

GATEWAY

COUNTY AND CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

RULES TO GOVERN THE OPERATION OF THE SCHEME AND DEFINE ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION AND EACH PARTICIPATING COUNTY AND CITY COUNCIL

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Social Protection

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1 OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Gateway is an activation initiative for those who are unemployed and on the Live Register. **Gateway** will provide short-term quality and suitable working opportunities for people who are unemployed while at the same time carrying out beneficial work within communities, and will contribute to the management of the Live Register.

These rules and conditions are intended to support consistency of operation of **Gateway** nationally and are confined to its operation and do not affect the operation of any other rules or conditions of funding, national or EU, prescribed by other publicly funded programmes or initiatives delivered by the County and City Council.

Any conflict in interpretations should be notified to the Department.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

Work placements are a valuable route for participants to gain or update experience of the workplace, to learn new skills and to return to the routine of work. The objectives of **Gateway** are to:

- Support the Department in its efforts to afford those who are unemployed with the opportunity of short-term quality work placements and break the cycle of unemployment
- Improve the employability and work readiness of participants by providing them with opportunities to put work skills into practice and to learn new ones and to enable progression to work, further education or skill development opportunities
- Provide prospective employers with evidence that a participant has the necessary skills and abilities to do the job
- Boost the participants' motivation and confidence
- Provide participants with a work reference at the end of the placement
- Support the development and delivery of services to improve community wellbeing.

1.3 PRINCIPLES

The principles set out in this section will underpin the work of the County and City Council in respect of **Gateway**.

Spirit of Motivation and Development – in support of the participant in order to break the cycle of unemployment and provide opportunities for a return to work and/or assist the participant, with Department input, to identify training and educational opportunities.

Equality and Inclusion - of opportunity and access for participants and communities, particularly those facing particular challenges.

Community Involvement - ensuring local engagement and representation in the operation of **Gateway** and the application of principles and good practice in respect of local consultation and the provision of information and access to the benefits of **Gateway**.

Quality – application of quality standards in terms of organisational and operational processes, placement selection, and service delivery to participants, other staff engaged and people in the communities served.

Integration and Co-ordination - with other services provided by the County and City Council to those who are unemployed.

Co-operation – with other service providers and agencies working within communities, notably, local development companies/partnerships, FÁS/SOLAS, Vocational Education Committee, the Local Employment Service, where present, and community employment programme sponsors.

Value for money – through efficient and effective service delivery and co-ordination of the work undertaken by participants.

Providing a supportive and positive environment – so that participants, staff and community organisations are enabled to benefit from the opportunities offered by **Gateway**.

1.4 DEFINITIONS

Agreement – the Memorandum of Agreement made between the Department and the County and City Council in respect of the delivery and other arrangements for **Gateway**.

Department – the Department of Social Protection (DSP) or its successor in the event of functions being transferred or assigned by the Government.

County and City Council – those bodies that have entered into an agreement for the delivery of **Gateway** and their successor.

Participant – a person randomly selected by the Department and referred to the County and City Council for profiling and recruitment into a work placement.

1.5 AREA OF OPERATIONS

Each County and City Council is authorised to deliver **Gateway** only in the geographic area covered by its operations as determined by the Government or under statute.

County and City Councils are encouraged to work together in order to share resources and achieve efficiency in the operation of **Gateway**. Nothing in these rules shall prevent any County and City Council or groups of County and City Councils from co-operating to support the delivery of **Gateway** or from sharing resources, property or financial resources where greater economy, getting better value for money and achieving enhanced outputs can be achieved.

County and City Councils are encouraged to work with other State agencies and other official structures and development agencies within their operational areas to support the objectives of **Gateway**.

Activities which may negatively impact upon the environment shall only be undertaken following consultation and with the agreement with the appropriate authorities and/or State agency concerned.

1.6 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

It is unlawful to discriminate against persons on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, religion, age, disability, race, colour, language, nationality and national or ethnic orientation, including membership of the travelling community. The legislation makes discrimination unlawful not only in the workplace but also in the provision of goods, facilities and services, including recreational facilities and services.

The County and City Council is required to reflect equality of opportunity in its operation of Gateway.

1.7 CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The County and City Council shall meet its obligations under the Ethics in Public Office Acts.

Consistent with the County and City Council's own arrangements for such matters, any person engaged in the selection or decision making process on placements, shall declare the nature of his or her interests.

