



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND



INFORMATION & RECORDS



DOMESTIC ADOPTION



INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION



SOCIAL WORK



RESEARCH

Job Description and Person Specification
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OFFICER
HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Full Time (35 hours) Monday to Friday
Permanent Post
Based in Dublin 4

The Adoption Authority of Ireland is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Adoption Authority of Ireland will run this competition in compliance with the codes of practice published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and available on www.cpsa.ie

AAI recognises its responsibilities under the Data Protection Acts 1988, 2003 & 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Freedom of Information Act 201

Mission Statement & Vision

“To ensure the provision of the highest possible standards of adoption related services, throughout the lifelong adoption process, with the best interest of children as the first and paramount objective” - Adoption Authority of Ireland Mission

“To be recognised as the centre of excellence and principal authoritative source of information on all aspects of adoption and as a provider and regulator of high quality adoption services” - Adoption Authority of Ireland Vision

Principles and Values

Child-centeredness: focusing on the best interests of the child as paramount throughout the adoption process with consideration of their lifelong needs. Ensuring that the Authority is committed to hearing from children and young people and responding meaningfully in the adoption process.

Accountability: Through Ethical Practice and Transparency: Modus operandi which is open to scrutiny distinguished by impartiality and equity guided by honest, proper, accountable and ethical adoption practice. Committed to delivering services in an effective and efficient manner to achieve value for money.

Quality Services: Provide the highest quality service in adoption based on law and best practice, alongside developing and retaining experts in the field (including commitment to continuous improvement of services).

Respect: Committed to treating all stakeholders in the adoption process or otherwise with dignity, respect and courtesy. Listening, learning and empowering organisation for all those working or affected by adoption services and listen and respect staff ensuring the Authority remains a good place to work.

Who we are

The Adoption Authority of Ireland was established as an independent regulatory body on 1 November, 2010 following the enactment of the Adoption Act 2010.

The Adoption Authority of Ireland is an independent quasi-judicial statutory body appointed by Government. The functions of the Authority are set out in Section 96 of the Act. These include functions of an operational, judicial and quasi-judicial nature in relation to the adoption process itself, as provided for under the Act and relation to the Authority's designation as the Central Authority for the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. Other functions of the Authority include, registration, regulatory and standard setting functions in respect of all agencies providing adoption services in accordance with Part 13 of the Act and the relevant Regulations. The Authority also undertakes and promotes research and publishes information about adoption and related services; provides information to the general public; supports others in the provision of information on adoption services.

The Adoption Authority of Ireland is operating in a changing environment. The nature of adoption in Ireland has changed considerably in recent years, and so has the work of the Authority. The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 was signed into law on 30 June 2022. This landmark legislation provides a full and clear right of access to birth certificates, birth and early life information for all persons who were adopted, boarded out, the subject of an illegal birth registration or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allows for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances.

The new law establishes a Contact Preference Register and a robust tracing service and, as well as a range of new bespoke measures to address issues arising for people affected by illegal birth registration. The legislation came into operation on a phased basis, from the 1st July 2022.

Part 12 of the Act (sections 94-124 inclusive) provides, inter alia, for the establishment of the Authority and the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer. The Authority Members are the governing body of the organisation and are collectively responsible for promoting the success of the Authority by leading and directing the Authority's activities. The provisions of the Act put in place a statutory framework which ensures that the Authority is accountable to the Minister for Children, Equality, Diversity, Integration and Youth and to the Government.

For more details on the work of the Authority, please refer to our website at www.aai.gov.ie

