

**CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

The Pensions Authority is an equal opportunities employer

**Head of Legal
The Pensions Authority**

Title: Head of Legal

Employer: The Pensions Authority

Salary: €104,971

Level: Principal Officer (Standard Scale)

Posts: One full-time post

The Authority may establish a Head of Legal panel as part of this recruitment process from which any future permanent or temporary Head of Legal posts which arise during the life of the panel may be filled.

Tenure: Permanent (subject to satisfactory completion of probation)

Location: Verschoye House, 28-30 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2

The Pensions Authority currently operates a hybrid work model (HWM). The HWM requires all employees to attend the office for a minimum of two days per week. Please note the Authority's HWM is subject to change in line with Government guidelines and the Authority's business needs.

Email: careers@pensionsauthority.ie

Closing date: 12:00 noon on 25 June 2025.

The Pensions Authority

The Authority is a statutory body established under the Pensions Act 1990. The Authority supervises compliance with the Pensions Act by scheme trustees, personal retirement savings account (PRSA) providers, registered administrators and employers. Occupational pension schemes and PRSAs have between them over €140 billion in assets. Additionally, the Authority is responsible for advising the Minister for Social Protection on pension matters generally.

Further information about the Authority and [the work we do](#) can be found on our website www.pensionsauthority.ie

The Legal Unit

The Legal Unit provides essential services to the various operations of the Pensions Authority including:

- providing general legal advice and specialist regulatory and pensions advice to support the Authority in its regulatory, supervisory and advisory roles;
- supporting the Department of Social Protection as requested in relation to pensions legislation;
- managing prosecution and civil litigation cases;
- supporting the development of authoritative guidance and FAQs on the Pension Authority's expectations of regulated entities and trustees; and
- acting as secretariat to the Authority.

Further information on the Legal Unit is available on www.pensionsauthority.ie.

The Role of Head of Legal

The Head of Legal will be appointed at the level of Principal Officer and will report to the Director of Supervision, Policy and Legal.

The Head of Legal must be a qualified solicitor or barrister with at least six years' relevant post-qualification legal and managerial experience.

In addition to being responsible for the provision of legal advice and legal services to the organisation, the Head of Legal is a member of the Senior Management Team and in that capacity will be responsible for contributing at a senior level to the fulfilment of the Authority's strategic objectives.

Responsibilities of the post include the following:

- Being the legal adviser to the Board of the Pensions Authority.

- Providing legal advice and support to the Pensions Regulator.
- Actively participating in the management of the delivery of the Authority's strategy as a member of the Senior Management Team.
- Developing, empowering, motivating and managing a professional team and ensuring a prompt and high-quality legal service is provided at all times.
- Identifying and managing legal risk in the context of delivering the Authority's strategic objectives and statutory priorities.
- Providing legal advice on regulatory strategy, regulatory and supervisory policies, investigations, due process and fair procedures.
- Supporting the Department of Social Protection as requested in relation to pensions legislation.
- Inputting into pensions regulatory legislation and the development of Authority guidance and codes of practice for trustees.
- Managing litigation and representing the Authority in all High Court proceedings and appeals.
- Providing general in-house legal advice as required, for example, on procurement law, health and safety, employment law, GDPR and data protection.
- Advising on EU developments relevant to pension schemes e.g., SFDR/Taxonomy, DORA, ESAP, Securitisation.
- Representing the Authority on inter-departmental working groups and EU regulatory committees.
- Managing the Freedom of Information function, the determinations functions under the Pensions Act and the internal knowledge programme.
- Ensuring the quality, consistency and value for money of the legal services provided.
- Any other tasks as may be assigned from time to time by the Director or the Pensions Regulator.

Essential requirements:

Applicants must be qualified to act as a solicitor or barrister and must have:

- at least six years' post qualification experience which must include significant experience of pensions or financial services or regulatory law;
- strong leadership qualities, experience of leading a team and the ability to motivate, inspire and develop the legal team;
- strong evidence of project and resource management capability, and a record of achieving challenging goals, and managing and prioritising multiple work streams;
- strong drafting skills;
- a minimum 2:1 law degree or equivalent;

- a high level of personal drive and resilience;
- an ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines;
- excellent communication skills;
- highly developed judgement and decision-making abilities;
- strong analytical and strategic thinking capabilities;
- excellent interpersonal skills;
- high levels of integrity and professionalism;
- a commitment to continuous self-learning and development; and
- a commitment to developing others within the organisation.

