working days of the grievance being received. Senior Management refer the matter to either Senior Line Management or the Human Resources Department. If the issue cannot be resolved at this stage, the matter may be referred to a third party.

### 2 Stage 2

If agreement cannot be reached at Stage 1, the matter may be referred to the appropriate Senior Manager. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter not later than seven working days following receipt of the complaint. The Employee will be advised of his/her right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union representative. Following this meeting, the decision will be conveyed in writing to the Employee within seven working days. The Employee will also be advised how to move to the third stage of the procedure

### 3 Stage 3

If agreement cannot be reached at Stage 2 the matter may be referred to the Human Resources Department. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter not later than seven working days following receipt of the complaint. The Employee will be advised of his/her right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union representative. Following this meeting, the decision will be conveyed in writing to the Employee within seven working days. The Employee will also be advised how to move to the fourth stage of the procedure

### 4 Stage 4

If the issue remains unresolved after Stage 3, the matter may be referred to an appropriate third party:

- Rights Commissioner
- Labour Relations Commission
- Labour Court
- Equality Tribunal

No strikes or other forms of industrial action should be initiated or threatened until all stages of the Grievance Procedure, including third party referrals, have been fully exhausted.

*The Grievance Procedure can be accessed through your Line Manager or it can be downloaded from [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

## 2.5 Communication

*Aims:*

- Understand how media queries are dealt with
- Know how to deal with advertising and sponsorship
- Understand our Consumer Affairs policy
- Know our Electronic Communications policy

## Communications

### Media

The giving of interviews, statements or any other information connected with the services provided by the organisation should not be undertaken without the approval of the CEO or the Director of Communication. Such unapproved actions have the capacity to prejudice the interests and reputation of the organisation and, in this regard, will be considered to be a disciplinary matter to be dealt with under normal procedures.

The hosting of ongoing events, publications, conferences, launches, openings etc. should be fully agreed with Senior Management and the Communication Department as appropriate.

*Full contact details on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Media Queries

All media queries, including requests to take photographs or film, should be referred to the HSE Communications office in your area. Public statements or the giving of interviews should be cleared by Communications in advance. Invitations to the press (or public events in the planning stage) should also be notified to Communications.

A Media Relations Protocol is in place to ensure that our patients' and clients' confidentiality is protected at all times, all information is accurate and up to date, each query is dealt with properly and HSE policy is clear.

*Contact the National Press Office for a copy of the Media Relations Protocol for HSE Employees, full contact details on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Event Management

The hosting of events, including launches and openings, should be approved by your Manager who will liaise with your Communications Office as appropriate. Communications Employees are available to discuss and assist with planning for events and will liaise with relevant Senior Management.

### Advertising and Sponsorship

Planned national information campaigns involving advertising are conducted by the HSE; mainly by Human Resources (recruitment advertising), Population Health (public health awareness campaigns) and the National Communications Unit (public information advertising).

In addition HSE offices are often approached by publications, publishing houses and professional staff organisations with requests to purchase advertising. These requests or sponsorship requests should be referred to Public Communications within the National Communications Unit. Contact your Line Manager or Area Communications Manager for guidance in the first instance.



### Staff Magazine

Health Matters is the national staff newsletter of the HSE. Contributions are always welcome. You can contact Health Matters through your local Communications office or at email: [internalcomms@hse.ie](mailto:internalcomms@hse.ie).

Alternatively you can write to the following address:  
Health Matters, Internal Communications, HSE, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8.

### Notice Boards

Notice boards are for official information. If you wish to use the notice board, you must have the notice approved by the Line Manager.

### Printing/Reprographic Facilities

Printing and photocopying facilities are for official use only.

### Telephone Policy

Office telephones must be used only for business. If you wish to make a private call you must use the public telephones, where available, during break times only. You will be notified immediately of emergency calls.

Personal mobile phones should be switched off when in attendance at work unless expressly permitted by your Line Manager for urgent and exceptional reasons.

## Electronic Communications

### Acceptable Use

Individual users are responsible for the proper use of IT equipment provided by the HSE. Computer resources may only be used for legitimate and authorised purposes by HSE Employees, contractors, consultants or any authorised third party.

### Internet

The Internet is a valuable business tool. It should be used by Employees for business related reasons. HSE forbids access to inappropriate websites.

### Complaints, Suggestions and Compliments

Feedback from our clients, in the form of complaints, comments, suggestions or compliments, provides us with the opportunity to improve the quality of the services we provide and to learn valuable lessons for the future. Responding effectively to this feedback is a key aspect to providing a high quality customer focused service.

