

Pathways to Work

Government Policy Statement on Labour Market Activation



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Foreword

Ireland is in the midst of a serious unemployment crisis, a crisis which gives rise to many negative economic and social consequences – for society as a whole and for individuals and their families.

In our Programme for Government we undertook to introduce a better approach to how the State engages with and supports the unemployed to get back into the workforce.

‘Pathways to Work’ sets out how we intend to do this and is a key element of our strategy to get Ireland working again. Delivered alongside the measures in the Government’s Action Plan on Jobs to help create new employment opportunities, we aim to avoid a repeat of the mistakes of the 1980s and 1990s when unemployment remained high even after economic recovery took hold.

The approach set out in this statement will build on existing Government policies to ensure that as many new job opportunities as possible are filled by those on the Live Register. Our challenge, in ‘Pathways to Work’, is to ensure that the creation of new jobs results in a reduction in unemployment – particularly long-term unemployment – so that individuals do not become permanently disenfranchised within our society. Our aim is to engage with every unemployed individual to make sure that their first day out of work is also their first step on the pathway back to work.

‘Pathways to Work’ has five strands:

- more regular and on-going engagement with people who are unemployed
- greater targeting of activation places and opportunities
- incentivising the take-up of opportunities
- incentivising employers to provide more jobs for people who are unemployed, and
- reforming institutions to deliver better services to people who are unemployed.

These strands will ensure that Ireland’s greatest resource, its people, will no longer remain on the Live Register for lengthy periods without an appropriate offer of assistance from the State. In return, individuals will be made aware of their

responsibility to commit to job-search and/or other employment, education and training activities or risk losing welfare entitlements.

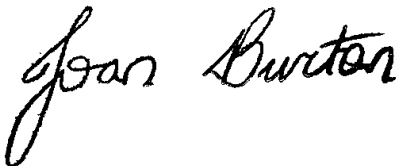
Together, the five strands of 'Pathways to Work' present a coherent, effective and overdue transformation of Ireland's labour market activation policies.



Enda Kenny TD
Taoiseach



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Introduction – Challenges and Targets

1. Ireland is facing an unemployment crisis last seen in the deep recessions of the 1980s. There are now over 439,500 individuals on the Live Register, over 183,800 (42%) of whom are on the Live Register for a year or longer, with many previously employed in the construction sector. In the 1980s it took almost a decade for a return to economic growth to result in a reduced Live Register. Even in the early 1990s, during a period of double digit economic growth, the rate of unemployment fell by less than 2% from 14.7% to 12.8% between 1992 and 1995. Today, the average period spent on the Live Register is an unacceptable 21 months.
2. The Government is determined that those who are unemployed will be provided with appropriate advice, support, education and training to take advantage of new job opportunities as the economy recovers. The recently published Action Plan on Jobs envisages the creation of a net new 100,000 jobs by 2016. The 'Pathways to Work' approach presented here will enable as many of these new jobs as possible to be filled from the large numbers of people who are unemployed.
3. Our ambition is to develop a new approach to engagement with people who are unemployed which meets international best practice and which can be compared favourably with similar systems anywhere in the world. This includes measuring the performance of the 'Pathways to Work' approach as a whole, as well as of the effectiveness of individual engagement programmes. We will commission research and develop measurement methodologies to ensure that we have at our disposal the most appropriate and up-to-date metrics to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of progress under 'Pathways to Work'.
4. The 'Pathways to Work' approach will transform the nature and level of engagement between the employment services and the unemployed. Based on current trends the numbers of long-term unemployed will, in the absence of concerted action, increase inexorably and could grow to exceed more than 200,000. Clearly this is unacceptable. If the growth in long-term unemployment is to be halted, and the number of people who are unemployed for more than twelve months reduced, these trends will have to be reversed. Put simply, no-one who loses his/her job should be allowed to drift, with no support, into long-term unemployment.
5. The Government is determined that those who are already unemployed for more than twelve months will have access to supports that enable them to return to active employment. It is also committed to ensuring that those who become unemployed during the course of this plan receive the advice and support necessary to help them secure an early return to employment and so

avoid the transition into long-term unemployment. This deliberate and active focus on both short and long-term unemployment is very challenging, but is a challenge that we must tackle with imagination and resolve.