2 PARTICIPANTS

2.1 PROCEDURES MANUAL/HANDBOOKS

Each County and City Council should incorporate the operation of **Gateway** into its own procedures manual in respect of financial, administrative and management control systems and processes as a matter of good practice.

A suitable handbook should be prepared by the County and City Council in line with its own HR policies and must be distributed to each participant within a reasonable period of them commencing work or a work placement.

As a matter of good practice, the County and City Council should provide each prospective participant with adequate induction to the operation of **Gateway** and the services available from the County and City Council.

The Department will require sight of such manuals and induction material as part of its monitoring processes.

2.2 PARTICIPANTS' CONTRACTS

Participants will be offered contracts of 22 month duration in line with guidance provided by the Local Government Management Agency. Contracts cannot be renewed or extended past 22 months.

2.3 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

In general, County and City Councils will apply their own policies with respect to the length of the probationary period to be applied. In the absence of such policies, a minimum period of 12 weeks, extendable for a period of no longer than six (6) weeks shall apply.

2.4 HOURS OF WORK

The normal working week for participants is 19½ hours per week. Hours of attendance may be spread across the day, including evenings and Saturdays, to meet work requirements.

2.5 PARTICIPANTS' PAY

The pay rate of participants is calculated on the basis of the value of their personal circumstances and related social protection payments. The County and City Council has no discretion whatsoever in determining the amount to be paid to a participant. The rate of payment will be determined by reference to the prior rate of payment the participant had from social protection plus €20 per week, subject to a minimum payment of €208.00 per week. A free fuel allowance will be paid where the participant is eligible and this has been determined prior to the take up of the position on Gateway.

2.6 CHANGE IN PARTICIPANT'S CIRCUMSTANCES

A change in a participant's circumstances can result in either an under or over payment.

Under the terms of the obligations entered into by the participant with the County and City Council, all participants are required to declare any change in their circumstances that might alter the underlying value of their pay rate as soon as they arise.

The level of pay may vary during the participant's period of employment on **Gateway** if there are changes to:

- The value of any underlying social protection payments to which they were in receipt of, prior to employment on **Gateway** having increased or decreased
- Civil status, as a result of marriage, entry into a civil partnership, divorce or death of a spouse
- The employment status of spouse/civil partner /cohabitant
- Spouse/civil partner /cohabitant has applied for or has been awarded a Social Welfare Payment in his/her own right. (e.g. Carers Allowance/Benefit, Maternity Benefit/Allowance, Jobseeker's Benefit/Allowance, Illness Benefit/Allowance)
- Spouse/civil partner /cohabitant is no longer in receipt of a Social Welfare Payment in his/her own right
- Birth, adoption or death of a child
- Child dependant turns 18 years of age and is no longer in full-time education or a child dependant in full-time daytime education turns 22 years of age
- Where a child between the age of 18 and 22 is attending a course which includes paid work experience for a period in excess of 6 months
- Where a qualified child is no longer resident in the State, is detained in a reformatory or an industrial school or no longer lives with the participant
- A child dependant Increase is not payable in respect of a child in receipt of a Social Welfare payment in their own right.

County and City Councils should retain all backup documentation relating to change of circumstances to support verification and inspection. This is particularly relevant where the change in circumstance results in an increase in payment. Any change in circumstances of a participant must be immediately notified to Pobal so that the participant's payments may be amended. This will help prevent over/underpayments being made to participants.

The County and City Council will ensure that obligations in respect of the submission of data to Pobal are met to ensure that participants are paid.

2.7 ATTENDANCE, TIMEKEEPING AND ABSENCES

Each County and City Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for recording time attendance. Arrangements can be either paper based or electronic and should be adequate to allow for verification. Where time sheets are used, they should show the original signatures of both the participant and the X or other person authorised by the County and City Council to verify attendance.

All time and attendance records must be retained and made available for inspection, at any time.

Absence and attendance management is the responsibility of the County and City Council. This means that it is for the County and City Council to determine, communicate, and manage participant attendance and timekeeping. Every participant who takes part in **Gateway** should have the standards of attendance and timekeeping explained to them at induction. In particular:

- 🌐 Participants should take reasonable steps to minimise absences during contracted hours (e.g. for attendance at medical appointments)
- 🌐 Unplanned absences (e.g. for sickness, domestic emergencies, caring duties) will incur sanction if not notified on the first day of absence
- 🌐 Absences in respect of holidays should be planned in advance.

