

Oifig an  
Office of the



**Stiúrtóra Ionchúiseamh Poiblí**  
**Director of Public Prosecutions**

# Quality Service Charter 2021-2023

## Mission Statement

To provide on behalf of the People of Ireland a prosecution service that is independent, fair and effective.

## Who are we?

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions was established by the Prosecution of Offences Act, 1974. The Director of Public Prosecutions is referred to as the DPP. The Office of the DPP has four main divisions:

1. The **Directing Division** determines, following an examination of an investigation file, whether there should be a prosecution or whether a prosecution commenced by the Garda Síochána should be maintained. The direction which issues indicates the charges, if any, to be brought before the courts. In some cases further information and investigation may be required before a decision can be made. To prosecute there must be a prima facie case - evidence which could, though not necessarily would, lead a court or a jury to decide, beyond reasonable doubt, that the person is guilty of the offence.
2. The **Solicitors Division**, headed by the Chief Prosecution Solicitor, provides a solicitor service to the Director in the preparation and presentation of cases in the Dublin District and Circuit Criminal Courts, the Central Criminal Court and Special Criminal Court, the Court of Appeal and the High and Supreme Courts. Outside the Dublin area 32 local state solicitors, engaged on a contract basis, provide a solicitor service in the Circuit Court and in some District Court matters in their respective local areas.
3. The **Prosecution Support Services Division** incorporates the Victims Liaison Unit which is responsible for ensuring that the Office meets its obligations in relation to the support and protection of victims of crime as set out under the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017; the International

Unit which deals with areas of international criminal law, including extradition, European Arrest Warrants and requests for mutual legal assistance; and the Prosecution Policy and Research Unit which conducts legal research, provides support for the development of legal policy, and engages with external stakeholders on policy matters. The Policy and Research Unit also co-ordinates knowledge management and includes the Library service which provides information and know-how services for both legal and administrative staff.

4. The **Corporate Services Division** consists of general civil service grades and provides human resources, IT and other support services to the three legal divisions.

## What do we do?

The DPP decides whether to charge people with criminal offences, and what the charges should be. Once charges are brought the Office of the DPP is in charge of the prosecution case.

The Chief Prosecution Solicitor acts as solicitor to the DPP and is head of the Solicitors Division in the DPP's Office. The staff of the Solicitors Division represent the Director in all courts in Dublin. Local state solicitors represent the DPP in courts outside of Dublin.

## What we do NOT do

The DPP's Office does NOT:

- investigate crimes - crimes are investigated by the Garda Síochána.
- give legal advice to members of the public - those seeking such advice should consult their own legal advisor.

## What you can expect from us

The DPP and her staff are committed to providing a quality prosecution service. In your dealings with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions you can expect:

## Independence

Independence is a core value of the Office. The DPP is independent when carrying out her job. The Government or the Garda Síochána cannot make the DPP prosecute any particular case nor can they stop her doing so.

## Fairness

The Office of the DPP operates to the highest professional standards and treats all those with whom it has dealings fairly, equally and consistently.

## Careful consideration

The decision to prosecute or not to prosecute is very important. If persons are prosecuted it can do them a lot of damage even if they are later found not guilty. A criminal trial is very stressful for all concerned, particularly the victim. At the same time, a decision not to prosecute can cause great stress and upset to a victim. So the decision whether or not to prosecute has to be very carefully considered.

## Confidentiality

All matters referred to the DPP's Office will be dealt with in an appropriate and confidential manner. When the DPP decides not to prosecute, the reasons for her decision are given to the Garda Síochána, or other investigating agency, and are kept confidential. However, a victim can ask for a summary of the reasons for the decision. This applies to all decisions made on or after 16 November 2015.

In cases where the victim has died, a family member of the deceased victim can ask us for reasons for our decision not to prosecute. This applies to all cases where the death occurred on or after 22 October 2008.

## Timely Action

The DPP and her staff will deal with all files, enquiries and other matters referred to her Office in a timely manner.

## Review

If you are a victim or an accused person, or a member of their family, or their lawyer, doctor or social worker you can request

the DPP to reconsider a decision which has been taken. You can do this by sending a written request to the DPP's Office.

## Courtesy & Respect

The staff of the DPP's Office will treat all those with whom we have dealings with courtesy and respect.

## Sensitivity

The DPP's Office is committed to treating victims and witnesses with the utmost consideration and sensitivity. The DPP will have regard to any view expressed by victims of crime when making decisions in specific cases whether or not to prosecute.

When prosecuting offences in court we will:

- work with the Garda Síochána to ensure that victims of crime are kept fully informed of developments in the case.
- explain, wherever possible, the court processes involved and make available our information guide on 'Going to Court as a Witness'.
- at the request of a victim of crime, facilitate a pre-trial meeting with counsel and a representative from the Solicitors Division of the DPP's Office. The purpose of this meeting is to explain the trial process to you and answer any questions you may have. It should be pointed out, however, that the Director's representative cannot discuss evidence with witnesses in advance of the case.

## Appeals

In cases tried in the Circuit, Central Criminal or Special Criminal Court the DPP can apply to the Court of Appeal to review a sentence where she considers the sentence to be unduly lenient. If you are a victim, or a member of their family, or their lawyer, doctor or social worker you can request the DPP to appeal the leniency of a sentence handed down by the courts.

## Information

The Office of the DPP provides easily accessible information on the work of the Office through publication of information

guides, Annual Reports, Guidelines for Prosecutors, and other publications, all of which are available on the Office website at [www.dppireland.ie](http://www.dppireland.ie).

Under section 42(f) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, only records concerning the general administration of the Office can be made public. This means that the public cannot obtain information from files relating to individual criminal cases.

### Official Language Equality

All publications issued by the DPP's Office are published in both Irish and English and our website is bi-lingual. We will also assist you to conduct your business through the Irish language.

### Complaints Policy

If you have a complaint about how we work you can write to the DPP's Office and your complaint will be dealt with promptly.

## Contact Details

### **Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions**

Infirmary Road  
Dublin 7  
D07 FHN8.

Tel: + 353 1 858 8500

Fax: + 353 1 642 7406

Web: [www.dppireland.ie](http://www.dppireland.ie)

### **Chief Prosecution Solicitor**

### **Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions**

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Dublin 7  
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Fax: +353 1 642 7406

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