6. Through the regular and on-going engagement with people on the Live Register, we intend to provide access to opportunities for work, education and training. 'Pathways to Work' is based on five strands:
 - more regular and on-going engagement with the unemployed
 - greater targeting of activation places and opportunities
 - incentivising the take-up of opportunities
 - incentivising employers to provide more jobs for people who are unemployed, and
 - reforming institutions to deliver better services to the unemployed.
7. Through implementing these five strands we will ensure that people who are unemployed will be given the opportunity to acquire suitable skills and/or qualifications. We will ensure that they will be in a position to take advantage of new job opportunities by achieving the following goals by 2015:

(i) For each person currently unemployed

The Department of Social Protection will engage with and provide supports (such as referral to education, training, work placement, or job search assistance) to each person currently unemployed to increase their prospects of securing a job. There will be a particular focus on the long-term unemployed with a view to ensuring that at least 75,000 of those currently long-term unemployed will move into employment by 2015. This is more than double the current rate.

(ii) For each person who becomes unemployed in the future

The Department of Social Protection will engage with each person who becomes unemployed in the future with a view to reducing the average time spent on the Live Register from 21 months today to less than 12 months by the end of 2015.

(iii) For Employers

As part of this 'Pathways to Work' approach there will be more meaningful engagement between the Department of Social Protection and employers so as to ensure that employers have access to and are offered, on request, candidates to fill full-time vacancies.

The Department of Social Protection will increase the proportion of all jobs that are filled with candidates from the Live Register via its employment services to a level which meets international best practice. Appropriate research and analysis will be undertaken during the second quarter of 2012 to establish robust targets and measurement metrics in line with this commitment.

In advance of this analysis, an interim target will be set of increasing the proportion of vacancies filled by the Department's employment services from the Live Register to 40% by 2015. This target will be reviewed once the relevant analysis has been completed.

(iv) For the Tax-Payer

To ensure that each person in receipt of job-seeker payment fulfils their personal responsibility to engage fully with the employment and training supports provided by the State, as a pre-condition for receipt of their welfare payments.

This will contribute to the Department of Social Protection meeting its target of achieving control savings on expenditure on welfare payments of which a significant proportion is expected to be in respect of working age payments.

Together with the 'Action Plan for Jobs' the achievement of these 'Pathways to Work' goals will form a vital component of our national effort of getting Ireland, and its people, back to work.

Background

8. When the Government came to office we pledged to restore our economy to sustainability, fix a broken banking system, restore our damaged international reputation and get our people back to work. We have made significant progress in all of these areas. We introduced a Jobs Initiative soon after coming to office which included a number of measures to target job creation in specific sectors. Job creation was also the primary focus of our first Budget, and we published a comprehensive 'Action Plan for Jobs' on 13 February which identifies specific measures across a range of sectors with the target of creating 100,000 net new jobs in the period to 2016.
9. The purpose of this document is to set out the Government's enhanced labour market activation strategy to maximise the number of these new jobs which will be filled by those who are unemployed. A key objective of labour market activation policy is to prevent the drift into, and reduce, long-term unemployment. The key is to implement an activation policy which engages with every unemployed individual and, in particular, those at risk of long-term unemployment in order to provide them with a pathway to work. This means that the State will provide supports, where appropriate, in the form of access to employment advice, job search assistance/referral, education, training and work experience. This will help people to maintain contact with the labour market, to move back to work as opportunities emerge, and will reduce the impact of long-term unemployment on individuals and their families. In return, individuals must commit themselves to job-search and/or other employment or education and training activities or face sanction in the case of non-compliance.
10. Activation policies should seek to increase the employability of job seekers and to encourage them to be more active in their efforts to find work. However, in Ireland we have traditionally adopted a passive approach to supporting job seekers compared with other OECD countries. One of the consequences of this in the past was the development of a significant core of long-term unemployed, even in the midst of an economic boom, and the deskilling of many people in the labour market. It is even more urgent that we address these challenges in the current economic circumstances. It is estimated that the Department for Social Protection will spend €977 million on employment supports including Community Employment schemes in 2012, an increase from €882 million in 2011. This is a substantial increase of €95 million in the budget for 2012, in the context of significant fiscal consolidation, and demonstrates the Government's commitment to enhancing its labour market activation policies.
11. Our aim is to achieve sustained success in assisting people at risk of long-term welfare dependency into employment. This will require both a work-focused