It is therefore essential that the County and City Council actively manages attendance and timekeeping of participants.

2.8 LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS

Sick Leave

Participants may incur a maximum seven (7) days paid sick leave in any 12 month period where certified and no more than two (2) days uncertified sick leave.

These provisions are subject to the County and City Council's own procedures being followed.

Holidays

Participants are entitled to 10½ (ten and a half) days annual leave per annum which must be taken within the year of the placement. A participant is not allowed to receive remuneration in respect of annual leave not taken before the end of the participant's contract and untaken leave should be considered surrendered. County and City Councils will ensure that annual leave is taken in good time before the end of placement.

Public Holidays

Participants who are scheduled to work on a Public Holiday are entitled to a paid day off on that day or a day off in lieu of that day.

Participants who are not scheduled to work on a Public Holiday are entitled to paid time-in-lieu in the equivalent of 20% of their weekly hours. It is recommended, where possible, that this time is taken on the week on which the Public Holiday falls, if this is not possible the time-in-lieu can be added to a participant's Annual Leave.

Unpaid Leave

The County and City Council may not approve unpaid leave for participants.

Maternity Leave/Adoption Leave

The usual statutory arrangements in respect of maternity and adoption leave apply.

Carer's Leave

Gateway participants do not fulfil the requirement to avail of Carer's Leave.

Jury Service

Participants who are required to undertake a period of Jury Service will continue to be paid for the duration of their service where this is certified by the Courts Service. Participants who are engaged on prolonged Jury Service (of the order of six weeks or more) may apply to have their **Gateway** placement extended for a period not exceeding the length of the Jury Service.

Force Majeure Leave

Paid leave may be granted by the County and City Council in circumstances to allow participants to deal with emergencies resulting from a family member's serious injury, illness or death. This leave is limited to three (3) days over 12 months or five (5) days over 24 months, if not otherwise provided for by the County and City Council.

Court Attendance/Detainment by An Garda Síochána

Appropriate arrangements should be made, without loss of pay, where a participant is required to attend a court or tribunal for any reason as a defendant or as a witness or accompany another person to court. In such circumstances, evidence in the form of a summons should be requested by the County and City Council.

In general, County and City Councils should deal with circumstances where a participant is detained by An Garda Síochána on a case by case basis. Absences of a prolonged duration (over two days) should result in loss of pay. A participant will forfeit their placement in the event that they receive a prison sentence.

Community Service (as a result of a Court order)

Participants should undertake commitments in respect of Community Service as a result of an order of the Court outside of the hours of engagement on the work placement. County and City Councils may make practical arrangements to accommodate participants where particular circumstances exist; including deferring the placement until such time as the Community Service Order has been vacated.

Emergency Voluntary Service

Appropriate arrangements should be made, without loss of pay, where a participant is engaged in voluntary or part-time activity in support of the civil power, such as crewing or launching a lifeboat; membership of a local fire brigade or ambulance crew; or engaged in emergency duties for the benefit of others (such as the Civil Defence, Red Cross, and Order of Malta).

Pro-rata adjustments

Where less than 12 months has been worked, pro rata rates of leave calculated by the County and City Council will apply.

2.9 OBLIGATIONS TO POBAL

Pobal has been contracted by the Department to provide payroll and related services in respect of **Gateway**. In fulfilment of these services, Pobal will set out separately, its requirement to ensure the orderly processing of data in respect of the engagement of Xs and participants. County and City Councils are required to co-operate with Pobal to ensure the timely and effective operation of the payroll functions.

The County and City Council will adhere to the arrangements set out by Pobal for the transmission of time and attendance data, changes in circumstances, and placement starts and terminations or any other occurrence which impact on payments under Section 5.

In order to avoid overpayment or underpayment of participant pay, any change in a participant's circumstances must be submitted without undue delay to Pobal and in a form prescribed by them.

2.10 PART-TIME STUDY AND OTHER TRAINING

Participants may be undertaking part time education or training whilst claiming jobseeker's allowance. Participants may wish to combine attendance on placement with part-time study or training on the following grounds:

-  They should already be involved in part-time study at the time they were first referred to the County and City Council by the Local Office
-  The part-time study must have been declared to DSP
-  The part-time study cannot be re-arranged or deferred until the participant completes the work placement.

