

# **Accessible Information Policy**

**For users with special needs**



## Introduction

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is committed to ensuring effective communication with all its service users, both internal and external customers. As part of our commitment to effective communication, this policy outlines how we will communicate with customers and staff who have special needs.

The Public Appointments Service has five key customer groups which avail of our services. They are:

- **Members of the public;**
- **Candidates participating in a recruitment campaign;**
- **Interview Board Members;**
- **Representatives of Client Departments;**
- **Internal customers (Staff of the Public Appointments Service).**

## Communications

PAS is committed to the principle of independent living. As part of our commitment we ensure, where possible, that all our customers' needs are facilitated and; that we communicate effectively with all service users.

## Policy

The Public Appointments Service will endeavour to ensure that all possible assistance is given to people with special needs to access information on the wide range of services that are provided by the following: -

- Providing at least two Access Officers who will actively promote their availability and how they may be contacted.
- Providing extensive Disability Equality Training under our DORAS programme (Disability Orientated Recruitment Assessment Service) for all staff, in order to support them in providing services to customers with special needs.
- Customers participating in our recruitment campaigns can, at application stage, indicate their preferred method of communication channel and any specific requirements. For all other customers, requests can be dealt with through the Access Officers (*please see contact details below*). For a list

of accommodations available please see our *Accessible Customer Service Information Booklet*.

- Continuing to enhance ICT through adhering to the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Our main ICT platform, publicjobs.ie, will be maintained and developed to ensure no customer is prevented from accessing our services. Where our ICT may not be accessible to a customer, we will put in place an alternative in consultation with the service user.
- Availability of computers in our Career Store to customers who wish to register / apply for a recruitment campaign. We will continue to ensure that at least one of the terminals is accessible to all users. For further information please contact the Access Officers.
- Ensuring, where possible, that customers can avail of technology on site to assist in conducting their business with the office. Staff are encouraged to learn how to use assistive technology and communicate in sign language. Currently the office has thirteen staff members, of varying ability, who can sign. However where a customer is participating in a recruitment campaign, the office will ensure a fully competent signer is available to facilitate their needs.

## **Documents**

As outlined in our *Accessible Customer Service Information Booklet*, we can provide a wide range of accessible formats on request. We have our own resources for producing the majority of alternative formats. While the general turn-around time for producing most accessible formats is one day, audio and related formats require more time. In such cases the customer will be kept informed of the delivery date for their request. Further details on access requests is available in our *Request for Documentation / Information In An Alternative Format Brochure*.

**We will:**

- Ensure that existing core documents are readily available in a wide range of accessible formats. Where it is not possible to provide the entire document in accessible format, the Executive Summary will be provided.
- Ensure that all new documentation is completed in compliance with accessibility standards. Resource documents such as the National Disability Authority (NDA) Guidelines “First Steps in Producing Accessible Publications” and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) “See it Right” Guidelines will be used as reference points for preparation of such documents.
- We will circulate clear format guidelines to all staff, as used in the preparation of this document and make them available on our Intranet.
- If we cannot produce a specific format that meets your needs in-house, we will within reason, attempt to accommodate your request through third parties.
- Continue to openly advertise the availability of information in accessible formats to staff and all our customers.
- Continue to use our established channels of communication to facilitate accessible format requests and ensure that all staff are aware of the procedure for receipt and delivery of such requests.
- Ensure (where possible) that all information and documents available on our website ([publicjobs.ie](http://publicjobs.ie)) are available in a format that can be used in conjunction with assistive technology. Where this is not the case, an alternative will be provided in consultation with the service user.
- Prepare a checklist for the organisation of testing sessions taking into account how to respond to requests for special needs.

## Policy Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated on a regular basis through the following methods: -

- Monitoring of the demand for information in alternative formats outside of our in-house resources.
- Seeking user feedback from internal and external customers which will enhance our services.
- The Access Officers, in consultation with the Access Team / Equality Monitoring Committee will continue to monitor the general implementation of this policy and will review it on an annual basis.

## **Contact Details**

### **Compliance with the Disability Act 2005**

The Public Appointments Service have put in place a feedback mechanism in line with the Disability Act 2005. This feedback mechanism facilitates people with disabilities to assist us by making suggestions for service improvements. If you would like to comment on any aspect of our service please contact our Inquiry Officer, Colm Dorgan at [colm.dorgan@publicjobs.ie](mailto:colm.dorgan@publicjobs.ie) or 01-8587702.

Alternatively you can contact our Access Officer; Gerard Murphy, [gerard.murphy@publicjobs.ie](mailto:gerard.murphy@publicjobs.ie)

Postal address: Public Appointments Service, Chapter House, 26-30 Abbey St. Upper, Dublin 1.