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publicjobs

# Accessible Features and Services of publicjobs



publicjobs refers to Public Appointments Service established under the Public Service  
Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004-2013

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# Introduction

publicjobs is the primary recruitment service provider for government departments and certain state bodies. The Office is located in a modern building consisting of a ground floor and three additional floors above street level.

publicjobs is committed to providing a recruitment service that is accessible and user friendly to all its customers. In this context the Office is conscious that the attitudes of people towards those with disabilities can impact greatly on their quality of life. This can include how a person is treated by society, whether by individuals or organisations, both public and private, and the services accessible to them in their day-to-day lives.

The biggest obstacle facing people with disabilities is not necessarily the lack of ramps, signs or guide dogs, but the negative attitude which can come to the fore when approaching the concept of providing accessible services. If the attitude of individuals and organisations is open and positive, then the provision of accessible customer and environmental services becomes a natural part of individual and corporate thought. Conversely, negative attitudes can present the biggest barrier to people with disabilities in partaking fully in Irish society.

publicjobs recognises that disability is often seen in the context of providing services which address the physical needs of people. While this is an important aspect of accessibility, it is equally so that disability does not necessarily manifest itself in a physical way. Members of the public with hidden disabilities such as dyslexia, colour blindness / limited sight, mental health issues or hearing impairment to mention a few

are not so easily recognisable. As a result, accessible services are often thought of and addressed in the context of providing environmental remedies.

The Office through its experience of dealing with and providing services to a wide range of people with various individual needs, has learned, and continues to learn, from its interaction with its customers. As part of our commitment to addressing the needs of customers with disabilities, we have compiled this information booklet to highlight the various aspects of our accessible recruitment service and the physical accessibility of the Office in general.



## Our Services

publicjobs approaches accessibility of its office and services in a structured planned manner. The Office's implementation of customer services can be categorised into three primary areas as follows.

- Environmental Access;
- Accessible testing and interview services;
- Information Communication Technology.

The respective headings and associated services are outlined in detail in this Booklet.



# Environmental Access

## **A consultative planned approach**

The opportunity of redesigning our Office in Abbey Street offered the organisation, in consultation with the architects and developer, a chance to address the accessibility of the Office. This involved ensuring that the layout and internal fittings were user friendly to all users of the building irrespective of whether they were customers or staff. Outlined below are the core physical accessible features of the Office.

## **Accessible Features**

### **Accessible Signage**

The Office has installed an extensive bilingual information and direction signage throughout the Office. The signage features colour contrast, tactile elements, and Braille. In addition internationally recognised symbols and fonts are used to ensure consistency.

## **Entrance**

The entrance to publicjobs is through clear glass doors. The glass doors are an important accessible feature. They allow people to see each other before approaching the door, prevent accidents if a visually impaired person is using them and allows staff at reception to help a person with reduced mobility if they are having difficulty.

## **Large Open Spaces**

Each level of the building has large open lobbies and corridors which use natural light where possible to avoid shadows. The minimising of shadows allows persons with a visual impairment to distinguish objects. This is particularly important in staircases where shadows can obstruct a person's visual judgement of steps and possibly lead to injury.

## **Interview Suites**

Our interview suites are located on the first floor of the building. All suites, like our training and testing suites, have been designed and furnished to give maximum access to people with a range of individual needs. Use has been made of free moving furniture, colour contrast surfaces and natural light where possible. Fittings such as door handles have levers rather than knobs which allow for maximum dexterity use.

## **Accessible Elevators**

All three lifts in the Office are designed to be accessible to all our customers, taking into account visual, audio, mental and physical impairments. Features such colour contrast call buttons, voice announcement, tactile control panel, directional mirror, hand rails, non-slip surface and time delayed / motion sensor doors are fitted (e.g.

aids wheelchair users to reverse out).

### **Staircase**

The Office staircase which acts as an alternative access to the building has also been fitted with a number of accessibility features. This includes tactile flooring, colour contrast steps and floor level indicator.

### **Varying Height Reception Desk**

This was designed and built to ensure maximum accessibility. Typical users would include wheelchair users, or customer who are of smaller stature, allowing access to writing surfaces and direct eye contact with staff.

### **Free Moving Chairs**

This allows for persons with a range of requirements to select a seat suitable for their needs. For instance, persons with back problems often prefer a high chair, while wheelchair users often prefer a low seat for easy transfer.

### **Alarmed Accessible Toilets**

The central alarm system notifies reception if a person gets into difficulties while using an accessible toilet and where an incident has occurred in the building. In order to ensure access can be gained to a person in difficulty, all accessible toilets are fitted with a lock which can be opened from the outside.



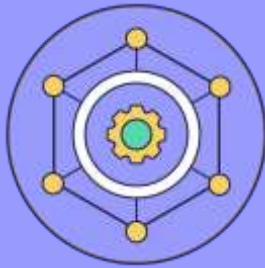
# Customer Safety

## Emergency procedures

The Office has a safety procedure and specialised equipment in place in the event of an emergency occurring in the building. This includes fire wardens who have been trained to ensure each area of responsibility is evacuated safely. A number of fire drills are carried out annually by the Office to ensure staff are familiar with the evacuation plan.