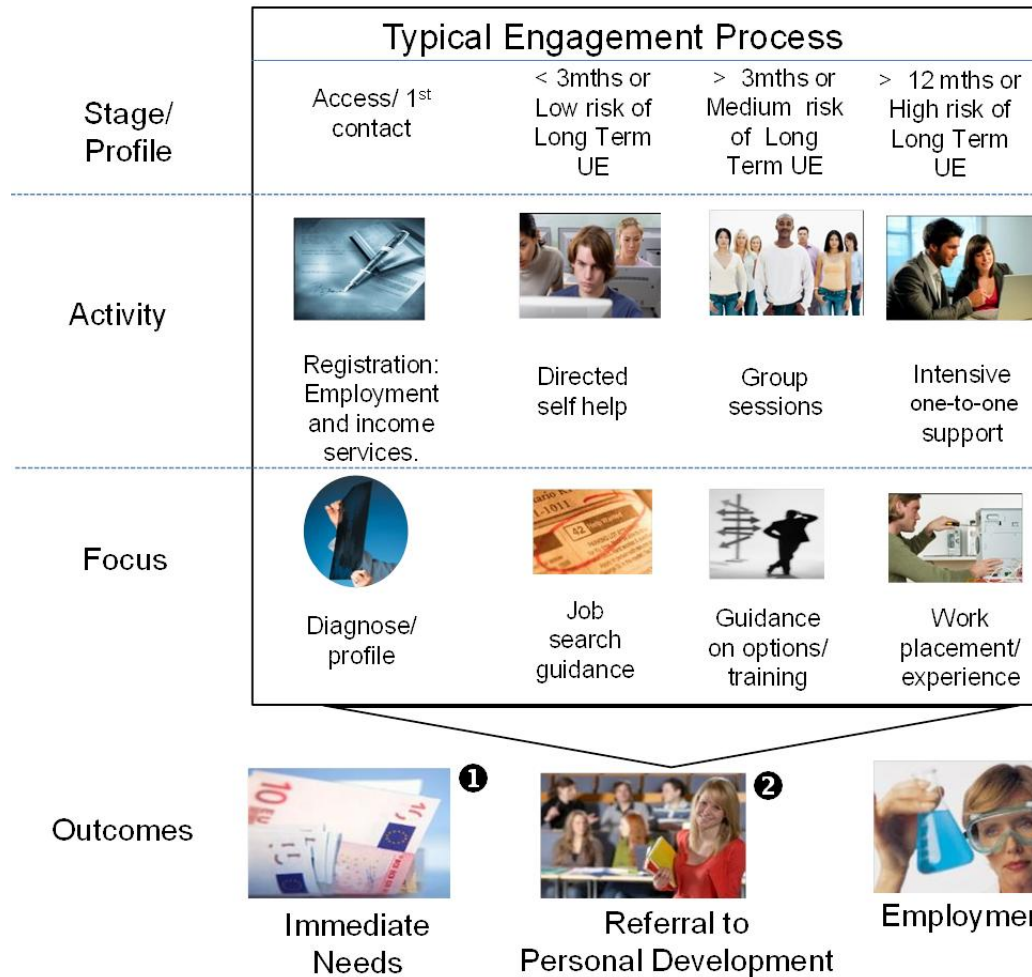
welfare payment *and* effective and targeted service delivery through the National Employment and Entitlements Service (NEES).

12. We do not underestimate the challenges. But we also recognise the opportunities – even in the worst of the recession, large numbers of people have left the Live Register to take up jobs or start their own businesses.
13. Given limited public resources, it is also essential that activation measures are targeted at those groups who are most at risk of long-term unemployment as well as those who would benefit most from interventions. The development of the Probability of Exit (PEX) profiling model by the Department of Social Protection in conjunction with the ESRI will help in this regard. However, the current cohort of long-term unemployed – including those previously employed in the ca. 205,000 jobs lost in the construction and retail sectors – will also be a particular focus of interventions during 2012 and on an ongoing basis.
14. Our approach will be informed by a greater focus in programme design on supporting people to keep close to the labour market, taking into account advice on areas of emerging skills needs through the work of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs and other relevant empirical data.
15. We will also ensure a systematic approach to the evaluation of programme impacts, which will be informed by the development of standardised data collection and reporting requirements and the sharing of data between relevant Government Departments and Agencies (this will be enabled, if necessary, by legislative amendments).