About the Role

Title

Head of Human Resources and Staff Development

Reporting to

Chief Executive Officer

The Head of HR is a key member of the senior management team supporting and implementing objectives under Strategic Plans and Annual Business Plans. The Head of HR will manage the HR team of three staff ranging from Clerical Officer to Higher Executive Officer level.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- In partnership with the Senior Management Team (SMT), the AP will be responsible for developing and implementing HR strategies for the Authority to optimise organisational performance in line with Adoption Authority of Ireland Strategic Plan 2022 - 2024 with particular reference to *Goal 4: Empower our people and deliver effective operations* and the associated objectives and actions;
- Managing all aspects of the Authority's recruitment function, including identifying key talent gaps, oversee the recruitment life cycle and proactively engaging with internal and external stakeholders regarding the recruitment pipeline;
- Ensuring the HR function provides a comprehensive service to all staff members, acting as a HR partner to the SMT and other senior stakeholders;
- Ensure that HR policies are in accordance with the organisation's strategic goals and objectives, current employment practices, relevant employment legislation and best practice;
- Develop programmes and initiatives to build human capital and a strong employee development culture;
- Liaise with relevant trade unions to ensure employee relations matters are dealt with proactively and efficiently;
- Develop and lead change management initiatives to improve employee satisfaction and staff retention
- Work with appropriate line managers to design, implement and evaluate job descriptions and key performance indicators for all employees ensuring they are aligned with the strategic objectives of the organisation;
- Providing employee relations support to staff and managers, including conflict resolution, disciplinary and grievance support
- Ensuring compliance with statutory regulations, CPSA and DPER guidelines and HR policies and procedures, keeping abreast of new legislative and public service developments to ensure the Authority is compliant and up to date;
- Ensure adherence to the public sector policies and relevant circulars;

- Design, implement and evaluate performance management systems such as induction frameworks, staff appraisals and reviews and internal audits ensuring they are aligned with the overall organisational and strategic objectives;
- Plan, implement and evaluate all training and development activities to ensure they are cost-effective and demonstrating added value to the organisation.
- Review training and development plans in conjunction with the senior management team to ensure employees are qualified to the appropriate levels;
- Overseeing the delivery of operational HR processes, including Time and Attendance and HR systems;
- Lead and manage others within the HR team, ensuring accurate and up-to-date staff information is maintained on both manual and digital systems;
- Manage relationships with strategic providers of HR services including recruitment agencies and payroll and pensions support providers, ensuring adherence to public service policy;
- Engage with and seek guidance and sanction from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (the Department) on all, but not limited to, the foregoing where necessary.

Note: The functions and responsibilities assigned to this position are based on the current stated role and may be changed from time to time. The person appointed requires the flexibility to fulfil other roles and responsibilities at a similar level within the Authority

Core Competencies

Applicants should be able to demonstrate all of the competencies required of an Assistant Principal Officer as set out in Appendix 1 of this booklet. In particular, applicants must demonstrate, by reference to specific achievements in their career to date, that they possess those qualities, skills and knowledge required for the role of Assistant Principal as identified by AP level competency framework, which are:

- Leadership
- Analysis and Decision Making
- Management and Delivery of Results
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Special Knowledge Expertise and Self Development
- Drive and Commitment to Public Service Values

Eligibility to compete and certain restrictions on eligibility

Eligible candidates must be:

- a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- b) A citizen of the United Kingdom; or

- c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- d) A non- EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Swiss citizens under EU agreements may also apply.

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

Collective Agreement - Redundancy Payments to Public Servants:

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

Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DECLARATION:

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

Principal conditions of service

General

The Appointment is to a permanent post in the Adoption Authority of Ireland. Staff of the Adoption Authority are public servants.

Pay

The salary scale for the position (rate effective as of 1 March 2023) is as follows:

Assistant Principal Officer (PPC)

€74,701: €77,452: €80,241: €83,040: €85,834: €87,445: €90,265 LSI 1: €93,095 LSI 2.

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

A different salary scale will apply where the appointee is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3 (LSI1) and 6 (LSI2) years' satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Note:

- Entry will be at the first point of the relevant scale and will not be subject to negotiation
- Increments may be awarded subject to satisfactory performance;
- You will agree that any overpayment of salary, allowances, or expenses will be repaid by you in accordance with Circular 07/2018: Recovery of Salary, Allowances and Expenses Overpayment made to Staff Members/Pensioners;
- The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

If immediately prior to appointment the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant or Public Servant, different terms and conditions may apply. If the appointee is on a payscale which is the equivalent of the pay scale advertised, consideration will be given to entry at their existing point on the scale, subject to limits set by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform;

Probation

This role will be on a probationary basis for a period of 12 months from the date of commencement of employment. During the period of your probationary contract, your performance will be subject to review by your supervisor(s) to determine whether you:

- Have performed in a satisfactory manner
- Have satisfactory in general conduct, and
- Are suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Location

The Adoption Authority is currently based in one location in Ballsbridge. In due course the Authority, or part of the Authority, may relocate to one or more sites and some staff will be relocated to the new site(s).

