

Terms and Conditions of Employment

The full terms and conditions of employment of the Northern Ireland Civil Service involve a large number of agreements which are too complex and lengthy to reproduce here. A number of aspects are however touched on briefly below and members are urged to refer to the actual agreements or if necessary to consult the relevant Personnel Department or NIPSA Branch Secretary. Full details of conditions of employment are contained in the NICS Pay and Conditions of Service Code and in the NICS Staff Handbook.

Superannuation

Civil servants receive the basic state pension and Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) benefits.

As from 30 July 2007 revised pension arrangements (the 'nuvos' scheme) based on 'whole career' earnings apply to new entrants. All civil servants already in post before then retain existing rights and benefits.

The pre-30 July 2007 schemes include: 'classic', a scheme which was available prior to October 2002; 'premium', which was introduced with effect from October 2002; 'classic plus', which retained past benefits in 'classic' and future benefits in 'premium'; and a stakeholder ('partnership') money purchase scheme. New entrants from October 2002 (to 30 July 2007) had the choice of the 'premium' or 'partnership' schemes only. Some of the terms of the three main schemes ('classic', 'premium' and 'nuvos') are as below.

PCSPS (NI) Pension - 'Classic': Based on whichever 12 month period of the last three years service gives the highest pensionable pay. On retirement an officer receives an annual pension of 1/80 of pensionable pay and a lump sum of 3/80s, both multiplied by length of reckonable service not exceeding 40 years by age 60. Service after 60 may reckon up to a total of 45 years.

'Premium': Based on 1/60 of pensionable pay. Lump sum not automatic but can be exchanged for some pension entitlement.

'Nuvos': Based on pensionable earnings throughout career. 2.3% of pensionable earnings credited each year with additional index linked credits. Lump sum not automatic but can be exchanged for some pension entitlement.

Note: 'Classic' contribution rate of 1.5% of pensionable earnings, 'Premium' and 'Nuvos' contribution rate of 3.5%.

Ill-Health Retirement - 'Classic': An officer with five years service may qualify for enhanced superannuation benefits for retirement on medical grounds. No enhancement for those with less than five years service.

'Premium': Provides 'upper' and 'lower' tier pensions depending on severity of illness.

'Nuvos': Provides 'upper' and 'lower' tier pensions depending on severity of illness.

Death Benefits - 'Classic': For death in service, two years pensionable pay to a nominated beneficiary. For death shortly after retirement a supplementary death benefit may be paid.

'Premium': Three years pensionable pay to nominated beneficiaries (may be more than one).

'Nuvos': Two years pensionable pay to nominated beneficiaries.

Widows'/Widowers' Pensions - 'Classic': Half the officer's pension paid if the officer dies in service or after retirement, leaving an eligible spouse. For three months the pension is equal to the officer's full pension (if the officer dies after retirement and retired after 1 June 1972), or to pensionable pay (if the officer dies before retirement, when it may be extended to six months if there are dependent children). Unmarried officers can have their contributions refunded when they retire.

'Premium': Reckonable service doubled if in scheme more than 2 years before death in service, provided extra years not more than 10 years or further service up to pension age.

'Nuvos': Surviving spouses/civil partners entitled to a pension for life (normally 3/8 of member's pension but where members die in service, additional enhancement of up to 10 years service).

Children's Benefit - 'Classic': In the event of death in service, up to two children each receive one quarter of the officers pension; if there is no widow/widower, up to two children receive one third of the pension.

'Premium': Up to two children each receive 30% of pension; if no widow/widower/partner, up to two children receive 50% of pension.

'Nuvos': Children receive 30% of pension; if no widow/widower/partner, 50% of pension.

Additional Voluntary Contributions - Officers may buy reckonable service (added years) or extra benefits. Contributions are eligible for tax relief.

Injury Benefits - Loss of earnings compensation paid for injury or disease in course of duty, except when mainly due to serious and culpable negligence or misconduct.

Early Retirement - Officers can apply to take their pension early but it will be actuarially reduced to take account of the fact that it will be paid earlier. Pensions are reduced by around 5% for each year they are drawn before pension age. In some cases better terms apply (eg compulsory, flexible or approved early retirement).

Further information on pensions can be obtained on the pensions website (www.civilservicepensions-ni.gov.uk).

