

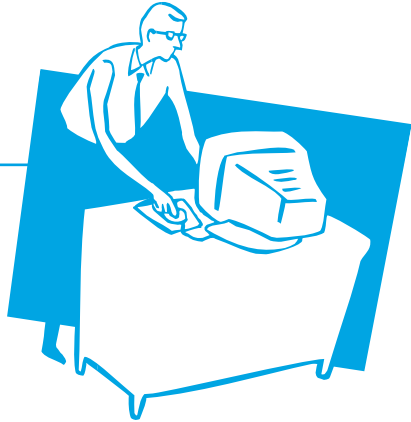
Employment

The rules governing who can work freely in Ireland and who needs permission (a permit, visa or authorisation) are complicated. We have tried to give a general overview of the current situation but cannot cover all cases.

Work Permits

Many people are free to work without a work permit, including:

- Citizens of a European Economic Area (EEA) country (the EU countries plus Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) and Switzerland.
- Persons who have been granted refugee status.
- Students (for up to 20 hours per week in term time, full time in holidays).
- Non-EEA workers legally employed in one Member State who are temporarily sent on a contract to another Member State.
- Persons who have been granted permission to remain in Ireland because:
 - They are the spouse or parent of an Irish citizen.
 - They have been given temporary leave to remain on humanitarian



grounds, having been in the Asylum process.

If you need a work permit the key point to note is that it may only be applied for by an employer on behalf of a prospective employee. The employer must have a permit before the employee starts work. Working without a valid work permit is an offence under Irish law. If you have a work permit it is possible to change employers, but only if the new employer gets a work permit on your behalf. The existing work permit needs to be returned to the Department with a cover letter from the previous employer.

An employer will pay between €65 and €500 for a permit, depending on its length. A permit can last for up to one year. Applications for renewal of permits should be made before the end of the current permit. The standard waiting time is 8-10 weeks but it may take longer depending on the number of applications.

Working Visas and Work Authorisation

Because of skills shortages in certain sectors in Ireland, it is possible to apply for a working visa or work authorisation. Applications must be made from outside Ireland and the person applying must have an offer and contract of employment from an employer in Ireland in one of the named sectors (such as health care, information technology, construction engineering and town planning). The key difference between these and work permits is that working visas/work authorisation are granted initially for 2 years and the person may change employer (provided that they stay in the same sector).

Further Information

For the latest information and application forms contact:
Department of Enterprise,
Trade and Employment,
Davitt House, 65a Adelaide Road,
Dublin 2. www.entemp.ie

Work permits section
Tel. 01 6313333/3308
email. workpermits@entemp.ie

Working visas tel. 01 6313186
email. workingvisas@entemp.ie

Finding a Job

There are several useful sources when you are looking for a job in Cork. Firstly, jobs are advertised in newspapers. The Friday edition of the Irish Times and Irish Examiner and the Thursday edition of the Irish Independent include many job ads. Jobs advertised in these national newspapers may be based anywhere in Ireland. The Cork-based Evening Echo includes job ads every day and these are usually for positions in Cork.

Jobs are also advertised in the FÁS offices and local employment service (see page 14)

Contact Details

FÁS Employment Services Office,
Sullivan's Quay, Cork.
Tel: 021 4856200 and in the FAS
Centre, 30/31 Shandon Street,
Cork. Tel: 021 4946162.

Cork also has several recruitment agencies (a full listing is included in the Golden Pages under "Recruitment Specialists"). Many recruitment agencies are accessible online – these include: www.irishjobs.ie, www.bestjobs.ie, www.recruitireland.com, www.jobsireland.com, www.topjobs.ie and www.monster.ie

How to Apply for a Job?

Once you've found a job ad that interests you and seems to match your skills, the next step is to apply for the position. The job ad will tell you how to apply – this usually involves sending an application letter and curriculum vitae (see below) by a specific date. It's important not to miss that date, as late applications are not usually considered. The employer may want you to apply using an application form, which is generally mentioned in the ad and available from the employer.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A CV (curriculum vitae) gives a brief overview of your education and work experience and seeks to show the employer why you are suitable for the job. A CV will include:

- Personal details (name, age, contact details, etc)
- Education details
- Work experience and employment history.
- Interests and activities.
- Additional information such as ability with foreign languages, computing skills, etc.
- Names and addresses of people who will give you a reference (usually past employers).