The County and City Council should obtain evidence of the training/study before agreeing to alter any arrangement in respect of the placement. As a general rule, participants engaged in training/study are expected to work 19½ hours per week.

2.11 UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR AND PARTICIPANT EXCLUSION

The County and City Council is under no obligation to provide a placement for a person who demonstrates behaviour that is difficult, non-cooperative, aggressive, or where evidence of unmanageable mental or physical ill-health is present. While every effort should be made to find a suitable work placement, this may not always be possible. Where such circumstances arise, the County and City Council should coordinate its action with the Department.

Where a participant begins work and their behaviour poses difficulties or they are un-cooperative, the County and City Council may discontinue their participation on **Gateway**. Before taking such action, the County and City Council should take reasonable steps to deal with the unacceptable behaviour, including engaging with the participant and offering support, issuing verbal and/or written warnings or referral to other support services.

The DSP Local Office that referred the participant should receive a formal notification of the termination of a participant's contract with the County and City Council.

Where a decision of this nature is being taken, reasonable notice should be given to the participant and a right of review should be provided.

2.12 RETIREMENT

Gateway participants may work on the **Gateway** until the day before their 66th birthday. The State Pension (both Contributory and Non-Contributory) may be payable with effect from the day on which a person reaches 66 years of age.

2.13 GARDA VETTING

The County and City Council will have regard to its obligations in respect of the protection of children, vulnerable adults and the elderly in the assignment of participants to work placements. It is matter for the County and City Council to make arrangements in respect of Garda Vetting.

3 DUTIES IN RESPECT OF PARTICIPANTS

3.1 SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

The County and City Council is responsible for putting in place and operating its standard supervisory arrangements for the nature of the work and duties to be undertaken. Management and supervision of the participant will include such supervision that provides for quality work outputs, peer-to-peer training, compliance with health and safety at work practices, time keeping and attendance and general discipline of the work place.

3.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY

County and City Councils are responsible for ensuring adherence to health and safety requirements, including the provision of equipment and its correct usage.

The County and City Council will provide a suitable undertaking to all participants in respect of their health and safety roles and responsibilities. All participants are required to sign an undertaking to indicate that the requirements have been brought to their attention and that they fully accept their role and responsibility with respect to health and safety obligations.

3.3 MANAGING PARTICIPANT PERFORMANCE

A key task of supervision is the management of work performance of the participant to ensure that quality outputs are achieved from the work placement and the participant benefits from supportive management, has clearly articulated objectives, sees the work placements as contributing to their career and development needs and ensures the participant's continued work readiness. This will support the achievement of:

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- 🌐 Improved individual performances
 - 🌐 Ensuring that management's expectations are communicated and understood
 - 🌐 Enhancing the participant's work placement experience and, working with the Department and other agencies, introduce them to other career enhancing prospects through recognising or identifying training and other development opportunities, and
 - 🌐 Resolving cases of underperformance where identified.

3.4 MANAGEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

The County and City Council is responsible for the day-to-day administration of **Gateway** and must have adequate systems in place to ensure all administrative work is completed to the required standard within the time limits directed by the Department and Pobal in respect of its payroll and data gathering functions. Where considered appropriate, **Gateway** participants can be allocated to support these administrative tasks.

3.5 CREATION AND MAINTAINENCE OF PANELS

The Department's Divisional/Local Offices will select the persons who meet the criteria for **Gateway** for referral to the County and City Council for inclusion on a panel from which recruitment will be made. Each County and City Council should liaise closely with their Departmental contact officer to determine the local approaches to be engaged in the selection, referral, support and follow up processes.

County and City Councils will create and maintain a panel of person referred by the Department from which recruitment will be made. No persons other than those selected and referred by the Department are to be included on the panel of prospective participants.

County and City Councils will create and maintain records in respect of each participant containing the following minimum information:

- 🌐 Notification of referral from DSP Local Office
- 🌐 Participant's name, address, date of birth, civil status, gender, phone number, PPSN
- 🌐 Attendances at interviews, induction, information, and/or guidance events
- 🌐 Skill and educational profile, including summary of interview or notes
- 🌐 Outcome of any referrals to other agencies for further development, training or education
- 🌐 Details of any placements offered and date work started and concluded
- 🌐 Payroll arrangements
- 🌐 Supervisor's/team leader's report on attendance, sickness, performance, general conduct
- 🌐 Exit interview and evaluation
- 🌐 Notification to the DSP Local Office of date that a participant completes the placement.