Desirable knowledge or experience:

- Knowledge of the development and workings of EU law and its application.
- Experience of working in a regulatory body or in advising regulated entities who are the subject of regulatory investigations, proceedings or sanctions.
- Knowledge of administrative law.

Working at the Pensions Authority

The Authority is an equal opportunities employer. Our employees come from varied professional backgrounds in both the private and public sector and include actuaries, lawyers, accountants, regulatory specialists, data analysts, qualified financial advisors, pension administrators, investment managers, customer service support, and software and hardware engineers.

A career in the Authority will give you a unique opportunity to work in pensions regulation and to develop your potential while contributing to the Authority's vision of achieving a pensions landscape which encourages pensions savings by being secure, well managed and understandable.

Day-to-day work of the Authority

The day-to-day work of the Authority is carried out by our 100 employees working together across the following Units:

- Supervision and Enforcement comprising:
 - Defined Benefit Supervision,
 - Master Trust Supervision,
 - Defined Contribution Supervision.
- Strategy and Change Management.
- Policy.

- Legal.
- IT and Data.
- Operations.

Career development

Through our continuous learning and development programme, we provide employees with the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge required to efficiently and effectively carry out their roles to serve the public interest. The Authority is committed to investing in the expertise of our employees so they can progress their careers in our organisation and beyond.

Each Unit works collaboratively and plays an important role in delivering the Authority's objectives. In the delivery of our objectives there are various cross-Unit projects and business as usual activities underway at any one time in a variety of areas such as supervision; compliance and enforcement activity; data management and analysis; policy development; providing legal and technical advice; IT systems development; HR; finance; procurement and communications. Employees have the opportunity to input into and influence how the Authority does its work. These activities enable employees to gain an array of experiences from across the organisation.

Benefits of working at the Pensions Authority

Our modern city centre office, located on Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2, is easily accessible by DART, Luas and many bus routes. While employees are contracted to work in our Dublin 2 office, employees can currently avail of our hybrid working arrangement. Our hybrid working policy requires employees to attend the office for a minimum of two days per week and is subject to change in line with Government guidelines and the business needs of the Authority. All employees must work from the territory and jurisdiction of Ireland while working remotely with the Authority.

Below are just some of the benefits that the Authority has to offer:

- Public sector pay rates, pension benefits and annual leave entitlements.
- Dynamic and interactive work environment.
- Career progression opportunities.
- Personal development opportunities through employer-sponsored academic education, paid study leave and extensive in-house training and development programmes.
- Tax saver tickets, cycle-to-work scheme and bike storage onsite.

- Wellbeing initiatives: lunch and learn sessions on popular topics, mindfulness classes, mental health awareness talks, provision of fresh fruit daily, health initiatives, employee networking initiatives, confidential employee assistance programme.
- An active and inclusive social committee hosting varied activities.

Application process

Applications must be submitted by email and marked 'Head of Legal – your name'. Failure to correctly mark the email subject header may result in disqualification.

Interested candidates must submit the following to careers@pensionsauthority.ie:

- Their curriculum vitae.
- A cover letter demonstrating by reference to specific achievements in their career to date how they meet the requirements of this position, as described in this document.

The cover letter must address the following headings:

- Essential requirements.
- Desirable requirements (if applicable).
- Principal Officer competencies (set out in Appendix 1).

Please provide specific examples illustrating how you have displayed the relevant competency during your career to date in order to clearly demonstrate your suitability for this position.

Your examples must highlight all elements of the STAR competency framework which is outlined below

Situation	Present a challenging situation you found yourself in
Task	What did you need to achieve from the situation?
Action	What action did you personally take to achieve this?
Result	What was the result of your action?

It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address or mobile phone number in the course of this recruitment competition, as any correspondence will be through the email address/mobile phone number originally supplied by you.

Closing date

The closing date and time for receipt of applications is **12:00 noon on 25 June 2025**.

If you do not receive an acknowledgment of receipt of your application within three working days of the closing date, please contact careers@pensionsauthority.ie. Please note the requirement above relating to the email subject heading.