Basic Hours

For most Civil Servants conditioned hours are 42 gross a week, including lunch. The standard working week is regarded as five days but in the interests of the service attendance on more than 5 days may be necessary in some circumstances. Where this applies time off in lieu or overtime payment should normally be allowed. Attendance on Saturday earns a half time premium for those grades eligible for overtime, even if within conditioned hours.

With agreement of both Management and Trade Union Side, Flexible Working Hours have been introduced in most offices. Details of the Flexible Working Hours scheme are contained in the NICS Staff Handbook section 'Hours and Attendance'. Part-time working and job sharing arrangements are available for existing staff.

Overtime

When overtime is considered necessary and where blocks of staff are involved the local branch of NIPSA must be consulted before overtime can be authorised. This should be worked by volunteers and normally 48 hours notice should be given. Individuals can be excused late working on grounds of personal safety. Payment for overtime is made in two bands:

- Band 1 comprises all grades up to and including Executive Officer I and equivalents. They receive hourly payment at time and a half for all hours in excess of conditioned hours, Monday to Saturday inclusive.
- Band 2 comprises all grades at Staff Officer and equivalents. They receive payments at plain time rates for all hours worked in excess of conditioned hours. Monday to Friday inclusive.

Premium payments are also made for weekend, bank and public holiday working.

Staff in grades at Deputy Principal, Grade 7 and equivalent are eligible for time of in lieu and payments of weekend, bank and public holiday premia. Staff in those grades may also receive a discretionary hourly payment in certain circumstances.

Staff working hours in excess of conditioned hours at weekends or on bank holidays may, in addition to the payment of weekend etc premia, be granted time off in lieu (TOIL) equivalent to the additional hours worked, provided it can be taken within a reasonable period of time.

On Call and Standby

On Call and Standby payments may be made as follows:

	on call (radio pager / mobile phone)	on call (home)	stand-by (office)
Weekdays (evenings/nights) All grades	£4.90	£6.15	£11.64
Saturdays, Sundays & Privilege Holidays All grades	£14.00	£17.50	£33.40
Public & Bank Holidays All grades	£17.73	£22.11	£41.92

Subsistence

Subsistence allowances are payable as follows:-

Day Subsistence – All Classes

Rate A:	5 to 10 hours absence	£4.25
Rate B:	More than 10 hours	£9.30

Paid for up to 30 days when a meal has to be bought at greater cost than at a permanent station. Main meals taken on trains, boats etc reimbursed as follows:-

5-10 hour absence - one main meal in lieu of rate A

Over 10 hours absence – One main meal plus rate A, or two main meals in lieu of rate B.

Long day absence – For absences which exceed 12 hours check NICS Staff Handbook section ‘Subsistence Allowances.’

Night Subsistence

Central London (ie 5 miles from Charing Cross and Republic of Ireland (RoI))	Receipted actuals for bed and breakfast up to a ceiling of £120 including VAT plus an allowance of up to a maximum of £18.30 to cover lunch and dinner.
Elsewhere in GB and Northern Ireland (wef 1.12.00)	Receipted actuals for bed and breakfast up to a ceiling of £80 including VAT plus an allowance of up to a maximum of £18.30 to cover lunch and dinner.
Officers staying with friends or relatives (London, RoI and elsewhere in GB and NI)	£25 per night

Paid for overnight absence of up to 24 hours for up to 30 nights. Discounted rate applies to approved hotel list. Undiscounted applies where staff have been unable to secure accommodation from the recommended list. All travel (for all classes) including trains, tubes and taxis is paid on an actuals basis, supported by receipts where feasible.

Personal Allowance

Payable only in conjunction with all complete periods of 24 hours for which night subsistence is payable	All classes £5.00 (not taxable)
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Residential Allowance

For officers attending residential training school for which boarding expenses are paid for by employer.	All classes £5.00 (not taxable)
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Lodging Allowance (applies after night subsistence)

	All classes
Central London and Republic of Ireland	£38.82
Elsewhere in GB and NI	£31.00

Mileage Allowances

Mileage allowances (standard rate) are payable when an Officer uses his/her car on official business. The rates of allowance are negotiated annually. Supplements are paid for carrying passengers and equipment. Garaging and parking expenses may also be met. The Public Transport rate may be paid rather than the standard rate if the Officer's insurance policy does not meet the requirements of the Code of Regulations.