'Pathways to Work' and the Framework for Activation

16. The pathway back to work will vary for individuals depending on their skills and qualifications, on developments in the economy, and on the extent to which people remain attached to the labour market through activation, education and training as appropriate. The graphic overleaf illustrates the typical process although this will vary depending on the client profile of the individual claimant.

Pathways to Work/Case Management



'Pathways to Work'

The first stage in the process is the client registration. At this stage the client will be registered both for welfare entitlements and employment services and will be assigned to a case worker.

As part of the registration process the client will complete a profile questionnaire to enable the case worker assess their Probability of Exit (PEX) from unemployment during the subsequent 12 months and develop a personal progression plan for the client.

Depending on the outcome of this assessment the elements of the progression plan will vary.

For Example:

- Clients with a high PEX rating will be encouraged and helped to search for and secure employment.
- Clients with a mid-point PEX rating, and those with a high-PEX rating but still on the live register after three months, will be invited to participate in Group Advisory sessions where they will be provided with guidance on how to improve their job search activities and also on the training and development opportunities available to them to improve their employment prospects.
- Clients with a low-PEX rating and all those still on the live register after 12 months will receive intensive one-to-one support from an experienced employment services advisor and may be directed to particular work experience and training programmes.

Our 'Pathways to Work' approach has five strands

Firstly, more regular and ongoing engagement with the unemployed ...

17. Our aim is that every individual on the Live Register will have deeper and more regular engagement with the National Employment and Entitlements Service (NEES) according to their needs, and that they will be offered job search assistance with appropriate education, training or work experience opportunity to increase their employability and keep them close to the labour market.

This Government is now committing to, by end 2012:

- ensure a national roll-out of group interviews for appropriate groups on the Live Register and will ensure that 30,000 are engaged in this process in 2012
- focus this capacity on the long-term unemployed and high priority groups, and
- fully implement the types of additional engagements necessary in developing the case management system, including the direct referral of clients to one-to-one engagements where group engagement may not be an appropriate or efficient response to their needs.

18. The merger of the employment services functions of FÁS with the Department of Social Protection was completed on target on 1 January 2012. The Department of Social Protection will now ensure that:

- Probability of Exit (PEX) profiling will be extended to half of all local offices by end May 2012 – this will include the signing of a rights and responsibilities contract and commitment to a progression plan by claimants. The extension of profiling to almost all new claimants will be completed by end-2012
- Group engagement will also be made available, as appropriate, to all people profiled as at moderate risk of long-term unemployment and/or those who have been on the Live Register for at least three months
- The Department will ensure that those most at risk of long-term unemployment, such as those previously employed in the construction and retail sectors, will be a specific focus of these interventions over the next twelve months.

19. Specific targets have been set by the Minister for Social Protection for 2012 which will ensure that new clients signing-on to the Live Register will, as a minimum, benefit from a group engagement after three months and a referral to job placement/training after eighteen months. These targets are as follows:

| Table 1: Targets for Roll-out of PEX Profiling and Group Engagement in 2012 | | |
|--|---|------------------|
| Date | Coverage to be achieved (% of DSP local offices) | |
| | Profiling | Group Engagement |
| Apr 2012 | 40% | 95% |
| May 2012 | 50% | 95% |
| Sept 2012 | 80% | 95% |
| Dec 2012 | 95% | 95% |

20. Based on this rollout, and given current level of transactions and claims, the Department will ensure, as a minimum, the following throughput via the various types of employment support and assistance during 2012:

| Table 2: Minimum level of Client Engagement in 2012 | |
|--|---------|
| No of clients profiled | 150,000 |
| No of clients participating in Group Engagements at three months | 30,000 |
| No of one-to-one advice and guidance interview appointments | 130,000 |