It is the Authority's policy that applications will not be accepted after the closing time.

Note:

If you are an EU/EEA/UK national, you will be asked to show proof of right to work in Ireland. If you are a non-EU/EEA/UK national, you will require a current and valid work visa for the Republic of Ireland. Remote working outside of the territory and jurisdiction of Ireland will not be facilitated except for employees residing in Northern Ireland.

Please note the Pensions Authority cannot provide employer sponsorship for employment permit purposes.

Selection process

Candidates may be shortlisted on the basis of the information provided in their application. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of how your skills, personal qualities, qualifications and experience meet the requirements of the post.

The selection process may include:

- a competitive initial/preliminary interview; and/or
- one or more rounds of technical tasks, tests or exercises to be completed by the candidate; and/or
- a competitive final interview(s); and/or
- a presentation by the candidate.

Notification to attend interview will be issued at least one week in advance. Candidates will be required to attend interviews at their own expense. It is not possible to alter the allocated interview date or time. Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required, or confirm their attendance for interview if requested, will have no claim for further consideration and their candidature will be deemed to be withdrawn.

If you require special facilities at the interview location (e.g., wheelchair access, sign interpreter, Braille, etc.), please contact careers@pensionsauthority.ie.

Candidates must produce satisfactory documentary evidence of all qualifications claimed by them, on request. Failure to produce such documentary evidence when requested may lead to disqualification from the competition and/or termination of contract. Therefore, it

is advised that you have this documentation available to you when making your application.

Any candidate who supplies false or misleading information in their application may be disqualified.

We will endeavour to keep candidates informed of the progress of their application at the earliest possible date.

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Honesty agreement

Honesty and integrity are key values in the Civil and Public Service. You are therefore required to ensure that the information provided throughout the selection process is factual, honest, and an accurate reflection of your skills and experience to date. Please note that the use of online systems, software or artificial intelligence during the selection process, assessments, interviews, or to prepare your application responses is strictly prohibited. Candidate submissions at all stages are subject to duplication / originality / response pattern checks, and the information provided may be verified at a later stage. Where a breach occurs, the Authority will consider sanctions which may result in disqualification. In submitting your application, and in engaging in the recruitment process, you are confirming that you consent to your work/submissions being made subject to this process.

General conditions of employment

Pay

Entry will be at the minimum of the Principal Officer (Standard) Scale for persons appointed on or after 6 April 1995. The salary scale for the position, as per Circular 06/2025, is as follows:

For persons appointed to the public service after 6 April 1995:

€104,971, €109,426, €113,845, €118,298, €122,054, €125,951 ^(LSI-1), €129,841 ^(LSI-2)

Long-service increments may be payable after three (LSI-1) and six (LSI-2) years of satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Increments are normally awarded annually subject to satisfactory performance; however, payment of increments and/or the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Tenure

In the event of appointment to a permanent or temporary position with the Authority, the appointee must serve a probationary period, which normally will last for nine months. If at any time during this period it appears that the appointee would not be suitable for final appointment, the probation will be terminated.

Panel

As part of this recruitment process, the Authority may establish a panel of successful candidates in order of merit. Any panel created will expire after a designated period from its establishment (usually nine months), or when it has been exhausted, whichever is sooner. The Authority may decide that only a certain number of candidates will be placed on any such panel. Qualification and placement on a panel is not a guarantee of appointment to a position. Candidates not appointed at the expiry of the panel will have no claim to a position thereafter because of having been on the panel.

More detailed information regarding establishment of a panel (if any), duration of any such panel and placement on the panel will be provided to successful candidates.

If you are placed on a panel, and are subsequently offered an assignment, you must be available to take up the post as offered. Vacancies may need to be filled with immediate effect therefore if you are not contactable, the Authority will immediately move on to the next available candidate. Candidates who wish to be considered for positions which may arise must be available for the full duration of the contract offered. Extended holiday plans during this period may affect your possible assignment.

Hours of attendance

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time but will amount, on average, to not less than 43 hours and 15 minutes gross or 35 hours net per week. Normal working hours are from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday, including lunch. The successful candidate will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations. The rate of remuneration payable covers any extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time. Please note that hours of attendance may be subject to change from time to time in line with Government/local policy and practices.

