

Dear Members,

The Department of Justice has contacted PSI with regard to the Parole Act 2019 and, specifically, with regard to the appointment of members to the statutory Parole Board. A copy of that Act is available at <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/act/28/enacted/en/html>

Including the chairperson, the statutory Parole Board currently has 12 members. The provisions of section 9 of the above Act set out the functions of the Parole Board as follows:

The Board, in addition to the other functions conferred on it by this Act-

- A) shall provide information to persons serving sentences of imprisonment, victims and members of the public in relation to its functions,
- B) Shall provide information to the Minister in relation to its functions and make recommendations to the Minister, upon his or her request, to assist him or her in coordinating and making policy related to the release of persons from prison on parole, and
- C) may undertake, commission, or assist in research projects and other activities related to the release of persons from prison on parole which in the opinion of the Board may assist it in the exercise of its functions, and make recommendations to the Minister arising from those projects or activities.

Furthermore, I would draw your attention to section 13 of the Act in respect of the powers of the Board and section 14 in respect of the procedures of the Board.

Mr Justice Michael White is Chairperson of the Board.

The Board is supported in its statutory duties by a secretariat, led by the Chief Executive Ciairín de Buis and consisting of civil servants assigned by the Department of Justice. The offices of the secretariat, and the related meeting rooms for the Parole Board, are in Dublin; however, travelling outside Dublin (for example, to meet prisoners and/or victims) is necessary for the Board members. The candidate will have to be a position to drive to some locations where public transport is limited. Subject to the 2019 Act, the Board is independent in the exercise of its functions. Any function of the Board may be performed through or by the Chief Executive or any member of the staff of the Board duly authorised in that behalf by the Board.

Appointments to the statutory Parole Board by the Minister for Justice, and in accordance with the provisions of section 10(5) of the above Act, I shall satisfy themselves - in appointing a person to be a member of the Board,

-that the person has:

- A) knowledge and understanding of the criminal justice system, and
- B) the ability to make a reasonable and balanced assessment of-

(i) the risk a person serving a sentence of imprisonment might present to the safety and

security of members of the public if released on parole,

(ii) the extent to which such a person has been rehabilitated and would, if released on parole, be capable of reintegrating into society, and

(iii) whether it is appropriate in all the circumstances that such a person be released on parole.

I now draw your particular attention to section 10(3)(e) of the Parole Act 2019 which provides that, of the persons appointed to be members of the Board, "two shall be psychologists nominated for appointment by the Psychological Society of Ireland".

Furthermore, I would note that section 10(6), insofar as it relates to the Psychological Society of Ireland, provides that in nominating persons for appointment under this section, a nominating person or body shall nominate one man and one woman, and shall satisfy itself that its nominees meet the criteria specified in subsection (5).

I would also draw your attention to section 12 of the Act which provides for the resignation, removal, disqualification, ineligibility, etc., for office of members of the Parole Board.

Request for nomination

The PSI has been requested to nominate one man and one woman, both to be suitably qualified and experienced individuals, as members of the Parole Board. If you are interested in this position could you please fill out the accompanying [form](#) (highlighting relevant experience, qualifications and/or expertise), telephone, correspondence address and email contact details.

In considering a role as a member of the Parole Board, it should be noted by all concerned that there is likely to be a considerable time commitment involved which may include, inter alia, the following:

- attendance (at least) fourteen meetings of the Parole Board per year and any such other meetings as may be required such as membership of sub-committees.
- attendance at meetings with applicants (meetings occur in prisons)
- attendance at meetings with victims (in various locations around the country)

- ensuring the accurate and timely drafting, recording and notification of relevant Board decisions;
- preparation for, and follow-up arising from, such meetings;
- meeting with relevant stakeholders;
- assisting with regard to ensuring appropriate and timely sharing of Board decisions with relevant stakeholders;
- assisting with regard to the preparation and submission to me, as Minister, each year of the Board's annual report;
- assisting the Chairperson with regard to oversight of the Board itself, the Chief Executive and the supporting organisation to ensure effective and efficient use of public funds, good governance in accordance with public sector norms and accurate reporting;
- chairing and/or participating in meetings of sub-groups of the Parole Board on matters regarding the operation/governance of the organisation.

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive.

The chairperson and members of the Parole Board will also be required to be mindful of the requirements set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies as issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Remuneration

Expenses for travel and accommodation are reimbursed. Travel and subsistence allowances will be paid in line with Civil Service guidelines. Candidates not employed in the public sector will be provided with remuneration of board fees (approx. eleven thousand euro per annum).

In line with the "One Person = One Salary" principle, no public servant is entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees (except for situations that are statutorily provided for e.g. Worker Directors). For nominees who may already be in receipt of a public sector pension, the question of abatement also arises.

Conclusion

If you would like to be nominated for this role please complete this [form](#) and send your CV to divisions@psychologicalsociety.ie by no later than **Friday 03 March 5pm**.

Informal inquiries about the role can be made to either of the two PSI representatives who currently sit on the Parole Board (Sharon Lambert and Paul Murphy).

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Pgmurphy30@gmail.com