3.6 SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Following selection and referral by the Department, responsibility for arranging the initial meeting and subsequent interview(s) of the participant rests with the County and City Council. The initial meeting should be held within a reasonable time of the participant being referred by the DSP Local

Office. This period will be no later than 15 days from the date of referral. The initial meeting may consist of a group meeting and information session on how the County and City Council is approaching the delivery of **Gateway**, the requirements on prospective participants, the implications of non- co-operation, the process of selection, and other services available to the participant from the County and City Council and local agencies.

The County and City Council should conduct an assessment of each participant's skills in a one-to-one interview conducted along standard lines. Information gained, plus any information provided by DSP Local Office should be recorded. The skills, past work experiences, level of education, and attitude to work will vary greatly. At a minimum, the County and City Council should assess:

- Details of a participant's most recent periods of employment and work history
- Skill base
- The participant's employment goals
- Details of participant qualifications, basic education, formal certifications, degrees
- Status of driving licence (full, provisional, classes, including endorsements)
- Recent training or participation on Community Employment or other activation or training initiatives
- Illnesses and work restrictions.

Regard must be had in each placement to getting the participant into a routine of attendance, time keeping, supervision and developing a healthy work ethic.

3.7 FAILURE TO ATTEND INTERVIEW

If a prospective participant fails to attend their initial appointment/interview, the County and City Council should contact them at least once to provide an alternative opportunity.

In the event that the prospective participant fails to attend after being reminded, the County and City Council must inform DSP Local Office where a failure to take up the offer of an interview occurs.

It is a matter for the DSP Local Office to determine the appropriate course of action following receipt of a report from the County and City Council.

3.8 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Each County and City Council is required to maintain such records as will support the proper monitoring and management of **Gateway** at local level and provide a documentary trail of each person referred, their engagement with the processes instituted by the County and City Council, engagement with local Departmental staff to arrange placement or referral onwards to other training or support opportunities or other follow up action.

From time to time, the Department will set out its requirements and may supply templates to ensure that information is made available to support the better management of **Gateway**. The Department will also make arrangements, including the engagement of third parties, for the collection, collation and dissemination of information, including on-line systems. At a minimum, sufficient records should be maintained to enable:

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- 🌐 Management and performance information to be provided in formats requested
 - 🌐 Tracking the progress of participants and their movement into, through and out of placement either into employment, training, return to the Live Register or other activities
 - 🌐 Reporting on any difficulties they may be experiencing that affect a participant's ability to participate in, and benefit fully from the work placement
 - 🌐 Facilitating the information requirement of monitoring staff, auditors, evaluators, and others at the request of the Department
 - 🌐 Vetting of participants by An Garda Síochána, and
 - 🌐 Capture details of relevant incidents involving injury, discipline or performance of a participant whilst on placement.

3.9 COMPLAINTS

All participants on **Gateway** should receive a good quality reception, service and commitment to meet their needs. The County and City Council should be sensitive to, and ensure that, participant's needs are being met. However there may be occasions when a participant wishes to complain about their provision or air grievances under the County and City Council's Grievance and Internal Complaints procedures.

The County and City Council must ensure visible and promoted systems are in place to allow participants to resolve any grievances, concerns or complaints promptly and with the minimum level of bureaucracy, without causing them embarrassment. This includes complaints in relation to discrimination.

Where a participant has a complaint about the County and City Council's service, they have the right to complain to the County and City Council directly. The County and City Council must explain to the participant their "Grievance and Internal Complaints" process and the escalation route through the County and City Council's organisation. The County and City Council must inform them of the timescale for resolution and how the County and City Council will formally notify them of the outcome.

4 OTHER MATTERS

4.1 SIGNAGE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The County and City Councils/Department will ensure that appropriate acknowledgement is given to agencies involved in the delivery of **Gateway**. Where signage is provided, the County and City Council will ensure that such signage is used. Costs will be met by the Department.

Signage or other appropriate forms of acknowledgement should be placed in a prominent position at the site where work placements are being undertaken.

All publicity, including public lectures, publications, print materials and press releases, television and radio advertisements, websites, film, video and audio recordings associated with or arising from the work undertaken with the support of **Gateway** must contain acknowledgement of the support received from the Department, the County and City Council and **Gateway**.