Annual leave

The annual leave allowance for the position of Principal Officer is 30 working days per year. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the Civil Service, is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Business travel

When absent from home and headquarters on duty, appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances will be paid subject to the normal Civil Service regulations.

Pension entitlements

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate pension terms and conditions as prevailing in the Authority at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, and except for candidates who have worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment, this means being offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Candidates will be notified of which scheme will apply to them, at the time of being offered an appointment.

The Single Scheme, as provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012, came into effect on 1 January 2013. From that date onwards, new public servants will be members of the Single Scheme, which will provide CPI-linked defined-benefit pensions based on career-average pay. The Scheme's minimum pension age will be linked to the State Pension age 66. Retirement for most members will be compulsory on reaching age 70. For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme for Public Servants please see: <http://www.per.gov.ie/pensions>.

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 public service pension scheme will apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

Note:

Candidates should note that different pay and conditions may apply if, prior to appointment with the Authority, the appointee is/was a serving civil or public servant.

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.

Privacy statement

Information provided on applications submitted to the Pensions Authority will be processed in line with our privacy statement. Please click here to review the Pensions Authority's [privacy statement](#).

Appendix 1 Principal Officer competencies

Competency	Typical behavioural indicators
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads, inspires, and motivates team to build and sustain high levels of performance and achievement; addresses performance issues as they arise. • Accountability and responsibility for actions taken. • Supports and encourages innovation and empowerment of staff. • Leads on preparing for and implementing change and reform. • Establishes a culture of learning and development across the organisation, providing ongoing coaching and constructive/supportive feedback. • Develops capability and capacity of staff through effective delegation of projects and tasks. • Challenges ideas and proposed changes constructively in the best interest of the long-term future of the organisation. • Is aware of his/her own strengths/ weaknesses. • Champions the Authority's goals.
Strategic thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the ability to formulate and implement policy which delivers the organisation's strategic goals • Actively shapes and implements the Authority's strategy and policies. • Establishes, promotes and carries out operational risk and opportunities scanning; implements appropriate risk management and pursues appropriate opportunities. • Facilitates collaboration across units in the organisation; actively and constructively challenges others at senior management level. • Looks at and understands the bigger picture.
Judgement, decision-making and problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipates and responds quickly to developments in the industry/broader environment and takes appropriate action. • Consults and communicates with the senior management team before implementing decisions with major implications for the Authority or its work. • Adopts reasoned, logical and evidence-based approach to decision making. • Can present complex issues and provide solutions to the senior management team. • Demonstrates a high level of drive and initiative.
Delivery of results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balances strategic objectives with operational

Competency	Typical behavioural indicators
	<p>capacity/resources to meet business needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instils the importance of efficiencies, value for money and meeting corporate governance requirements. • Is personally accountable for delivering results/services in own unit and across the Authority, against key performance indicators. • Keeps objectives and plans under review and reallocates resources to manage any changes in focus where required. • Effectively delegates and manages multiple projects ensuring they are delivered on time, within budget and to a high standard.
Building relationships and communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks and writes in a clear, articulate and impactful manner. • Advances the mandate of the Authority externally through advocacy, leadership and the development of critical relationships. • Actively listens, seeking to understand the perspective and position of others. • Encourages the views and ideas of others through active listening, including encouraging others to bring forward new ideas and initiatives to improve how the Authority operates.
Influence and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively engages with colleagues at all levels of the Authority and builds strong professional networks. • Is resilient and maintains composure and presents a confident and positive demeanour even in adverse or challenging situations. • Works effectively within the public service system, recognising and managing the tensions arising from different stakeholders perspectives and influencing good outcomes. • Exemplifies and promotes a culture within the Authority that fosters the highest standards of ethics and integrity. • Produces papers and presentations on professional/technical or specialised aspects of the role and is recognised as an expert in their field both inside and outside of the Authority.
Specialist knowledge, skills, expertise and self-development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively drives and ensures the sharing and the application of knowledge, best practice and continuous improvement across the Authority. • Develops and maintains skills and expertise across relevant industry and areas. • Keeps up to date with key organisational, national and international policies and economic trends that affect the role of the Authority. • Maintains a strong focus on self-development, seeking ongoing

Competency	Typical behavioural indicators
	feedback and opportunities for growth of management and technical skills.