Secondly, greater targeting of activation places and opportunities

21. In the Jobs Initiative the Government provided an additional 20,900 training, education and work experience places in 2011.
22. In 2012 the Government will invest in a high level of education, training, job placement and work experience places, with a large percentage of these focused on the unemployed.
23. The Department of Social Protection is committed to supporting over 85,000 beneficiaries of job placement, work experience and back to education schemes in 2012 as indicated in Table 3.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Community Employment | 22,300 |
| Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme | 12,000 |
| Back to Education Allowance Scheme | 25,000 |
| Jobs Initiative | 1,300 |
| Supported Employment | 4,500 |
| Job Clubs | 7,800 |
| Rural Social Scheme | 2,750 |
| TÚS | 5,000 |
| JobBridge | 5,000 |
| Total | 85,650 |

24. In 2011, the further education and training sectors provided almost 300,000¹ places. In addition, enrolments in the third level sector reached 161,000² and 5,900 places were offered through the Springboard initiative. The Department of Education and Skills will achieve the level of provision in 2012 as set out in Table 4. This is a very significant investment in the context of the current budgetary constraints.
25. These places will include provision for school leavers and self-referred clients, but the long-term unemployed will be a priority. In 2011, over 90% of those commencing FÁS training courses came from within the priority groups of long-term unemployed, low-skilled and under 35 year olds. 60% of Springboard participants have been unemployed for more than twelve months and one third of those for more than 24 months. Sixty per cent of the unemployed people on further education courses have been unemployed for more than twelve months.

¹ Includes all enrolments and not just annual new entrants.

² Includes all enrolments and not just annual new entrants; 17.5% of new entrants in 2011 came from the Live Register.

| | |
|--|----------------|
| FÁS/SOLAS places ³ | 75,000 |
| Training Education Support Grant (TESG) ⁴ | 12,000 |
| Skillnets | 8,000 |
| Labour Market Education and Training Fund | 6,500 |
| Further education places | 180,000 |
| Third level places | 170,000 |
| Springboard | 5,900 |
| Total | 457,400 |

26. At a time of reducing resources we are committed to maintaining the resourcing of these programmes. However, we will target these resources to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes with a view to delivering a greater focus on keeping the unemployed close to the labour market. We are reviewing training and further education options so that employment prospects for participants are improved. We will take into account advice from the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs in relation to growth areas with employment potential in the economy. We will re-allocate resources towards activation options which are closer to the labour market, since research has shown that the closer the activation measures are to the labour market the more likely they are to be effective. Some of these options are outlined at paragraph 28 overleaf.

27. In 2012 the Government will:

- Prioritise places, including in the further education and training sector, specifically for those on the Live Register for twelve months or more
- Improve data collection and impact evaluation to ensure delivery of this goal
- Develop and improve our existing employer services (e.g. those previously managed by FÁS) to encourage greater use of these services by employers and to maximise the flow-through from public sector training and support programmes to full time employment.

³ Currently funded through FÁS. On statutory establishment, these places will be funded through SOLAS. Includes ca. 40,000 full-time places

⁴ In 2012, these will be funded through the Department of Social Protection

28. Specific measures to improve the targeting of resources in 2012 include commitments to:

- Realign one-third of the places on *Community Employment* (CE) schemes towards shorter more focused active labour market interventions⁵. This will be undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Social Protection's wider review of Community Employment schemes currently underway. The Department is engaging with representatives of all the Community Employment schemes and is examining their budgets with the following two objectives:
 - to ensure that the people who participate in Community Employment Schemes get a quality experience, including appropriate training, which will enable them to be of service to their community
 - to enable participants to take up a job in the open labour market by developing the skills, work experience and confidence of participants
- Provide *conversion courses* to upskill/reskill unemployed people to meet skills shortages in new and emerging sectors. One example in this area is the range of new graduate ICT skills conversion programmes being rolled out from March 2012
- Provide €20 million from the National Training Fund for a new *Labour Market Education and Training Fund* for the long-term unemployed. This fund, which will be specifically targeted at the long-term unemployed, will deliver upwards of 6,500 places
- Complete roll-out of the *JobBridge* national internship scheme and carry-out an independent evaluation of its impact, including the progression of interns into permanent jobs
- Provide €10 million from the National Training Fund to support a further roll out of the *Springboard* initiative. The precise number of places to be provided will be determined by the results of an open competitive tendering process which will be conducted in the first quarter of 2012
- Widen and deepen *Local Authority support* for labour market training schemes, with the target for all county and city councils to have made placements under appropriate schemes by June 2012, with the aim of increasing participation levels from 1,000 in 2011 to 2,000 by mid-2013 with continued support from other agencies and stakeholders
- The *Local and Community Development Programme* (LCDP), which operates through Local Development Companies (LDCs) provide a range of employment services delivered to those who are identified as furthest from the labour market. In 2012, the targets for