4.2 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Acts provide that, with effect from 21 April 1998, every person has the following legal rights to:

- Access official records held by Government Departments or other public bodies listed in the Act
- Have personal information held on them corrected or updated where such information is incomplete, incorrect or misleading; and
- Obtain reasons for decisions that directly affect them.

The Act asserts the right of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals, subject only to specified exceptions. All FOI requests made to the County and City Council in respect of any matter relating to **Gateway** should be referred to the FOI Manager of the Department.

All records shared by the County and City Council with and subsequently retained on file by the Department come under the scope of the Acts. In this regard, the County and City Council shall ensure that all records are: clear, precise and actions and decisions are documented, free of irrelevant or unnecessary comment or opinion, gratuitous or personal comments or inappropriate remarks, and that manual notes or annotations are legibly written.

4.3 CO-ORDINATION

The Department shall establish and convene at least twice yearly, a co-ordinating committee to support the consistent implementation and delivery of **Gateway**. This co-ordinating committee will be chaired by a County or City Manager and will comprise representatives of each County and City Managers' Association, the Departments of Social Protection and Environment, Community and Local Government. The membership may be extended to support implementation of **Gateway**.

The terms of reference of the co-ordinating committee shall be agreed by the membership.

Any County and City Council and/or member can place a matter for discussion before the coordinating committee. The committee will adopt its own operating procedures.

4.4 DATA PROTECTION

The Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 impose legal obligations on the Department, County and City Councils and Pobal to:

- Obtain and process personal data fairly
- Keep it only for one or more specified and explicit lawful purposes
- Process information only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given initially
- Keep personal data safe and secure
- Keep data accurate, complete and up-to-date
- Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes and,
- Provide a copy of his/her personal data to any individual, on request.

County and City Councils will ensure that their existing policies, procedures and practices are extended to include data used in support of the delivery of **Gateway** and to enable the sharing of data for the purposes of the operation of the initiative, including seeking the consent of participants.

Adequate and appropriate training should be provided to all supervisory staff and any participants engaged where personal data is accessible.

Data should only be retained for as long as it is necessary and stored securely in accordance with legal requirements and good practice.

When determining the retention period for data held, due regard will be had to the legal and regulatory requirements for retention for the type of data being processed. These include:

- Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003
- Comptroller and Auditor General requirements
- Public Accounts Committee
- Internal Audit considerations
- Potential litigation requiring documentary evidence

Data exchanged with the Department of Social Protection must be undertaken in a secure manner and, if exchanged electronically, must be suitably encrypted.

4.5 AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS

The Department reserves the right to make additions and amendments to these conditions and rules in agreement with the Local Government Management Agency. Any changes will be notified to the County and City Council electronically via the Local Government Management Agency. It is the responsibility of the County and City Council to ensure that accurate contact details are supplied to

the Department. The Department may, from time to time, seek submissions from the County and City Council regarding additions, revisions or amendments to these conditions and rules.

From time to time, the Department and the payroll providers will issue clarifying circulars and other circulars pertaining to the operation of **Gateway**. Such circulars are considered to form part of the conditions and rules attaching to **Gateway**.

4.6 THIS VERSION

This version of the rules and conditions was updated in July 2013 and superseded any previous version issued.

5 APPENDICES

1. Allocation of Placements to County and City Councils
2. Roles of the County and City Council and DSP staff
3. **Gateway** PARTICIPANTS DETAILS FORM – **Gateway**

Section to be completed.

THE ROLE OF THE COUNTY AND CITY COUNCIL AND DSP STAFF

1. The following is an outline of the roll out process for **Gateway**, the role of the County and City Councils and the role of DSP staff. This information note is issued by the **Gateway** Unit (gateway@welfare.ie) to support the roll-out of this initiative. Queries should be addressed via email.

GATEWAY REGIONAL LIAISON OFFICERS

2. The Department has appointed Liaison Officers for each of its regions to support the delivery and implementation of this initiative and to provide contact points for running the selection process for participants. The Department's regional structure is shown on the map below and the contact details of the personnel providing a coordination role with County and City Councils and the Local/Branch office structure is set out at Appendix 5.