The National HSE Complaints Policy and National Comments, Suggestions and Compliments Policy ensure that the people using our services have every opportunity to comment on their experiences, positive and negative.

The HSE, in accordance with Part 9 of the Health Act 2004 and the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations 2006, is committed to providing a system for the management of complaints that facilitates effective feedback from and communication to all service users.

All HSE staff have an obligation to receive and manage a complaint at the point of contact where appropriate. Where complaints cannot be managed at the point of contact, Complaints Officers will be responsible for dealing with complaints while linking and communicating with any persons relevant to the complaint.

### Emails

The primary purpose of the email system is to promote effective communication throughout the organisation. Emails should be primarily used for work related purposes and personal emails should be kept to a minimum

## External Communications

### Consumer Affairs

Consumer Affairs covers a range of functions including Freedom of Information (FOI), Data Protection, Complaints, Suggestions and Compliments, Appeals and Patient/Consumer Participation.

### Freedom of Information and Data Protection

The FOI Acts 1997 and 2003 and Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 give people (including Employees) specific legal rights to their personal information and to reasons for decisions that affect them. The Acts place huge responsibility on Health Service providers and staff to keep accurate and up to date records, to keep records safe and secure and to give people access to their personal records. Designated FOI and Data Protection Officers exist throughout the HSE to deal with FOI and Data Protection requests from the public.

### Appeals

The public have a right to appeal any HSE decision in relation to allowances/payments and this appeal may be made to designated Appeals Officers in each local HSE area.

Details of the above services and designated officers may be obtained through the Office of Consumer Affairs.

### The Official Languages Act 2003

The Official Languages Act 2003 gives legislative effect to Article 8 of the Constitution of Ireland, by providing clarity in relation to when, where and how Irish is to be used in the delivery of public services. The primary objective is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

Every consumer of HSE services has a constitutional right to receive that service through the medium of the Irish Language if they so request. The Official Languages Act 2003 gives effect to this constitutional right.

Some of the principle requirements placed on the HSE and its Employees by the Act are:

- Correspondence to be replied to in the official language in which it was written
- Information issued to customers to be in Irish or in Irish and English
- Bilingual publications of certain key documents
- The right to use Irish in dealing with the HSE
- Service in the Gaeltacht areas is to be available in the Irish Language

Further information can be obtained from Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga/ Office of the Language Commissioner [www.coimisineir.ie](http://www.coimisineir.ie) or Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs <http://www.pobail.ie/ie/AnGhaeilge/Achtnadteangachaoifigula2003/>

## Information, Consultation and Workplace Partnership

*Aims:*

- Understand Employee entitlements to information, consultation and workplace partnership
- Understand how this is handled in the HSE
- Understand the role of the trade union organisations in the HSE

### Partnership

In keeping with best practice the HSE supports and operates a partnership culture and system where all Employees are encouraged to fully engage in the dynamics of change, building a world class service locally within their own team and nationally across the entire Health Service.

The partnership approach is formally organised and facilitated throughout the HSE through the joint working of management and trade unions, at national level through the Health Services National Partnership Forum (HSNPF) and locally, through a system of partnership committees and working groups.

The partnership between the HSE and the trade unions is formally recognised in our national agreements, in the Health Services Partnership Agreement, in joint protocols and declarations and, most tangibly, in the joint work undertaken to improve service delivery for all patients and clients and to improve the quality of working life for all Employees.

*Further information on Partnership is available on [www.hsnpf.ie](http://www.hsnpf.ie)*

### Trade Union Organisation in the HSE

The HSE recognises the role and contribution of the trade unions in articulating the views of their members, in representing Employees' interests through the agreed Partnership process and in negotiation on their behalf within the agreed Industrial Relations procedures in the Health Service.

The HSE operates in a positive trade union environment. The evidence shows that partnership working between management and trade unions is a powerful business component in developing and sustaining world class organisations, producing positive health outcomes for patients, modern management systems, an excellent working environment and highly motivated Employees who contribute hugely to the success of the organisation.

### Health Services Information and Consultation Agreement

This agreement meets the requirements set out in the 'Employees (Provision of Information and Consultation) Act 2006', meeting the requirements of the EU directive.

In the context of a partnership culture, it is accepted that consultation is not an isolated incidence of exchange of views on a specific issue. The exchange of views implicit in consultation is expected to take place at all stages during the implementation of change.