Hours of Attendance

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time but will amount to not less than 35 hours net of lunch breaks, Monday to Friday.

Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance for the position of Assistant Principal Officer is **30 Days**. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the Authority, is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Sick Leave

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars for the public service.

Blended Working –

The Authority currently employs a hybrid model of working with a portion of the week (minimum of 40%) spent in the office and a portion working remotely from home. Staff have the option to avail of blended working or to work from the office fulltime.

Other

Staff can also avail of TaxSaver Tickets, Bike to Work Scheme and Employee Assistance Programme.

Superannuation and Retirement

In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”). Full details of the Scheme are at www.singlescheme.gov.ie

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

- **Pensionable Age:** The minimum age at which retirement benefits are payable is the same as the age of eligibility for the State Pension, currently 66 years.
- **Retirement Age:** Scheme members must retire on reaching the age of 70 years.
- Career average earnings are used to calculate benefits (*a pension and lump sum amount accrue each year and up-rated each year by reference to CPI*)
- Post retirement pension increases are linked to CPI

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

Pension Abatement

- If the appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during his/her re-employment that pension **will be subject to abatement** in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. **Please Note: In applying for this position you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Department/Office will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.**
- However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil or Public Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER), the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS or the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular letter LG(P) 06/2013, any of which renders a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements may, however be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

Ill-Health-Retirement

Please note that any person who previously retired on ill health grounds under the terms of a superannuation scheme will be required to declare, at the initial application phase, that they are in receipt of such a pension to the organisation administering the recruitment competition. Such applicants will be required to attend the AAI Occupational Health Service to assess their ability to provide regular and effective service taking account of the condition which qualified them for IHR.

Appointment post ill-health retirement from Civil Service

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

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

Appointment post ill-health retirement from Public Service

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

Pension Accrual

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

Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC)

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

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme please see the following website - www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie.

IMPORTANT:

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

Person Specifications

Character: Each candidate must be of good character.

Health: Each candidate shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
A minimum of 5 years' experience in a similar HR role at a senior level	Third level qualification in Human Resource Management (level 7/8)
A track record of delivering HR strategies, preferably with public sector experience	CIPD membership
Excellent working knowledge of employment legislation/industrial relations in public service environment;	And Knowledge of workforce planning strategies in line with current best practice
Experience of change management and the implementation of organisational development initiatives.	Knowledge of FOI and GDPR legislation;
Experience of managing multiple workload demands, and working to tight deadlines	Experience of planning and implementing learning and development programmes;
Experience of personal performance management systems;	Experience of working with senior management teams
Knowledge of developing and implementing a robust digital HR administrative system,	
Excellent planning and organising skills;	
Time management skills and the ability to work under pressure;	
Excellent writing skills and the ability to present information in a clear, concise and effective manner	
A high level of digital literacy including Microsoft Suite i.e. Word, Excel, Outlook etc	
Proven ability to communicate effectively and to establish and develop excellent working relationship with a broad range of stakeholders	
Strong teamworking skills across all grades and functions	

Application Process

Candidates interested in the role should submit a CV and a fully completed Key Achievements Form which includes the competency questions and a personal statement setting out how you meet the criteria for the post.

The application should be uploaded as a **word document or PDF** to <https://www.sigmarrecruitment.com/clients/adoption-authority-of-ireland>

Incomplete applications will not be considered for the next stage of the selection process.

Closing Date

The deadline for receipt of applications is **12 noon on Wednesday 26 July 2023**.

Applications received after the specified deadline will not be accepted.

All applications will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an acknowledgment within 2 working days off submission of your application please email publicsector@sigmar.ie

Selection Process

This is a competitive selection process and **may** include some or all of the following: .

- Shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application form and cover letter to select a number to be invited to competitive interview;
- A preliminary competitive competency based interview; candidates who are successful at the shortlisting stage will be invited to a competitive interview;
- A presentation exercise, to be undertaken as part of a preliminary or final competitive interview;
- A final selection interview if deemed necessary.

