



LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Small Practice Traineeship Grant Scheme

[to assist in the employment of trainee solicitors by solicitors' practices located in specified geographical areas]

1. Objectives of the Scheme

- (a) Following the positive reception to and the success of the 2020 - 2025 iterations, the Law Society of Ireland (the "Society") this year (2026) is continuing with its promotional scheme designated the "Small Practice Traineeship Grant Scheme" (the "Scheme") designed to assist selected practices within specified geographical areas that are not located in the City and County of Dublin and the City of Galway, Metropolitan District of Limerick City and the City of Cork by means of supplementing financially the direct costs related to employing trainee solicitors from the same or adjacent geographical areas.¹
- (b) The Society, in promoting and funding the Scheme, has decided that in the year 2026, six individual grants should be awarded to each of six practices selected from among practices that make an application.
- (c) The cash element of each such grant awarded will total €18,000 (eighteen thousand euro) to be remitted to a selected practice by equal monthly payments of €750 in arrears over the course of the two year period of in-office training of the proposed trainee solicitor concerned and will be in addition to a fee discount of €7,000 (seven thousand euro) on the proposed trainee solicitor's fees payable to the Society for attending the Professional Practice Course ("PPC") or the PPC Hybrid.

¹ A "Specified Geographical Area" means an area within the State that is outside of the City and County of Dublin, the City of Galway, the Metropolitan District of Limerick City and the City of Cork. City of Galway as set out in SI 617 of 2018 and includes Galway City Central, Galway City East & Galway City West. Metropolitan District of Limerick City as set out in SI 624 of 2018 and includes Limerick City East, Limerick City North & Limerick City West. City of Cork as set out in SI 27 of 2019 and includes Cork City North East, Cork City North West, Cork City South Central, Cork City South East & Cork City South West.

2. Eligibility Criteria and other Conditions

(a) The eligibility criteria for making an application to the Scheme for a grant are as follows:

- i. the applicant practice where the training contract is to be completed to be located within a specified geographical area, as defined;
- ii. the applicant practice to consist of five or less solicitors, including principal, partner(s), consultant(s) and employed solicitor(s);
- iii. the proposed training solicitor to be a principal or partner who holds a current practicing certificate and has at some stage held a practicing certificate for a continuous period of at least four years;
- iv. the proposed trainee solicitor to be identified and to consent to the application being made and who should have passed the Final Examination First Part ("FE-1") before 29th May 2026; and
- v. the applicant practice to commit to paying the proposed trainee solicitor during the two year period of in-office training at least the "living wage" (currently €15.40 per hour), if awarded the grant.
- vi. The proposed trainee solicitor is not related to (including marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation) or connected to (by marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation, to any person related to) any solicitor(s) including principal, partner(s), consultant(s) and employed solicitor(s) associated with/working for any legal firm (including the applicant firm) in the same county.

(b) The format of the application form is set out in Appendix A hereto and, when completed, shall be submitted either by post (addressed to Small Practice Traineeship Grant Scheme, Traineeship Section, Law Society of Ireland, Blackhall Place, Dublin 7, D07VY24, DX79 Dublin) or by email (traineesection@lawsociety.ie) by no later than 29th May 2026.

(c) Each applicant practice, in so applying, acknowledges to the Society that:

- i. the decision of the adjudicating panel in selecting the five practices to be awarded a grant shall be final and conclusive; and
- ii. in the event of being successful, if any resultant training contract did not proceed at all or was terminated before the end of the two year period of in-office training of the trainee solicitor concerned the monthly payment of instalments of €750 cash grant would thereupon cease and the training practice will be paid a total grant amount pro-rata to the number of months of the in-office training period completed at the practice by the trainee solicitor unless the training contract was proceeding by reason of an assignment of the training contract to another eligible solicitor who was a principal or a partner within the same practice.
- iii. The successful practices who are awarded a grant undertake to notify the Traineeship Executive immediately if a training contract in respect of a grant aided trainee solicitor is terminated.
- iv. For the avoidance of doubt, the existence of any doubt being denied, the purpose of the grant is to promote traineeships in locations where without the grant the traineeship might not otherwise exist. Consequently, it is not a grant to, or for the benefit of the trainee. In the event that the trainee assigns their Indentures of Apprenticeship to a solicitor in another firm during the course of their traineeship, the grant does not automatically follow them. It would be open

to the new Training Solicitor, if the new firm otherwise fits the criteria of the criteria of the Scheme, to apply to be considered as potential recipient of the balance of the initial grant, without any guarantee of success.