The scope of this agreement ensures Employees and their trade union representatives receive the information to which they are entitled, are involved in change processes and in implementing arrangements that enable information and consultation to improve decision-making and organisational performance.

## Your Pay

*Aims:*

- Understand how pay is determined
- Understand deductions from pay
- Know who to contact if you have any questions
- Know how to claim travelling expenses

### Rates of Pay

Employees are generally paid fortnightly and by electronic funds transferred directly into their bank account. The rates of pay, allowances and other pay-related conditions are as approved by the Department of Health and Children. These rates are determined through negotiations between Employee organisations and management representatives. These pay rates are referred to as Consolidated Salary Scales.

*You can access them at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Understanding your payslip

Each time you are paid you will receive a detailed payslip setting out the various deductions and payments. Please contact your local Returning Officer or Payroll Department if you have any questions regarding your payslip.

### Overtime

Employees may, from time to time, be required to work overtime depending on the requirement of their department. In all cases overtime must be approved by the appropriate Line Manager prior to commencement. Overtime rates will be paid in accordance with the Department of Health and Children regulations.

### Payment of Increments

The Department of Health and Children, in consultation with the HSE, is responsible for setting remuneration rates for most HSE Employees. Most salaries are incremental. An increment is an increase in pay. Increments are paid subject to satisfactory service in the preceding year. The payment of increments is considered annually.

Incremental credit may also be given on appointment for certain types of relevant previous experience in medical, dental, administrative, paramedical, nursing and non-nursing grades. Applications should be supported by appropriate documentation from previous employers setting out the range and length of experience, and your Line Manager will advise to whom you should submit the information.

### Deductions From Pay

#### Income Tax

All employers are obliged to deduct income tax from salaries and wages paid to Employees. Each new Employee should contact their tax office to obtain a Certificate of Tax Credits. In the absence of a Certificate of Tax Credits, tax will be deducted at the emergency rate. If you have been previously employed, your last employer should have given you a completed P45 Form. This form should be forwarded to the Payroll Department on your first day of office. Staff are advised to notify the tax office of any change in their personal circumstances that might affect their tax-free allowance.

*Any tax queries can be addressed to the Revenue Information Office on LoCall 1890333425 (Dublin) or LoCall 1890605090 or [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie)*

Please make sure you have your Employer's Reference/PAYE number and your Personal

Public Service Number which are available on your payslip.

#### **Social Welfare**

Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) is deducted from salaries and wages of all Employees at the relevant rates. All permanent and pensionable staff in officer grade posts employed in the public service prior to 6th April 1995 pay Class D1 contributions. This is a reduced PRSI rate and covers staff for limited social welfare benefits. Since 6th April 1995 all new staff in the Health Service pay Class A1 Social Welfare Contributions and are insured for all social welfare benefits. Please refer to your payslip for details of your PRSI Class and PPS number.

*If you require any further information contact the Department of Social Welfare at [www.welfare.ie/contact/index.html](http://www.welfare.ie/contact/index.html)*

#### **Superannuation/Employees Pension Scheme**

A Superannuation Scheme is in operation that provides a wide range of benefits to pensionable Employees. Some of the more common entitlements payable are as follows:

- Tax free lump sum and annual superannuation allowance on retirement at the normal age
- Gratuity payable on the member's death in service
- Spouses' and Children's pensions
- Provision to pay a lump sum and pension to pensionable Employees who must retire early on the grounds of ill health
- Contributions towards the Superannuation Scheme are deducted from your salary.

#### **Payroll Deductions**

Statutory and voluntary deductions from the payroll are as follows:

- **STATUTORY DEDUCTIONS:** P.R.S.I., Superannuation, Tax
- **VOLUNTARY DEDUCTIONS:** Credit Union/Bank, Building Society, Health Insurance, General Insurance, Social Activity (Sports Club), Trade Union etc. Details of these deductions are available from your local Returning Officer, Payroll Department or directly from the service provider

#### **Overpayments**

Although every effort is made to avoid such an occurrence, it is possible that at some time you may be overpaid. Your local Payroll Department will seek to recover any overpayments by writing to you setting out the details of the overpayment. You will be consulted on how the overpayment will be recouped and you may involve your Trade Union Representative.

#### **Travel and Subsistence Policy**

If you are required to travel on official business, you will be paid the travel and subsistence rates approved by the Department of Health and Children.

Your Line Manager will provide details of the arrangements for the payment of travelling expenses and subsistence and the rates and conditions relating to such expenses.