Mileage rates (per mile)	Up to 10,000 miles	Over 10,000 miles
All engine capacities	45.0p	25.0p

Note: See also CSC5/04 (and addendum) for details of previous mileage compensation scheme.

Motor cycle rate per mile	24.0p
Public Transport Rate (PTR)	25.7p
Passenger supplement – first	5.0p
Passenger supplement – second	5.0p
Equipment allowance	2.0p
Pedal cycle allowance	20.0p

Permanent Transfer

Transfer To New Station - Up to five days special leave for preliminary visits and transfer, plus two days for furniture removal (three if long distance) and a number of other allowances for specific circumstances (see NICS Staff Handbook section 'Special Leave').

Night Subsistence/Lodging Allowance

Thirty nights subsistence for officers without permanent accommodation on transfer. Followed by:-

Lodging allowance for officers with dependants not joined by family at the detached duty station and officers without dependants who retain accommodation at the permanent station as well as lodgings at the detached duty station.

Removal Expenses - Lowest of three estimates for furniture removal is paid.

Legal Expenses - Reasonable legal expenses on house purchase are paid, including solicitor's fees, stamp duty, land registration fees, incidental expenses connected with mortgage or loan, private survey and drains test plus VAT on legal/estate agent fees.

Bridging Loan Interest - May be reimbursed net of tax for three months (longer at discretion) on house purchase at the new station, before sale at the old station. Bridging finance may not exceed estimated selling price of the old house or purchase price of the new house, if lower.

Advances Of Salary - Six months advance of salary to assist with house purchase for owner - occupiers who are compulsorily transferred. Repayment is spread over ten years and may be deferred for up to two years.

Transfer Grants - Lump sum payments to compensate for expenses not otherwise covered.

Non-Householder without dependants £868	Householder without dependants £2,246	Householder without dependants £3,694
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Additional Housing Cost Allowance (AHCA) - An allowance is paid to staff who move house on a permanent transfer. This is related to the differences in the average prices of properties in the areas between which the officers are moving. The actual amounts of AHCA payable will relate to increased outgoings by way of net interest on any additional mortgage, rent, rates, insurance etc. For further information see NICS Staff Handbook section 'Assistance with the Cost of Setting Up New Home.'

Excess Fares Allowance - An alternative to normal removal entitlement. Payable normally for three years and in exceptional cases up to five years to cover excess costs of daily travel to the new station. For further details see NICS Staff Handbook section 'Concessionary Travel.'

Rent Allowance - Before transfer to the new station, paid to:-

- Officers with dependants who obtain lodgings for their own use;
- Officers without dependants who obtain furnished accommodation (including lodgings) or unfurnished accommodation; and
- Officers with dependants who, having been officially informed of a permanent transfer, obtain temporary or permanent family accommodation (furnished or unfurnished).

Rent Allowances For Accommodation At New Station After Transfer - Payable for three months after transfer where accommodation costs at old station are unavoidable. Limit on reimbursement is the rate of lodging allowance.

Other Payments - include:-

- Travel expenses for fares to take up duty at new station.
- Storage of furniture.
- Installation of telephone, TV aerial, washing/dishwashing machine if installed at old home.
- Payment towards lodging and travelling cost of a child remaining at old station to complete course of study.

Leave

The leave allowance for non-industrial civil servants are set out below:-

Annual Leave

Staff with less than 5 year's service at 1 Feb 2010	25 days
New entrants after 1 Feb 2010	25 days on entry
At 1 Feb 2010 all staff below Senior Civil Service	30 days after 5 years
Senior Civil Service	30 days on entry

Special Leave - May be granted with official permission for such purposes as urgent domestic leave, work in the public interest, voluntary unpaid service, adoption, resettlement, etc.

Sick Absence

On full pay - up to 6 months in a 12 month period.

On half pay - further 6 months, up to a total limit of 12 months sick leave in 4 years. In exceptional cases at pension rate of pay thereafter.

Injury

Absence caused by injury does not count against sick absence if either:

- negligence is found or admitted by the Crown
- sick pay costs are recovered from a third party.

Special rules govern injuries due to assault on duty.

Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave And Pay

Statutory entitlements apply in these areas. Full details are contained in the NICS Handbook.

Maternity Leave And Pay

Women who meet the qualifying condition for contracted maternity arrangements are entitled to 52 weeks' maternity leave, the first 18 weeks of which is paid at full pay followed by implementation of the statutory maternity pay arrangements.

