

Working in the Civil Service



Public Health England will be an executive agency of the Department of Health. Staff will be governed by the Civil Service Management Code¹⁰, and for staff in Public Health England, the Public Health England Code of Conduct for Staff.

Public Health England will be an organisation whose culture and values will demonstrate scientific and analytical rigour, dedicated to providing impartial and objective advice, evidence and expert judgement and taking action on the basis of the best available evidence.

Through discussions with staff and HR functions in sender bodies, we have identified three areas where working in the Civil Service is likely to be different for individuals who currently work for NHS employers.

These are not exclusive but the following sections outline:

- the Civil Service Code
- the employment of staff from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) in Public Health England
- the Outside Business Appointment Rules.

The Civil Service Code of Conduct

As Civil Servants, staff in Public Health England will be expected to carry out their roles with dedication and will be

bound by the Civil Service and its core values: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

These are defined as follows:

- “integrity” – putting the obligations of public service above your own personal interests
- “honesty” – being truthful and open
- “objectivity” – basing your advice and decisions on rigorous analysis of the evidence
- “impartiality” – acting solely according to the merits of the case and serving equally well governments of different political persuasions.

These core values support good government and ensure the achievement of the highest possible standards in all that the Civil Service does. This in turn helps the Civil Service to gain and retain the respect of ministers, Parliament, the public and its customers.

The values set out in the Civil Service Code will be fundamental to PHE’s operation. Public Health England will develop its own Code of Conduct for Staff to help them understand what this means for them in their work.

A number of concerns have been expressed about how people can undertake their professional duties (particularly in the medical and scientific





professions) while complying with the Civil Service Code, and what the Code means in practice for such staff.

To help give clarity on this we have set up a small working group comprising the British Medical Association (BMA) and the British Dental Association (BDA) to help develop the Public Health England Code of Conduct for Staff and ensure that it covers issues clearly for professional staff.

The Public Health England Code of Conduct for Staff will be contractual and will apply to all staff in Public Health England including the “ring fenced” staff. We aim to make this available in December 2012.

The employment of people from outside the European Economic Area and outside the Commonwealth in Public Health England

A small number of people who are in scope to transfer into Public Health England are affected by the rules relating to employment of non-UK and non-Commonwealth nationals in the Civil Service. We are seeking to work through these issues in a way which will be straightforward for the staff concerned.

There is a general prohibition in UK law on the employment of non-UK nationals in the Civil Service except in specific circumstances set out in law.

Special arrangements apply for those from commonwealth countries and also people from the European Community and European Economic Area who have rights under European treaties.

The rules affect only a very small proportion of individuals who are in scope to transfer into Public Health England. Individuals affected would need to apply for exemption to the rules to be able to work in Public Health England.

The Public Health England transition team is currently working with senders to ensure all such staff are identified, and to provide support and guidance to enable applications for exemption to be made.

The Outside Business Appointment Rules

As Civil Servants, Public Health England staff will be bound by the Outside Business Appointment Rules.

These rules apply to Civil Servants who intend to take up an outside appointment or employment after leaving the Civil Service.

The approval process for applications under the rules differs depending on the applicant's seniority. The rules continue to apply for two years after the last day of paid Civil Service employment.

These rules are designed to uphold the core values in the Civil Service Code. It is in the public interest that people with experience of public administration should be able to move into business or other bodies outside central government, and that such movement should not be frustrated by unjustified public concern over a particular appointment.

It is equally important that when a former Civil Servant takes up an outside appointment there should be no cause





for justified public concern, criticism or misinterpretation.

Before accepting any new appointment or employment, whether in the UK or overseas, which they intend to take up after they have left the Civil Service, all serving/former Civil Servants must consider whether an application under the rules is required. If it is required, they should not accept a new job offer before it has been approved.

The process for giving approval differs depending on the applicant's seniority. The operation of these rules is overseen by the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments¹¹, which considers the most senior cases.

¹⁰ <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/resources/civil-service-management-code>

¹¹ <http://acoba.independent.gov.uk>



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