Employees may not use their private vehicles on official business without first producing evidence that there is a current motor insurance policy covering his/her use of the vehicle in connection with his/her business or profession. The policy must also be extended to indemnify the HSE.

*Full details of the policy can be obtained from the Internet site [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

Travel abroad is organised by the Business Travel Unit. Health Service Executive, Unit 7, Swords Business Campus, Balheary Road, Swords, Co.Dublin.

#### **Subsidised Canteen Facilities**

There are a number of locations throughout the HSE where subsidised canteen facilities are available to Employees, including hospitals, some community care areas, and administrative headquarters. Employees travelling to locations with such facilities for meetings and events are required to use these facilities in lieu of claiming full subsistence allowance.

#### **Bank/Mortgage**

Employees will be provided with a statement of earnings in respect of mortgage/loan applications by approved Payroll staff only.

#### **Easi-Travel Plan**

Legislation was introduced in the Finance Act 1999 which allowed an employer to incur the expense of providing an Employee with an annual bus/rail pass, without the Employee being liable for benefit-in-kind taxation.

Pilot schemes exist in some locations for provision of these travel passes.

*Details of how to apply should be sought from your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

#### **Acting Up Payments**

If you are required to act in a higher capacity, your payment for same will be made in accordance with the arrangements for your employment grade.

## 2.8

### **Leave from Work**

*Aims:*

- Know the Annual Leave and Sick Leave schemes
- Understand all the various other types of leave
- Know the Career Break schemes
- Understand how to apply for leave

All applications for leave are subject to the approval of your Line Manager and should be made in writing on the approved application form. If you are unable to attend work for illness or other reasons, it is your responsibility to ensure your Line Manager is informed as soon as possible.

Absence without leave may lead to disciplinary action. Employees absent without leave for more than five days will be deemed to have terminated their employment.

#### **Annual Leave**

The leave year extends from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March and normally the Annual Leave roster for each Department is prepared in the month of April. Application for leave should be made to your Line Manager on the approved leave application form at least 2 weeks in advance where there is no leave roster in operation. In exceptional circumstances your Line Manager may waive this requirement. You are requested to take the bulk of your leave at any one time and have at least three quarters of your leave entitlement taken before the end of December.

Annual Leave is normally required to be taken within the appropriate leave year. However, where an Employee does not avail of his/her outstanding leave because of service requirements, or other exceptional circumstances, she/he may be allowed to carry leave forward to be taken within the first 3 months of the following Annual Leave year.

Particulars of your leave entitlements are set out in your Contract or may be made available from your Line Manager. Employees in some areas may receive privilege days – an additional day's leave at Christmas and Easter.

If you commence employment during a leave year you are entitled to a proportionately reduced number of annual leave days.

### Public Holidays

In the case of public holidays, the Act provides that Employees are entitled to whichever of the following options his/her employer determines:

- (a) a paid day off on the day in question; or
- (b) a paid day off within a month of that day; or
- (c) an extra day's annual leave; or
- (d) an extra day's pay.

The Act provides that an Employee may, at least 21 days prior to the public holiday, request the employer to nominate which of the above options will apply. Where the employer fails to do so within 14 days of the public holiday, the Employee will automatically be entitled to a paid day off on the public holiday.

#### There are nine public holidays as follows:

- Christmas Day
- St. Stephen's Day
- St. Patrick's Day
- Easter Monday
- The first Monday in May
- The first Monday in June
- The first Monday in August
- The last Monday in October
- The first of January

An Employee who is absent on Maternity Leave, additional Maternity Leave, Adoptive Leave, additional Adoptive Leave, Parental Leave or Carer's Leave (first 13 weeks only) continues to accrue entitlement to public holidays.

### Sick Leave

When you are absent owing to illness for more than two consecutive days, a medical certificate must be submitted on the third day. However, your Line Manager may require a medical certificate even though the absence does not exceed two days. In general, the total uncertified Sick Leave for the majority of Employees is 7 days (pro rata) in any 12 month period. A medical certificate must cover each day's Sick Leave for the remainder of the year.

