

New public service bargaining claim seeks quicker progression to higher pay

ANDY PRENDERGAST

A major new local bargaining claim by Fórsa covering tens of thousands of civil servants, submitted to DPER under the current Public Service Agreement, seeks removal of increment scale points to enable higher pay in a shorter amount of time.

The claim also seeks to remove the waiting period for long service increments (three years) and add new maximum points on the relevant scales. The design of the claim is similar to the claim submitted by Fórsa on behalf of Clerical Officers and related grades, earlier this year (see *IRN 03/2025*).

It covers Executive Officers, Higher Executive Officers, Administrative Officer and Related Grades in the Civil Service, and Administrative Grades 4 to 7 and Related Grades in Public Service (Health, Education and Local Government Sectors).

Notably, the claim cites the 3% local bargaining figure as built into clause 4.2.1 of the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026. The current agreement allows for a 1% local bargaining claim to be applied on 1 September 2025, “and the balance will fall to be addressed in any successor pay agreement.”

The claim was submitted to DPER at the end of February, by Fórsa Deputy General Secretary Éamonn Donnelly, on behalf of the union’s members.

FULL CLAIM SUBMITTED

- **Executive Officer:**

- Removal of point 6 of the Executive Officer scale (on completion of 1 year at point 5, the next point of progression is point 7).
- Removal of point 10 of the Executive Officer Scale (on completion of 1 year at point 9, the next point of progression is point 11).
- Removal of the 3 years waiting criteria for Long Service Increments on the Executive Officer scale.
- An increase of 3.5% to the absolute maximum point of the Executive Officer scale.

- **Higher Executive Officer:**

- Removal of point 3 of the Higher Executive Officer scale (on completion of 1 year at point 2, the next point of progression is point 4).
- Removal of point 6 of the Higher Executive Officer scale (on completion of 1 year at point 5, the next point of progression is point 7).
- Removal of the 3 years waiting criteria for Long Service Increments on the Higher Executive Officer scale.
- An increase of 3.5% to the absolute maximum point of the Higher Executive Officer scale.

- **Grade 4:**
 - Removal of point 6 of the Grade 4 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 5, the next point of progression is point 7).
 - Removal of point 8 of the Grade 4 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 7, the next point of progression is point 9).
 - Removal of the 3 years waiting criteria for Long Service Increments on the Grade 4 scale.
 - An increase of 3.5% to the absolute maximum point of the Grade 4 scale.

- **Grade 5:**
 - Removal of point 2 of the Grade 5 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 1, the next point of progression is point 3).
 - Removal of point 5 of the Grade 5 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 4, the next point of progression is point 6).
 - Removal of the 3 years waiting criteria for Long Service Increments on the Grade 5 scale.
 - An increase of 3.5% to the absolute maximum point of the Grade 5 scale.

- **Grade 6:**
 - Removal of point 3 of the Grade 6 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 2, the next point of progression is point 4).
 - Removal of point 5 of the Grade 6 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 4, the next point of progression is point 6).
 - Removal of the 3 years waiting criteria for Long Service Increments on the Grade 6 scale.
 - An increase of 3.5% to the absolute maximum point of the Grade 6 scale.

- **Grade 7:**
 - Removal of point 3 of the Grade 7 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 2, the next point of progression is point 4).
 - Removal of point 6 of the Grade 7 scale (on completion of 1 year at point 5, the next point of progression is point 7).
 - Removal of the 3 years waiting criteria for Long Service Increments on the Grade 7 scale.

- An increase of 3.5% on the absolute maximum point of the Grade 7 scale.

The claim also notes that adjustments in line with those set out above “should also be made to the higher scales in the Executive Officer and Higher Executive Officer grades in the Civil Service” and that “similar adjustments should be made to the Administrative Officer scales in the Civil Service without prejudice to the discussion already underway on the suitability and sustainability of the pay structure of that grade in the context of labour market issues.”

BARGAINING UNITS

In an internal bulletin to members, Fórsa noted that the union’s General Secretary Kevin Callinan has met with DPER, in his capacity as Chair of the ICTU Public Services Committee, to finalise the local bargaining units.

On the new local bargaining claim submitted, Mr Callinan said: “The members covered by this claim were surveyed in advance, and their responses informed the nature of the claim.”

“For local bargaining to have a real impact on members’ lives, it is vital that members have a chance to input into claims early in the process. Members’ support will also be pivotal in securing the claims. There are no automatic entitlements here, these claims will need to be negotiated, fought for and won”, he added.