DSP Regional Structure

	DSP Division	Counties Covered
1	Cork Central	Cork City & East county (part)
2	Dublin-Central	Dublin 1/5/7/8/9/10/12/15/20
3	Dublin-North	Dublin 13/17 Fingal
4	Dublin-South	Dublin 2/4/6/6W/14/16/18/22/24
5	Midlands-North	Longford/Meath/Roscommon/Westmeath
6	Midlands-South	Kilkenny/Laois/Offaly/Tipperary
7	Mid-Leinster	Carlow/Kildare/Wicklow
8	Mid-West	Clare/Limerick
9	North-East	Cavan/Louth/Monaghan
10	North-West	Donegal/Leitrim/Sligo
11	South-East	Waterford/Wexford
12	South-West	Cork West (part)/Kerry
13	West	Galway/Mayo

3. The function of the Liaison Officer is to communicate with each County and City Council in that Region, establish where the **Gateway** placements will be located and when they will come on-stream, allocate these numbers to the respective Local and Branch Offices, and monitor the implementation of **Gateway** between the Local Offices and County and City Councils in the Region.

4. Depending on the volume of places, Liaison Officers may appoint local DSP representatives as individual contacts for each County and City Council.

ROLE OF STAFF IN DSP LOCAL AND BRANCH OFFICES

5. The role of staff in the local and branch offices will relate to:

- i. Agreeing the local timing and focus of the random selection process (i.e. the dates to be used, the addresses that should be included in the selection, the contact persons).
- ii. Issuing the letter of invitation and information leaflet.

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- iii. Dealing with enquiries.
 - iv. Preparing a list of interested participants for transmission to the County and City Council.
 - v. Follow up action in respect of a person who does not reply or who has offered a reason why they do not wish to participate.
 - vi. Follow up action in respect of a person who does not attend for interview or work offer when so advised by the County and City Council.

RECRUITMENT OF GATEWAY PARTICIPANTS

6. Participants cannot apply for a work placement position directly – there is no self-referral or application process.

7. Participation is by way of random selection undertaken at DSP local/branch office only in accordance with the instructions. Selection processes must be co-ordinated via the DSP Liaison Officers.

8. Local arrangements will differ but must reflect where suitable work placements have been identified and where the random selection should concentrate to ensure overlap between selection and available work placements. This process should begin immediately.

9. The Liaison Officer will request the random selection query to be run in the Local Office or by the Regional Management Team. The number of persons to be selected will relate to the number of supervisory position operational in each County and City Council (generally 40 placements initially).

10. When the query has selected the participants for referral, the Local Office/Regional Management Team will write to these participants using the letters (English or Irish) at Appendix 2 and enclosing the information leaflet at Appendix 3. Local Offices have been informed that it is important to ensure that participants selected should have reasonable access to their potential location of placements.

11. Participants will be given two weeks to respond to the letter of invitation. Any follow-up action in respect of non-referral or unavailability is a matter for the Local/branch Office/Regional Management Team making the selection at this stage. A failure to reply may result in the suspension of a social protection payment.

DEALING WITH PERSONS REFERRED

12. Where a participant responds and states that she/he is willing to participate, the Local Office will provide the participant's details to the County and City Council for interview and skill profiling on an agreed date arranged with the County and City Council. If subsequent positive replies are received, a further date by which these replies should be communicated to the County and City Council can be agreed.

13. County and City Councils should write to (or otherwise contact) each person on the list of participants provided to them immediately on receipt and invite them for an interview or information meeting. If it is considered appropriate, a preliminary group information meeting can be arranged, prior to informal interviews and profiling of each individual's skills.

14. It can be expected that a significant number of those referred to the County and City Council will not have prepared a CV or skills profile previously or have little access to preparing one. It should also be expected that many will not be familiar with interviews or in speaking about their skill sets or needs.

15. Completing an up-to-date CV and identifying the skill set and ambitions of each individual is a key element of the initial meeting/engagement and will contribute to the longer-term outcome of the person's engagement with **Gateway** and the County and City Council. At a minimum, the County and City Council should enquire into and assess the following:

- i. The participant's preferred employment goals
- ii. The participant's preferred working pattern (what days, mornings, afternoons, hours, preferred hours, full or part days)
- iii. Details of a participant's most recent periods of employment, if recent (including dates)
- iv. Status of driving licence (full, provisional, classes, including endorsements)
- v. Details of participant qualifications, basic education, formal certifications, degrees
- vi. Family and caring responsibilities
- vii. Recent training or participation of Community Employment or other activation or training initiatives
- viii. Illnesses and work restrictions.
- ix. Interests and community engagements.