During any shortlisting exercise which may be employed, the selection board will examine and assess applications against the pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the role. It is therefore in your own interests to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications and experience.

It is anticipated that interviews will take place in early August 2023. It is noted that this is a time when annual leave is commonly taken and we will endeavor to give as much notice as possible for interview dates. The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Authority for interview and to make whatever arrangements are necessary to ensure that they receive communications sent to them. The Authority will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

References

Should a candidate come under consideration for appointment to the role, the Authority will need to satisfy itself as to the suitability of that candidate for the position. Employer references will be sought and no appointment will be made until suitable references have been received. We would appreciate it if you would start considering names of 2 or 3 people who you feel would be suitable referees that we might consult.

Candidates' Obligations

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- personate a candidate at any stage of the process
- influence a decision of any person in relation to that process; or
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the selection process, for example through social media or any other means, may result in you being disqualified from the competition.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result letter, is not to be taken as implying that the Authority is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements or is not disqualified by law from holding the position.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it, the Authority may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

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

Confidentiality and Data Protection

The Adoption Authority of Ireland may use third party recruitment specialists to manage all or part of the recruitment process on our behalf. We would like to assure you that protecting confidentiality is our number one priority. You can expect, and we guarantee, that all enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

All data will be processed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation and relevant Data Protection Law.

When an application form is received, a record will be created in the candidate's name which contains much of the personal information supplied. This personal record is used to process the application and is held in accordance with GDPR and relevant data protection law. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, may be extracted from records for general statistical purposes.

Code of Practice

This competition is being undertaken in accordance with the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil and Public Service www.cpsa.ie The Authority will consider any requests for review in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

Review of Decisions

There are formal procedures set down where a candidate seeks a review of a decision taken in relation to their application. These procedures are set out in the **Code of Practice**

Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service. A full version of the document is available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments www.cpsa.ie

Section 7 Review

A request for review may be taken by a candidate should they be dissatisfied with an action or decision taken by the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI). The AAI will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of **Section 7** of the Code of Practice *Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (Commission). When making a request for a review, the candidate must support their request by outlining the facts they believe show that the action taken or decision reached was wrong. A request for review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

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

Procedure for Informal Review

A request for Informal Review must be made within 5 working days of notification of the decision, and should normally take place between the candidate and a representative of the AAI who had played a key role in the selection process.

- Where the decision being conveyed relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for informal review must be received within 2 working days of the date of receipt of the decision.
- Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such informal discussion, he/she may adopt the formal procedures set out below.
- If the candidate wishes the matter to be dealt with by way of a formal review, he/she must do so within 2 working days of the notification of the outcome of the informal review.

Procedure for Formal Review of Selection Process

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive, outlining the facts that they believe show an action taken or decision reached was wrong.
- A request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the selection decision. Where the decision relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for review must be received within 4 working days.
- Any extension of these time limits will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 25 working days of receipt of the request for review.

Complaints Process

A candidate may believe there was a breach of the Commission's Code of Practice by AAI that may have compromised the integrity of the decision reached in the appointment process. The complaints process enables candidates (or potential candidates) to make a complaint under **Section 8** to the Chief Higher Executive Officer of AAI in the first instance,

and to the Commission for Public Service Appointments subsequently on appeal if they remain dissatisfied.

Allegations of a breach of the Code of Practice should be addressed in writing, and within a reasonable timeframe, to the Chief Higher Executive Officer in the first instance. The complainant must outline the facts that they believe show that the process followed was wrong. The complainant must also identify the aspect of the Code they believe has been infringed and enclose any relevant documentation that may support the allegation. A complaint may be dismissed if they the complainant cannot support their allegations by setting out how the Adoption Authority of Ireland has fallen short of the principles of this Code.

On receipt of a complaint AAI may determine to engage with the complainant on an informal basis.

Procedure for Formal Review of Selection Process

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive, outlining the facts that they believe show an action taken or decision reached was wrong.
- A request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the selection decision. Where the decision relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for review must be received within 4 working days.
- Any extension of these time limits will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 25 working days of receipt of the request for review.

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

AAI is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of gender, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, family status, sexual orientation or disability