The layout of a CV is important. It should be easy to read, clear and concise (1-2 pages at most). As space is limited you should adapt your CV to match the specific requirements of

each job you are applying for. CV samples can be obtained from the Internet (e.g. www.ucc.ie/careers) and from recruitment agencies.

What is a Cover Letter

When applying for a job always send a cover letter along with your application or CV. Begin the letter with "Dear Sir/Madam" if you don't know the surname. End with "Yours sincerely".

Start by indicating the job you are applying for and where you learned about the vacancy. Go on to say why you are interested in this job. Mention your relevant qualifications and related work experience. Finally, indicate your availability for interview and if necessary ask for further information.

The Interview

The employer will invite applicants who seem best suited for the job to an interview. If you are called for an interview you should prepare well. Find out if there is any aptitude (ability, skill) test included in the interview. Know the organisation and the job. Think about your strengths and weaknesses. Allow enough time to arrive 20 to 30 minutes early. Dress professionally and give a firm handshake. Listen to the questions carefully and answer clearly and concisely. If you don't understand a question ask for clarification. If you don't know the answer to a question

say so. When given the opportunity to ask questions, it is the right time to demonstrate what you know about the company. Leave on a positive note.

Support in Finding Work

There are a number of organisations which provide support, free of charge, to people looking for work (provided that they are eligible to work in Ireland). FÁS provides a range of services to help people find work, including career guidance and information on jobs and training opportunities. The first step is to register at your local FÁS Office (Contact details page 12).

The **Local Employment Service (LES)** has offices throughout Cork City, which provide help to those who have been unemployed for a number of months, or who may face particular disadvantages in finding work (e.g. single parents, people with disabilities and Refugees). The service is free, confidential and provides support with career guidance, education and training, CV and interview preparation and job placement. There are 7 LES offices in Cork City.

Support, advice and a free CV preparation service are also available from the **Centre for the Unemployed**, 13 North Main Street Cork. Tel 021 4275876, e-mail cctu@eircom.net

LES Offices in Cork

Blackpool/The Glen: Gt. William O'Brien Street, Blackpool, Cork. Tel 021 4506266.

City Centre: Government Buildings, Sullivan's Quay, Cork. Tel 021 4856437

Churchfield/Farranree: Parochial Hall, Knockfree Avenue, Gurranaברה, Cork. Tel 021 4211048.

Knocknaheeny: Hollyhill Shopping Centre, Hollyhill, Cork. Tel 021 4211050

Mahon: Portacabin, Ringmahon House, Mahon, Cork. Tel 021 4975883

Mayfield: Old Youghal Road, Mayfield, Cork. Tel 021 4507499

Togher: Greenwood Estate, Togher, Cork. Tel 021 4320428

Wages & Taxes

Once you have a job you will pay tax in the PAYE (pay as you earn) system (unless you are self-employed). In the PAYE system the amount of tax you owe is calculated by your employer and deducted from your wages every week or month. Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) contributions will also be deducted from your salary if you earn over a certain amount. Your PRSI contributions may entitle you to

social welfare benefits at a future date. All employees are entitled to receive a pay slip from their employers. It is a confidential written statement of the total gross wages, the details of any deductions for instance PRSI and PAYE and the net pay after deductions.

Shortly after the end of each financial year (31st December) your employer should give you a P60 form. This sets out the gross amount of pay received plus the details of deductions for PAYE and PRSI. If you leave the country before the end of the financial year you may be eligible to claim a tax refund. Your P60 is important and should be kept safe, as you may need it to claim social welfare benefits or tax refunds. It also provides you with proof of the deductions made from your pay. If you leave a job your employer should give you a P45 form, which you should then give to any new employer.

When you start work for the first time you need to contact the tax office to get your Certificate of Tax Credits (CTC). However, before contacting the tax office you should have obtained your PPS number (see below) – always quote this number when contacting the tax office. Fill out an application form 12A, which is available from any tax office or from the Revenue Commissioner's website, www.revenue.ie. After receiving your

application form, the tax office will send both you and your employer a certificate of tax credits, which sets out in detail the amount of tax credits and standard rate cut off point due. If your employer does not hold a CTC for you, s/he must deduct tax at emergency rates, which may result in excessive tax deductions (although this would be repaid to you later).