Each Line Manager takes a special interest in the health and welfare of his/her Employee, especially during times of illness. A Line Manager may communicate with an Employee who is ill to ensure that proper arrangements have been made to receive the appropriate medical attention. Attendance with the Occupational Health Service may be required. Where an Employee is involved in an accident (e.g. a road traffic accident) involving a third party a claim for loss of earnings may be made against the third party. The HSE require the Employee to enter into a commitment to recoup the cost of sick pay to the HSE upon the successful outcome

#### There are two Sick Leave schemes for Employees of the HSE. Your Contract will contain reference to the Sick Leave scheme that you are covered by, either,

- Sick Leave scheme for Employees entered on the Register of Pensionable Servants/Registered Employees under of the Local Government (Superannuation) Act 1998
- OR  Sick Leave scheme for Employees governed by Department of Health and Children Circular 10/71 of 29th March 1971

of such a third party claim. Failure to give this commitment will result in termination of sick pay. Where an Employee is injured at work, he/she is requested to apply as soon as possible to the Department of Social and Family Affairs for entitlement to Occupational Injuries Benefit and Disablement Benefit. Non-officer grades and officer grades paying PRSI Class A, and some Class D officers (i.e. long term temporary service) who may have paid PRSI Class A contributions and are within the benefit year, and are in receipt of paid Sick Leave or Maternity Leave from the HSE are requested to apply to the Department of Social and Family Affairs for entitlement to Disability Benefit and Maternity Benefit.

### Compassionate Leave

An Employee may be allowed up to a maximum of five consecutive days on the death of a spouse, son or daughter. An Employee may be allowed three consecutive days Compassionate Leave with pay on the death of e.g. a mother, father, sister, brother, etc. Approved periods of Compassionate Leave may be supplemented and / or extended by additional unpaid leave or facilitation with a period of annual leave, etc. Managers should be particularly sensitive to the needs of Employees in circumstances of bereavement. Support may be offered, if required, through the Occupational Health Service and leave supplemented by alternative means if required.

*Further details of the Compassionate Leave scheme are available from your Line Manager or may be viewed at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Career Break

An Employee may be granted a Career Break without pay for a minimum of one year and a maximum of five years.

This leave may be availed of for:

- domestic purposes
- foreign travel
- educational purposes

This leave is not reckonable for superannuation benefits but may be reckoned subject to payment of eighteen and one sixth percentage of the salary that you would have been in receipt of had you not been on Career Break. Application to have this leave reckoned for superannuation purposes must be made in advance of going on the Career Break and contributions must be paid quarterly while on the Career Break.

*Further details of the Career Break scheme are available from your Line Manager or may be viewed at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Special Leave With Pay

Special Leave with pay may be granted for a number of reasons e.g.

- When appointed by a Government Minister to serve on a statutory body or commission
- When invited to sit on an interview board
- For annual training with the Defence Forces
- When sitting examinations appropriate to your area of work
- When attending interviews within the public or civil service (subject to a maximum of 6 days)
- When attending approved courses, conferences etc.

This is subject to approval from the Employee's Head of Department. Applications for Special Leave should be submitted to your Line Manager.

### Special Leave Without Pay

In certain special circumstances Special Leave without pay may be granted. This leave cannot be reckoned for superannuation purposes. When the period of Special Leave without pay exceeds 28 days it cannot be reckoned for the purposes of Annual Leave or increments. Special Leave without pay is not granted indefinitely and is only granted for a specific purpose. If used for any other purpose than that which was stated in the application, the leave is deemed to be invalid.



### Special Leave with Nominal Pay

Employees with professional qualifications are entitled to apply for Special Leave to work with a recognised agency in any of the following:

- A recognised underdeveloped country
- A disaster/emergency region
- A developing country where the public Health Service is underdeveloped

During Special Leave, Employees are paid a nominal amount per week to allow them to contribute towards the superannuation scheme and thereby have the service reckoned for superannuation purposes.

*Full details of the schemes are available on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Maternity Leave

The HSE applies the terms of the Maternity Protection Acts 1994–2005, which provide for twenty two weeks Maternity Leave. At the end of Maternity Leave an Employee must, on application, be allowed up to twelve weeks Special Leave without pay and/or any Annual Leave to which she is entitled at the time.

Employees who are entitled to social welfare benefits from contributions paid prior to permanency should also complete the Department of Social and Family Affairs application form and forward this to their Line Manager, who, when he/she has approved the leave should return it to the applicant without delay.

An extra day's paid leave should be granted at the end of the period of Maternity Leave for each public holiday falling within the Maternity Leave and additional Maternity Leave. Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

An employee who is breastfeeding is entitled, on application, to breastfeeding breaks without loss of pay during her working day until her child is six months old. This entitlement may be extended following the increase in paid Maternity Leave entitlement in March 2007.

