



Circular 22/99

19 April 1999

Chief Executive Officer
Each Health Board



DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH AND
CHILDREN
AN ROINN
SLÁINTE AGUS LEANAÍ

Shaping a
Healthier Future

Age Limits for Recruitment

The Employment Equality Act, 1998, which is expected to come into force in the middle of this year, prohibits discrimination in recruitment between the ages of 18 and 65 subject to certain limited exceptions set out in section 34(3) and (5) thereof.

Accordingly the Minister has reviewed the application of age limits for officer posts in the health services. For such competitions, he has decided to abolish lower age limits and increase the upper limits to 65 years.

The Minister therefore has issued a direction under section 18 of the Health Act, 1970, to provide that, for competitions publicly advertised on and after **1 May 1999**, qualifications for office will be construed as if 65 years were specified as the upper age limit and as if there were no lower age limit.

The retirement age will remain unchanged at 65 years. Any officer recruited over the age of 60 years will not qualify for a pension and lump sum on reaching the retiring age limit of 65 years. However any such officer, depending on the circumstances, may be entitled to a short service gratuity or death gratuity. Every such recruit should be advised accordingly.

All candidates should be informed in respect of each competition that any candidate who reaches the age of 65 years prior to appointment will cease to be eligible for appointment on the result of that competition.

While competitions publicly advertised prior to 1 May 1999 are not subject to this direction, health boards are asked to abide by the spirit of the legislation and adjust age limits accordingly.

Health Boards are required under the legislation to bring age limit qualifications for **non-officer grades** fully into line with the provisions of the Act.

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