

Chun gach Comhalta:
To each Member:

Summary of matters relevant to Members on a dissolution of the Dáil

The attached Dissolution Guidelines set out the detailed arrangements that will apply to allowances and facilities once the 31st Dáil is dissolved. Further copies are available from the One Stop Shop. However, in summary, we wish to remind outgoing Deputies and Senator candidates of the following key issues:

Usage of Leinster House Facilities following dissolution and appropriate charges

- Outgoing Deputies may use the publicly funded services and facilities provided by the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission, in the period following dissolution of Dáil Éireann up until polling day in order to attend to their duties as public representatives, such as dealing with ongoing constituency casework. There will be no charge for such usage.
- Where outgoing Deputies and Senator candidates use publicly funded services and facilities other than in respect of their duties as public representatives in the period following the dissolution of Dáil Éireann up until polling day, they shall pay the appropriate charge for such use specified by the Oireachtas Commission.

The guidelines and charges for such usage are detailed in Section F, pages 19 - 23 of the Guidelines. The schedule of charges is on pages 22 and 23, and the relevant declaration, to be completed by every Member, is attached as an Appendix (pages 27 and 28).

Salary and Allowances

- Salary and all allowances for Deputies will cease on the dissolution date.
- A payment of one-eighteenth of the annual Deputy's salary will be paid to each Deputy.
- The Travel and Accommodation Allowance and Public Representation Allowance will cease and the One Stop Shop will notify each Deputy of the number of days attendance and of the certification forms to be completed.
- An outgoing Deputy may claim travelling expenses for one journey from Leinster House to his or her constituency or residence following the dissolution of the Dáil.
- Information on termination payments, pensions etc. is at Section A, page 4 of the Guidelines.
- Senators continue to be paid salary and allowances as normal.

Leinster House Complex

- The Leinster House complex will remain open from 7.30 a.m. to 10.00 p.m., Monday to Friday, for Senators and to facilitate the provision of services and facilities to outgoing Deputies of the 31st Dáil in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission on 24 November 2015.
- Outgoing Deputies and Senator candidates are reminded that emblems/promotional material associated with the General Election should not be displayed within the precincts of Leinster House during the period between dissolution and polling day.
- The Members Bar and Visitors Bar will generally operate as normal. Credit arrangements will be discontinued for TDs on dissolution. Members will be issued with a final statement and outstanding balances must be cleared within 30 days.

Postal and Stationery Facilities

- Postal and Stationery facilities will cease at 7 p.m. on the dissolution date. Any Oireachtas prepaid envelopes due must be collected by Deputies by that time.
- Senators may continue to collect envelopes. However, any usage of such envelopes for purposes other than in respect of duties as a public representative (e.g. by Senators who are candidates in the Dáil elections) must be declared and certified to the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission and reimbursed in accordance with the schedule of charges in the attached Guidelines.
- Donation of Oireachtas supplied pre-paid envelopes to another person/organisation is not allowed under law.

Printing Facilities

- The Print Facility will close normal operations for Deputies at 7 p.m. on the day of dissolution, other than in respect of arrangements for collection by outgoing Deputies of outstanding print jobs. No new jobs will be accepted from Deputies, whether for internal printing or outsourcing, with effect from the actual dissolution date.
- “Outstanding print jobs” means items that have been received by the Print Facility which (whether outsourced or not) have already been commenced and are capable of being completed (i.e. printed and finished) within the following 24 hours (i.e. 7 p.m. on the day following the day of dissolution). Outgoing Deputies may also collect jobs which have been printed but have not been finished (e.g. jobs which have been printed but not folded). Other than this, items received before dissolution will not be completed. No items may be collected from the facility by outgoing Deputies later than 7 p.m. on the day following dissolution.

ICT Facilities

- Outgoing Deputies will be able to retain their existing IT equipment and facilities throughout the election period subject to the charges specified at pages 22 and 23.
- Outgoing Members may choose to retain the computer in their possession. **However, if this option is chosen, they MUST purchase the required software in order to access their data.** Further details are in Section C, page 9 of the Guidelines.

Data Protection issues

Members are reminded of their obligations regarding data protection. In particular, Members are reminded that they may use personal data only for the purpose for which it was provided, and that they may not transfer personal data gathered during their period of membership to any third party. More detailed guidance is provided in Section C.5, pages 11 - 14 of the Guidelines.

Phone charges

- Outgoing Deputies who wish to have their calls forwarded from Leinster House to another number during the dissolution period must apply in writing to the ICT Manager or by sending an email to telecoms@oir.ie. All such forwarding will be charged at the rates paid by the Houses of the Oireachtas Service. Any Member who wishes to have her/his phone or fax lines locked (in order to avoid charges arising from unauthorised use) should ask ICT Unit to lock them by sending an email to telecoms@oir.ie.

Secretarial Staff

- Staff employed under the Scheme for Secretarial Assistance – i.e. Administrators, Administrative Assistants, Parliamentary Assistants and Secretarial Assistants - will continue to be paid up to polling day, following the dissolution of the Dáil. However, staff will not be paid overtime as parliamentary activity will be scaled down.

- Staff of outgoing Deputies will have a six week period from polling day to secure a contract in the new Dáil. The end of this six week period will coincide with the deadline date for applications for a Voluntary Early Retirement Package (VER).
- **All Members and Parties must enter into a new contract with each of their staff following an election, including when re-hiring staff formerly employed by them during a previous Dáil/Seanad term. Members and Parties must use the current template contract supplied to Party Administrators by the HR Unit for Members for all contracts without exception.**
- Staff employed by Deputies and Ministers under the Secretarial Allowance as temporary vouched employees may be paid up to and including the day the Dáil is dissolved. As these staff are not employed under the Scheme for Secretarial Assistance, they will not qualify for any payments under the VER package. However, the Service will contact Members on any statutory entitlements which may apply to such employees.

Library and Research Service

- The Reading Room will be staffed from 9.15 a.m. to 6 p.m.(5.30 pm on Friday) during the dissolution period.
- Outgoing Deputies will continue to have access to newspaper, print and electronic collections via the Reading Room staff and the L&RS intranet pages.
- There will be no loans service (including inter-library loans), reference or research services for outgoing Deputies. Any publications currently on loan from the L&RS to outgoing Deputies, or that have been borrowed on their behalf, must be returned by 6 pm on the day of dissolution.

Accommodation policy – deadlines for vacating of rooms

The Commission has agreed that it is reasonable to expect that every Member should have an allocated office by the first sitting of the relevant House following the General Elections and accordingly the following deadlines for complete vacation of offices have been approved by the Commission:

- retiring Member – 1 week after polling day
- non-returned Member – 2 weeks after polling day (*Note - this deadline also applies to Members who were not returned to the Dáil and who are contesting the Seanad elections*).

The Superintendent's Office will facilitate Members by providing packing crates and will also provide advice on the location and cost of off-site storage, if required to ensure that the above deadlines are met.

Contacts for further assistance

Finally, to assist outgoing Deputies and Senator candidates, staff of the Service will be available throughout the dissolution period to provide advice and answer queries in relation to allowances and facilities. A list of staff contacts for the various areas is included in the Guidelines.

These Guidelines are available in Irish on request.



Peter Finnegan
Joint Acting Secretary General
4 December 2015



Michael Errity
Joint Acting Secretary General