Paternity Leave And Pay

Men eligible for paternity leave are entitled to take either one week or alternatively two consecutive weeks within 56 days of either the actual date of birth or the expected week of birth if the child is born early. Men taking paternity leave are entitled to 2 days leave on contractual pay. If availing of the one or two week option above, the remainder of the entitlement after the first 2 days will be paid at statutory level.

Adoption Leave And Pay

Those meeting the qualifying conditions for contractual adoption arrangements are entitled to 52 weeks' adoption leave, the first 18 weeks of which is paid at full pay followed by implementation of the statutory adoption pay arrangements.

Parental Leave

Parental leave is the right to take unpaid time off work to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare. Those meeting the qualifying conditions for parental leave arrangements can take up to 13 weeks' unpaid leave in respect of each child who meets the qualifying conditions. The entitlement is 18 weeks in respect of a child who is entitled to a disability living allowance.

Career Breaks

Career break arrangements are available for existing staff who for personal reasons wish to leave the service for a specified duration. Career breaks can be taken for no less than 1 year and no more than 5 years subject to agreement with their Department.

Leave For Domestic Responsibilities

Extra special leave is available to men or women which cannot be met within normal leave allowance, eg the care of children or elderly or infirm relatives. In cases of urgent domestic stress up to a maximum of five working days special leave may be allowed.

Leave On Bereavement

Up to five days' special leave with pay may be granted on the death of a near relative such as a parent, brother or sister, husband, wife or child. Details of this and other special leave provisions are contained in the NICS Staff Handbook section 'Special Leave'.

Special Leave For NIPSA Activity

Special leave with pay may be allowed for absences from work in connection with NIPSA activities. Full details of this facility are set out in CSC 48/82.

Public Holidays

The number of public and privilege holidays is normally limited to a maximum of 12 per year. In the Northern Ireland Civil Service these are New Year's Day, 17 March (St. Patrick's Day) (or a day in lieu), Easter Monday and Tuesday, May Day Bank Holiday, Spring Bank Holiday, 12 and 13 July (or days in lieu), late Summer Bank Holiday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day (or days in lieu), and a third Christmas Holiday to be announced from year to year.

Assistance to Study

Assistance is available for staff undertaking recognized qualifications that are essential to their posts for course fees, travel and subsistence and compulsory residentials (all paid), also book and equipment allowances, day release and/or special leave. Those undertaking non-mandatory further education courses related to their work may be eligible for some assistance in terms of financial assistance with course fees and special leave.

Legal Representation By Department

If a civil action is taken against a civil servant for an alleged wrongful act and his/her Department is satisfied that the act which is the subject of the proceedings was performed within the scope of the civil servant's employment he/she may be given legal representation at public expense.

Departments will also consider on the merits of the case, whether to accept responsibility for the defence of criminal proceedings, which are instituted against a civil servant for an act or default alleged to have been committed within the scope of his/her employment. This facility also extends to any action under the Health and Safety at Work legislation. In certain circumstances a Department will provide financial aid to assist a civil servant to institute proceedings against a third party, for example, if criminal proceedings are necessary because an officer has been assaulted on duty.

Disciplinary Procedures

In dealing with all disciplinary charges Departments must follow an agreed procedure, full details of which may be found in the NICS Staff Handbook. A Civil Servant may appeal against any decision to the head of his/her Department (or to the NICS Appeal Board, when appealing against dismissal). *See below, Civil Service Appeal Board.*

Mobility

Staff are divided into mobile and non-mobile categories. With a few exceptions, grades whose scale maxima are below that of EO II are non-mobile. They cannot be required to move to a post outside reasonable daily travelling distance of their homes although their liability to serve away from home on detached duty terms remains. In a redundancy situation, non-mobile staff who wish to be considered for a post involving a move of home may apply for transfer on public interest terms and where a suitable vacancy exists, this will be arranged.

Civil Service Appeal Board

The Civil Service Appeal Board is an independent body which deals mainly with appeals against unfair dismissal but also decisions to retire individuals early, not to pay compensation in cases of dismissal on inefficiency grounds and refusal of permission to participate in political activities.

The Board consists of a Trade Union nominee, an Official Side nominee and an agreed chairperson. Appellants may appear before the board and be accompanied by a NIPSA representative. Details of the procedure to be followed are set out in the NICS Staff Handbook section 'Civil Service Appeal Board'.