In the event of an evacuation, all security doors automatically release. Persons such as wheelchair users are escorted to refuge areas (by consent) which are located throughout the building. Where a customer is visually impaired, a staff member acts as a designated buddy to ensure the safe evacuation of that individual. Fire fighters can safely extricate any persons with mobility impairments then in a safe manner.

We also have pager system in place for hearing impaired visitors.



# Accessible Testing and Interview Services

The Office, in consultation with representative organisations, researches and develops best practice in delivering customer services to persons' with disabilities.

As part of our ongoing identification of customers' needs, the Office introduced, in consultation with a wide range of representative bodies, the "Equality Monitoring Form" which each candidate is asked to complete in a voluntary capacity. This information is not used as part of the recruitment process but kept separately in order to monitor general trends and equality proof our services under the nine grounds of the Employment Equality Act (1998).

## **Ability not Disability: Assessing the customer's needs**

As a means of continuing to identify customers' individual needs, the Office has incorporated an Accommodations Identification Form into all recruitment application documents. The form is in essence the Office's ears to what accommodations customers require to partake in the recruitment process in a fair manner. When a customer fills out this part of the form, the Office in turn endeavours to provide the service and/or equipment required by the applicant.

It should be noted that all the following services are provided both on and off site as the need arises (there can be an exception regarding assistive equipment). Outlined below are a number of services and accommodations offered to aid candidates during the recruitment process.

### **Staff Awareness**

Our staff receive disability equality training which addresses the key issues of accessibility, the recruitment process, accommodations and customer service in publicjobs.

Staff are also trained in the use of assistive technology and the production of alternative formats on request.

### **Sign language interpreter**

The Office provides sign interpreters for testing and interviews if the customer wishes. Alternatively, some customers avail of the mobile hearing loop unit or lip read. In relation to lip reading, staff are aware to speak slowly and clearly. This ensures that the customer lip reading clearly understands the directions / questions been asked.

### **Large print**

Information and testing material can be provided in large print format of your choice.

### **Extra time for tests**

Based on our own research and experience we are in a position to allocate extra time to candidates depending on their particular circumstances. Typical customers

would include those who have dyslexia, limited mobility or medical conditions which require the customer to have rest periods during the assessment / interview.

In this case we generally ask for some further information to help us arrive at an appropriate allocation of time for the assessment/interview.

### **Larger desks**

These are provided for persons who, for instance, have limited mobility or who are using Braille or large print documentation.

### **Assistance of a scribe**

Some customers may suffer from limited mobility and in this case the Office will provide a scribe (trained member of staff) to write down the customer's answers on her/his behalf.

### **One-To-One testing**

Customers with a mental health issue are offered one-to-one assessment in an environment that they are comfortable with. Examples may include persons with agoraphobia, claustrophobia or customers who experience severe stress during assessments which might affect their performance.

The emphasis on one-to-one testing is to remove any social or environmental fear the customer might experience during the assessment due to their disability.

One-to-one testing is also provided in certain instances to facilitate candidates who for individual reasons are unable to attend the main assessments due to travel logistics, etc.

### **Colour contrast paper**

Exam, interview and answer sheet papers can be provided with a variety of colour backgrounds which suit the customer's specific needs. Typically, customers with

dyslexia / limited colour vision avail of this service.

### **Voice packages**

Electronic software (JAWs) is provided for visually impaired persons who are familiar with this technology. Candidates have a choice between electronic or more traditional formats such as Braille.

### **ZoomText Magnifier**

ZoomText is an integrated magnification and screen reading software which is available to vision impaired customers using our computers.



# Additional Resources

## Access Handbook

The Access Handbook is a tool for all customers and staff, whether they have a disability or not. It is a customer way-finding guide to the Office's location, means of access, transport options, accessibility and emergency evacuation procedure. The information guide also outlines the functions and services of the Office.

The Access Handbook covers a number of topics to include:

- A description of the Office floor-by-floor and accessible features.
- Emergency evacuation procedure and accompanying diagrams.
- A detailed section on how to get to the Office from any part of the country including contact details and services provided by a variety of transport companies such as Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus, Irish Rail, Dart and Luas. Included are network maps of each service.
- The Access Handbook has been evaluated by the National Disability Authority and a copy can be download from our website.

## Website

publicjobs.ie has been designed with accessibility and usability standards in mind.

The Office is committed to ensuring Publicjobs.ie is a user-friendly portal for customers. Future developments coming online will greatly enhance the customer's experience.



## Conclusion and Further Information

We are still listening; this is the mantra of publicjobs. Providing customer service to all has been and continues to be a learning process. What is apparent is that listening to individual needs of customers and putting in place the tools they need to show their ability is the best approach.

In this context, the services we provide and environment we operate in, is continually under review as developments and trends emerge. In turn we strive where appropriate to incorporate what we have learnt into our corporate philosophy of access for all customers.

### **Further information**

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this booklet, publicjobs cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions and reserves the right to change the content of this publication at any time without prior notice.

If you have any observations which you would like to make about this publication or wish to have it provided in an alternative format, please contact the Disability Champion, Amanda Kavanagh, at: [EDI@publicjobs.ie](mailto:EDI@publicjobs.ie)



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