PPS Number

All employees should have a PPS (Personal Public Service) number. This is your unique reference number for all your dealings with the Public Service e.g. applying to the Revenue Commissioners (tax office) for a tax credits certificate, applying to the Department of Social and Family Affairs for a payment etc. For employment it is advisable to apply as soon as possible as without a PPS number you will be taxed at the higher rate.

PPS numbers are allocated by your local Social Welfare Office. You must apply in person, complete the application form (Reg 1) in the office and provide proof of identity. You will need to bring a passport or National ID Card or Immigration Card (in the case of a non EEA national), and proof of address in Ireland. You may also be asked for evidence of activity in your home country (ie evidence of either birth/work/unemployment/residency/tax liability/education) so it's best to bring such documents with

you. If you have a problem with these documents call 021 4270055 beforehand for advice. Further information can be found at www.welfare.ie.

Further Information

The following leaflets and forms contain more information on personal tax credits and the PAYE tax system:

IT1	Tax Credits, Rates and Reliefs
IT2	Taxation of Married Couples
IT11	Employee's Guide to PRSI
IT20A	PAYE/PRSI on Benefits from Employment (from 1/1/04)
OP1	One Parent Family Tax Credit Claim Form
Rent 1	Rent Relief Claim Form
RES2	Coming to Live in Ireland

These forms are available from LoCall 1890 306706 or from your local tax office – Office of the Revenue Commissioners, Government Offices, Sullivan's Quay, Cork tel 021 4325000. They can also be downloaded from www.revenue.ie

Your Rights at Work

There is a wide range of legislation which guarantees minimum rights and protection for both full-time and part-time workers. Examples of such rights include:

Terms and Conditions: When you start a new job you and your employer sign a Terms and Conditions form. This sets out detailed information related to your wage, working hours, breaks, holidays, maternity pay, sick pay, etc. At the end of the pay period your employer should give you a payslip showing your wages and deductions for tax, social insurance (PRSI) etc.

Pay Related Rights: Generally workers are entitled to a minimum wage – in 2004 this was €7 per hour. However, this does not apply to all employers – e.g. those under 18 and those who have not worked for two years. Certain sectors of industry, including agriculture, construction and hotel and catering, are covered by agreements, which set minimum rates of pay, which may be in excess of the National Minimum Wage.

Working Time Rights: On average an employer should not expect you to work for more than 48 hours per week (usually averaged over 4 months). You are entitled to at least 11 consecutive hours rest (breaks) per 24-hour period and at least one

24-hour rest per week. Employees who work on Sundays have a right to be compensated by extra pay or time in lieu (i.e. paid time off at a later date).

Holidays: Employees are entitled to at least 20 days holiday (or annual leave) every year plus 9 public holidays. Where employees are required to work on public holidays, they should receive either an extra off or an extra day's pay. Part-time workers are also entitled to holidays – the number of days depends on the number of hours they work.

Maternity and Parental Leave: If you are pregnant you are entitled to at least 18 weeks maternity leave from your job. You can also take an additional 8 weeks, but you will not get any Maternity Benefit for these extra weeks. Each parent is also entitled to 14 weeks unpaid parental leave for each child which can be taken in a single block or at intervals until the child is five.

Protection Against Discrimination

The Employment Equality Act prohibits discrimination against employees on a number of grounds – including age, gender, race, religion, family status, marital status, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the traveller community. This Act prevents discrimination not only in access to employment but also in conditions of employment – training, promotion, etc.

Other legislation obliges employers to give minimum notice before they dismiss an employee and sets out minimum payments for workers who are made redundant. This short guide cannot give a full picture of this legislation.

What if I have a problem with my employer?

If you think your employer has treated you unfairly regarding wages, holidays, work conditions, hours of work, redundancy, unfair dismissal etc you can contact the Independent Workers Union Centre for a free consultation – 55 North Main Street, Cork, tel 021 4277151.

Further Information

Dept of Enterprise, Trade and Employment,
Employment Rights Information Unit,
Davitt House,
65a Adelaide Road,
Dublin 2.
Tel 01 6313131
Lo-call 1890 201615
www.entemp.ie

Equality Authority
2 Clonmel St, Dublin 2.
Tel 01 417 3336
Lo-call 1890 245545