16. Persons referred will ultimately fall into four broad categories:

- i. Those willing and suitable to take up a work placement without further support or training – these persons should be selected and assigned to work placements at the earliest opportunity
- ii. Those willing but not yet ready to take up a work placement without some additional support and development – these persons should be assigned to services available from the County and City Council, the Department's facilitators, FÁS, other training and education providers (VEC).
- iii. Persons unwilling to take up the offer of a work placements – these persons should be given a reasonable opportunity of taking up a work placement, however, failure to do so should result in the County and City Council referring these persons back to DSP via the arrangements agreed with the Liaison Officer.
- iv. Persons referred who do not show for interview, initial meeting or, if assigned a placements, fail to show for work - these persons should be given a reasonable opportunity of co-operating, however, failure to do so should result in the County and City Council referring these persons back to DSP via the arrangements agreed with the Liaison Officer.

17. With regard to the outcome of the interviews/recruitment process, the following arrangements should generally apply:

- i. Participants who attended for interview and were offered a **Gateway** position - County and City Councils will inform the Local Office of the start date of employment and make

arrangements with Pobal to have these put on the payroll (Pobal will separately advise of these arrangements).

- ii. Participants who did not attend for interview (see above for sending information to the Department).
- iii. Participants who attended for interview and were not offered a **Gateway** position. County and City Councils should provide the reason why these participants were not offered **Gateway** positions (see above in respect of persons not ready for placement).

18. County and City Councils should, through their contact with the Liaison Officers agree the format for the exchange of information between themselves and the Local Offices.

PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF A PLACEMENT

19. Before the participant is assigned to a work placement, the County and City Council should ensure it is satisfied with the work placement offered and give the participant the opportunity to ask questions and express any doubts they may have. The County and City Council will need to explain to the participant the terms and conditions that will apply during a work placement and check that they understand the following:

- i. The role of the County and City Council.
- ii. The purpose of the work placement and what the work will involve, including profile of the duties to be undertaken.
- iii. Name and contact detail of the participant's line manager and contact details in the County and City Council and the reporting arrangements.
- iv. The schedule of hours and days they are expected to work.
- v. The practical arrangements for getting to and from the placement and any special or unusual arrangements that might apply.
- vi. The arrangements regarding guidance and direction in respect of the tasks to be undertaken.
- vii. The different roles of the Gateway participants and staff of the placement provider.
- viii. Details of additional support that the participant may be entitled to, including instructions in respect of the tasks to be undertaken, health and safety requirements.
- ix. The payment and other work related arrangements, such as the need to complete time and attendance records and other monitoring material that may be required.
- x. The standard grievance and dispute resolution policies of the County and City Council.

CONTACT POINTS FOR FURTHER QUERIES AND SUGGESTIONS

You should use the general unit email <gateway@welfare.ie> to address queries or suggestions that might have a more general application. This will allow us to include a response in future information notes.

Appendix 1



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Social Protection

Social Welfare Local Office

Personal Public

Service Number: _____

Telephone:

Fax:

_____ 20 _____

Dear [Name of customer],

I am writing to you to offer you an opportunity to apply for a position on GATEWAY, an employment initiative being operated by County and City Councils. The positions are with [name of local authority] and will involve 19.5 hours work per week for a period of 22 months from commencement.

I would appreciate if you could complete the enclosed form indicating if you are willing to have your contact details referred to [name of local authority] and to be interviewed by them for one of the available positions. Return this form in the enclosed envelope before [enter date].

If you agree, the County/City Council will contact you directly in the coming weeks to make arrangement for the provision of further information, to invite you to an interview. Should you not wish to take part in this initiative, you must state your reasons clearly in the space provided on the form and return it by the date mentioned above.

Please Note Your jobseeker's payment may be affected if

- a) you choose not to participate in this initiative; or if
- b) you do not return this form by the date mentioned.

I would ask you to include your mobile number and email address on the attached form. Further information is available by contacting this office.

Yours sincerely,

Local Office Manager

[Customer's name,
address and PPSN here]

GATEWAY - LOCAL AUTHORITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

I wish have my contact details referred to the [name of local authority] for consideration for recruitment to GATEWAY.

I DO NOT wish to be interviewed to take part in GATEWAY . (If you tick this box, you must complete the section below.)

State clearly the reasons YOU DO NOT wish to be considered and interviewed to take part in (NAME):

Please sign below:

[Customer's name print]

Date: _____

Your contact mobile/telephone number: _____

Your email address (if you have one): _____@_____.