*Details of these schemes should be sought through your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Phase 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007

The second phase of increased Maternity Leave entitlement will come into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007, when 26 weeks paid Maternity Leave and 16 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave will apply to all parents commencing Maternity Leave after this date.

### Paternity Leave

Fathers are granted Special Leave with pay (3 days) in respect of children born on or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2001. Part time staff are entitled to leave on a pro rata basis. The leave may be taken at the time of the birth or up to four weeks after the birth.

*Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager, or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Adoption Leave

Paid Adoptive Leave of twenty consecutive weeks, followed by up to twelve weeks additional unpaid Adoptive Leave may be granted, on the same basis as Maternity Leave, to Employees who are:

- Adopting mothers
- Sole male adopters

- Adopting fathers, in specified circumstances

Application for this leave can be made at the stage where the Employee receives notice of acceptance by the Adoption Board. The leave commences as soon as the child is placed with the adoptive parents.

### Phase 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007

The second phase of increased Adoptive Leave entitlement will come into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007, when 24 weeks paid Adoptive Leave and 16 weeks unpaid Adoptive Leave will apply to all parents commencing Adoptive Leave after this date.

### Term Time Working

The Term Time Working policy provides an opportunity for the Employee to reduce his/her annual working time from 52 weeks to either 42 weeks or 39 weeks by taking 10 or 13 weeks off during the summer months. The Employee's 42 or 39-week annual salary is then spread evenly over the 52-week period, so that the Employee has a consistent but reduced income over the 52-week period. The scheme is of particular benefit for parents with school going children who want to take time off work during the school holiday period. The scheme is conditional on the service needs being capable of being met during the proposed absence.

*Details of the scheme and application form may be obtained through your service manager or viewed at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Parental Leave

Employees may avail of 14 weeks unpaid leave to take care of their young children (before their 8th birthday).

*Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager or viewed at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Force Majeure Leave

Employees may take immediate time off from work in the event of an **unforeseen** injury or illness of a close family member where the presence of the Employee is indispensable. The maximum Force Majeure leave that may be availed of is 3 working days in 12 consecutive months or 5 working days in 36 consecutive months.

*Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager or viewed at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Flexi-time

Flexi-time is available to some staff members depending on service needs within the area, and usually caters for those whose normal workday would be between 9.00am and 5.00pm.

The flexi system clock runs from 8.00am to 6.00pm. This is a system whereby staff members can work their weekly hours within a flexible time frame e.g. start earlier, take a short lunch break (30 minutes minimum), and thereby accrue hours which can be taken as leave/time in lieu. However, service needs are paramount and dictate the level of flexibility within each area. 'Flexi leave' may only be taken after prior authorisation from the section/department head i.e. similar to Annual Leave arrangements.

### Carer's Leave

Employees with one year's service are covered by the Carer's Leave Act 2001 which provides an entitlement to avail of temporary unpaid leave from their employment to enable them to personally provide full-time care and attention to a person who is in need of such care.

*Your Line Manager can give you more information or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

An Employee may be entitled to receive carer's benefit during Carer's Leave. Further details regarding this benefit are available from: Carer's Benefit, Department of Social and Family Affairs, Longford

### Marriage Leave

Employees whose Annual Leave entitlement does not exceed 24 days may be entitled to some additional leave on the occasion of their marriage.

*Details may be obtained through your Line Manager or may be viewed at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### TOIL (Time off in lieu) Policy

Time off in Lieu is an employer mechanism for returning additional hours worked to that Employee at a later date. It is a mechanism used where there are no arrangements for the payment of overtime.

*Details should be sought through your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Jury Duty

Special Leave with pay may be granted to Employees who are called to serve under the Juries Act 1976.

*Details of the how to apply should be sought from your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Defence Forces/Reserves

Employees may claim up to one week's leave to participate in training for the above. Any further time for such training may be taken without pay.

*Details of how to apply should be sought from your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Health and Safety

Safety Representatives appointed under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989 may be granted time off with pay to discharge the function of a Safety Representative.

*Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager, or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Study and Exam Leave

Employees pursuing academic courses approved by their Line Manager may be granted Study Leave to facilitate preparation for the examinations. It must therefore be taken prior to examinations. Where examinations fall on a day when staff would otherwise be on duty Examination Leave may be granted. The granting of Study Leave and Exam Leave is a function of local management and Employees should make necessary arrangements in good time to avoid disappointment.

*Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Leave to attend Union/Association Meetings

Employee representatives may be granted time off with basic pay to undertake routine duties arising from their position.

Time off to attend union duties is at the discretion of the relevant Senior Manager and is contingent upon service needs being met. Requests for such leave will not be unreasonably withheld. The Labour Relations Commission's Code of Practice should be used for guidance.

Special Leave with pay may be granted to non full-time representatives to attend conferences/meetings who are duly authorised to attend such meetings.

- Annual delegate conference – the limit is two days a year
- Special delegate conference – the limit is one day a year
- Full National Executive meetings (excluding branch executive/committee meetings) – the limit is 20 days a year

The granting of Special Leave above, which will apply also to the time spent travelling to and from the meeting in question, is subject to the Chief Executive Officer being prepared to release the member of staff concerned for the period in question having regard, for instance, to the needs of the service being provided.

The granting of Special Leave is subject to the following additional condition:

- Submission to his/her Senior Manager by the member of staff in question of a written application for the leave, giving details of the purpose for which the leave is sought and other relevant information, at least two weeks (save in exceptional circumstances) before the date on which the leave is due to commence

*Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Interview Leave

Certain grades of Employees may be approved leave to attend for interview with the Public Appointment Service, or at interview for other HSE employments.

*Details of the scheme should be sought through your Line Manager or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*

### Secondments

The HSE recognises that secondment of staff may be in the interest of the overall development of health, personal welfare and social services and shall therefore consider applications in the following circumstances:

- The staff member must have satisfactorily completed his/her probationary period
- The secondment does not adversely affect the continued maintenance and development of services by the HSE
- The person can be replaced in their substantive post
- The secondment is to another public sector organisation or an organisation whose primary objectives are in the provision of or directly associated with the provision/development of health, personal social or welfare services

- The secondment is to enhance the individual's skills/experience, which would thereafter contribute to the provision of services by the HSE
- The HSE agrees that the secondment will promote the development of health, welfare, personal and social services
- The skills, experience and qualifications that the staff member possesses are not readily available to the recipient organisation other than through the secondment applied for
- The secondment shall be for a maximum period of 3 years unless otherwise specifically extended by the Director of Human Resources
- The secondment shall be to a temporary, fixed time and specific purpose assignment post/project in the recipient organisation
- The organisation requesting the secondment should submit an application to the HSE and supply any information requested by the HSE in relation to the secondment
- The recipient organisation must be one with whom the HSE has an important relationship
- The organisation requesting the secondment should agree to refund to the HSE the full gross cost to the HSE of facilitating the secondment
- Secondment cannot be used where the applicant has chosen to develop his/her career in the new organisation on a lasting basis
- It shall be at the discretion of the Health Service Executive to attach such conditions as it feels appropriate to a secondment agreement

## 2.9 Development, Promotion and Transfer Opportunity

### Aims:

- Know how performance is managed
- Understand how your career will develop
- Know how to access promotional opportunities

### Performance

You will be expected to perform your job to a consistently high standard.

Guidance and support will be provided by your Line Manager to carry out your role and responsibilities effectively.

Additional learning and development requirements will be agreed with your Line Manager.

As a client/patient centered organisation we encourage a high level of multidisciplinary team working and you will be expected to actively participate in these teams.

The organisation specifies a form of team working called Team Based Performance Management (TBPM).

Should you have a grievance at work or if the organisation has difficulties with your performance the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure is available to resolve such issues.

### Development

As a new Employee your personal development begins with your Induction to the HSE and your particular work role.

As a unitary and national organisation we can offer you a range of career options linked to your desire to continue your education and training, e.g.:

- Knowledge and skills development
- Professional development
- Management development
- Leadership

You will be actively encouraged to continue to develop your skills and capabilities with particular emphasis on your current role to allow you to optimise your contribution to the objectives of the Health Service.

To ensure that staff are clear on their role and responsibilities and have the requisite knowledge and skills, a process of Personal Development Planning (PDP) is encouraged with your Line Manager.

Personal Development Planning is a continuous development process that enables people to make the best use of their skills and helps advance both the individual's plans and the strategic goals of the HSE.

As part of this process you are encouraged to discuss your career opportunities with your Line Manager.

You may be supported by the organisation to pursue further academic studies.

### Promotion

All staff are encouraged to develop their career by competing for both temporary and permanent assignments and promotion through the HSE's Recruitment Service. The HSE welcomes feedback from candidates and carries out recruitment surveys periodically.