- (d) Each application received will be assessed by the adjudicating panel having regard to the proposal (of a maximum of 1,000 words) submitted as part of each application, which should be indicative of the range of experience the proposed trainee solicitor might gain during his/her two year period of in-office training, with emphasis on how the traineeship may foster the retention of the trainee, upon qualification, as a new solicitor in the county
 - the Proposal to be marked by the adjudicating panel up to a maximum of 70 points (see Appendix B - “Marking Scheme”).
- (e) In addition (and reflective of the statistics of numbers of trainee solicitor admissions to the PPC during the 2023 to 2025 period and the recorded county location of each trainee solicitor’s training firm, as set out in the schedule hereto), bonus marks may be granted in respect of applications from practices located in particular counties showing zero or very low admission levels – to be marked between 10 and 30 points (see Appendix B - “Marking Scheme”).
- (f) The adjudicating panel will consist of three members of the Society’s Education Committee.
- (g) The successful applicant practices will be notified by 1st August 2026 in sufficient time that should enable:
 - i. applications to be made to the Society by each proposed trainee solicitor concerned for consent to enter into a training contract with each nominated proposed training solicitor concerned;
 - ii. (subject to such consent being forthcoming) the training contract to be signed by each party and registered with the Society; and
 - iii. each trainee solicitor concerned to enter on to the Professional Practice Course or the Professional Practice Course Hybrid commencing later in 2026.

Appendix A – Application Form



Law Society Small Practice Traineeship Grant Scheme to assist in the hiring of a trainee solicitor (2026)

Eligibility Criteria

1. Has the proposed training practice five or less solicitors including principal, partners, consultants and employed solicitors?	Yes / No
2. Is the proposed training practice's office where the traineeship shall be completed located in a Specified Geographical Area? ¹	Yes / No
3. Have you identified a proposed trainee solicitor who will have passed all eight Law Society Final Examination Part One (FE-1) exam papers by 29 th May 2026?	Yes / No
4. If granted the small practice Traineeship grant, please confirm that your practice will pay the proposed trainee solicitor at least the living wage, (currently €15.40 per hour).	Yes / No
5. Is the proposed trainee solicitor related to (including marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation) or connected to (by marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation, to any person related to) any solicitor(s) including principal, partner(s), consultant(s) and employed solicitor(s) associated with/working for any legal firm (including the applicant firm) in the same County?	Yes / No

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Practice Details

Practice Name	
Practice Address	
Practice email address	
Practice telephone number	
Number of solicitors including principal, partners, consultants & employed solicitors.	

Proposed Training Solicitor's Details

Proposed Training Solicitor Name	
Proposed Training Solicitor Post Qualification Experience	

Proposed Trainee Solicitor's Details

Proposed Trainee Solicitor Name	
Proposed Trainee Solicitor Address	
Proposed Trainee Solicitor email address	
Proposed Trainee Solicitor telephone number	
Number of FE-1 exam papers passed by proposed Trainee Solicitor	

Training Contract Proposal (max 1,000 words)

(For the purposes of the scheme, particular attention will be given by the adjudicating panel to training proposals. The proposals will be assessed on the quality, level and range of work that will be provided to the trainee solicitor.)

Appendix B – “Marking Scheme”

Law Society Small Practice Traineeship Grant Scheme to assist in the hiring of a trainee solicitor (2026)

Marking Scheme [maximum 100 points including bonus points]

Standard Marks	Training Contract Proposal	Quality of proposed work, level of proposed work and range of proposed work	Up to 70 points
Location Bonus 1	Practice located in a county where there have been no training contracts in the last 3 years.	None such.	+30 points
Or Location Bonus 2	Practice located in a county where there has been an annual average of 1 or less training contracts in the last 3 years.	Cavan, Kilkenny, Laois, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Wexford	+20 points
Or Location Bonus 3	Practice located in a county where there has been an annual average of more than 1 and less than 2 training contracts in the last 3 years.	Carlow, Clare, Monaghan, Offaly, Sligo	+10 points

Schedule

Number of Training Contracts by Training Contract Location of Trainee Solicitors entering PPC between 2023 – 2025

County	2023	2024	2025	3 Year
				Average
Longford	1	0	0	0.33
Laois	0	1	0	0.33
Roscommon	0	0	2	0.67
Leitrim	0	1	1	0.67
Kilkenny	1	1	0	0.67
Wexford	1	0	1	0.67
Cavan	0	0	3	1.00
Carlow	0	3	1	1.33
Clare	0	3	1	1.33
Offaly	1	2	2	1.67
Monaghan	3	1	1	1.67
Sligo	2	1	2	1.67
Kerry	3	1	2	2.00
Mayo	3	2	2	2.33
Louth	1	4	3	2.67
Wicklow	3	1	4	2.67
Tipperary	1	6	1	2.67
Waterford	5	0	4	3.00
Kildare	1	3	5	3.00
Donegal	4	2	3	3.00
Westmeath	1	5	4	3.33
Meath	3	3	4	3.33
Galway	11	9	6	8.67
Limerick	11	6	11	9.33
Cork	38	34	38	36.67
Dublin	464	452	479	465.00