Recruitment and selection for appointments in the HSE are carried out under the licences issued by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Designated senior posts are managed by the Public Appointments Service and are advertised on their website [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

Appointments to positions in the HSE are subject to the Code of Practice published by the CPSA. The Code of Practice sets out how the core principles of probity, merit, equity and fairness might be applied on a principle basis and details the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in recruitment campaigns. The Code of Practice also outlines procedures in relation to requests for a review of the recruitment and selection process and review in relation to allegations of a breach of the Code of Practice. Information on the review process is available in the document posted with each vacancy entitled "Code of Practice, information for candidates." Details of the Code of Practice are available on [www.careersinhealthcare.ie](http://www.careersinhealthcare.ie)

Vacancies are advertised on the HSE's career site [www.careersinhealthcare.ie](http://www.careersinhealthcare.ie), in selected newspapers and are notified internally by means of e-mail and notice boards. Each vacancy posting to the website contains a full job specification which describes the service where the vacancy exists, the eligibility and selection criteria and the duties and responsibilities that are attached to the post. The recruitment and selection process involves eligibility screening, shortlisting and selection interview. Only those applicants who pass through these filtering stages are progressed to interview. Following interview candidates are entitled to receive details of the scores they achieved and an evaluation of their performance.

### Employee Transfers

The HSE endeavours to facilitate transfers without compromising on delivery of service which is the primary focus.

An Employee Transfer Policy has been agreed for certain grades within HSE. This policy will operate on a pilot basis initially.

*Details are available on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*



# 35 Part 3

## Leaving the HSE



### 3.1 Resignation, Retirement and Pension

Aims:

- Understand your obligations in relation to giving notice
- Understand the basic components of the pension schemes

#### Resignations

Permanent Employees are expected to give one month's notice of their intention to resign from the HSE's employment.

Permanent employees are expected to give the minimum notice stipulated in their Contract of Employment of their intention to resign from the HSE's employment.

Temporary Employees are expected to give notice as required under the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973–1991 as follows:

Length of Service	Minimum Notice
13 weeks to 2 years	1 week
2 years to 5 years	2 weeks
5 years plus	4 weeks

#### Resignation – Pension entitlements

If you resign with less than 2 years service and are not taking up employment with another organisation to which your service may be transferred you are entitled to a refund of any pension contributions you have made, less an appropriate tax deduction.

If you have been employed for more than 2 years and are not taking up employment with another organisation to which your service may be transferred your contributions are retained. Preserved benefits will become payable at age 60 years (65 years for new entrants) upon receipt of written application.

If you entered employment with a former Health Board prior to 1995 you have the option to either preserve your benefits or take a refund.

#### Retirement

If you retire the benefits of the Pension Scheme are as follows:

- Retirement Pension
- Lump Sum

In the unfortunate event of the death of a member of staff while in service who is contributing to the Pension Scheme the following is payable to the legal personal representative.

- 1 year's reckonable pay (at the rate applicable on the date of the death) or
- the lump sum that would have been paid to the staff member had they retired on ill health grounds on the date of death.

If the staff member was contributing to the Spouse and Children's Pension Scheme a pension will be payable to the spouse and eligible children.

If the staff member who was contributing to the Pension Scheme dies after retirement then the following is payable:

- A pension to the spouse and eligible children



**The factors taken into account in determining pension benefits are as follows:**

- Basic Salary
- Pensionable Allowances, if any
- Service (e.g. HSE, former Health Board, Civil Service, Local Authority, Voluntary Hospitals, VEC or approved Public Sector Bodies)

See online calculator at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) Please note that the entire time span of your employment may not equate with your pensionable service as certain periods e.g. unpaid sick leave will be deducted.

**Some early retirement schemes exist**

- For Psychiatric Staff employed before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 under the Mental Treatment Act 1945
- Nursing initiative schemes for General Nursing Staff
- Cost Neutral Early Retirement
- Ill Health Retirement (where deemed necessary by Occupational Health Department)

**As early in your career as possible**

It is extremely important that you familiarise yourself with the pension provision within the HSE and also to make conscious decisions to maximise this benefit. The HSE provides Mid-Career and Pre-Retirement Courses for your information.

These courses provide information on the following:

- Pension Scheme
- Taxation
- Social Welfare
- Investments
- Legalities

Many aspects of the pension scheme require detailed explanation and a range of information leaflets are available. For all advice relating to the pension schemes you should contact your local HSE Pension Office.

*Further details of the schemes are available on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)*