⁵ This will not reduce the number of places committed to in Table 3

individuals engaging in labour market training will be in excess of 7,000 and the target for the number of individuals supported into employment and self employment will be 5,000.

Thirdly, incentivising the take-up of opportunities ...

29. The Government will ensure that the social protection system incentivises rather than blocks the return to work for unemployed people, including those with families, through ongoing reform of the system.
30. In Budget 2012 the Government exempted low-paid, part-time and seasonal workers with an annual income of less than €10,036 from the Universal Social Charge (increased from €4,004).
31. Reforms to the jobseekers' schemes are being introduced to ensure that people in part-time employment are incentivised to take up full-time employment as such opportunities become available. This includes rebasing the payment week for jobseeker's benefit on a five-day week rather than the previous six-day week basis where a person is working for part of the week. In addition, from January 2013 employment on a Sunday will be taken into account when determining the level of entitlement to jobseeker's payments. These changes will reduce the amount of jobseeker benefit payable to casual workers and thereby encourage workers to take up offers of full-time employment rather than combining part-time employment with social welfare payments.
32. The Department of Social Protection will build on their recent studies on working age payments, child income support and disability allowance, with a view to producing a comprehensive programme of reforms. This will ensure that social supports are targeted towards those on lower incomes, and ensure that work pays for welfare recipients, including development of a single social assistance working age payment over the next three years. The introduction of this Single Working Age Assistance Payment (SWAAP) will simplify the social welfare code and minimise any incentive which exists for people to migrate between welfare payments as opposed to seeking employment.
33. The Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare is examining issues around the operation and interaction of the tax and social welfare systems and may also recommend further measures to improve incentives to take up employment.
34. In addition, the Department of Social Protection will continue to implement its powers to sanction individuals who fail to engage with the 'Pathways to Work' approach. The Department will also review the current rules under which sanctions can be applied and will as necessary strengthen these rules through legislation to ensure that individuals must engage with 'Pathways to Work'.

Fourthly, incentivising employers to provide more jobs for people who are unemployed ...

35. The Government has introduced a range of reforms and incentives to support, protect and create jobs, including through the Jobs Initiative in May 2011 which among other measures reduced VAT rates for labour intensive sectors such as tourism. It also halved the lower rate of PRSI until end-2013 on jobs that pay up to €356 per week.
36. In addition, on 13 February the Government published a comprehensive 'Action Plan for Jobs'. This will ensure a whole of Government focus on protecting and creating jobs. It has identified a range of specific actions to drive job creation under a range of headings including:
- Building competitive advantage – Innovation, Costs, Skills & Infrastructure
 - Supporting indigenous start-ups
 - Assisting indigenous business to grow
 - Attracting inward entrepreneurial start-ups
 - Developing and deepening the impact of Foreign Direct Investment
 - Developing employment initiatives within the community
 - Exploiting sectoral opportunities
37. Job creation and protection was also a central priority underpinning Budget 2012. A range of measures were included across a number of sectors to support employment growth in multinational and indigenous companies, the agri-food sector, international financial services, research and development activity and start-up companies.
38. A particular priority is to ensure that employment opportunities go to people currently on the Live Register. For that reason, the Employer Job (PRSI) Incentive Scheme, which exempts employers from liability to pay their share of PRSI for certain employees for twelve months, is now being extended into 2012.
39. In addition, access to the scheme for employers will be simplified as follows:
- The scheme will be extended to cover the first 18 months of employment. The relief will also be extended to 18 months for any business set up under the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance or Short-term Enterprise Allowance that takes on additional members of staff
 - Eligibility criteria for the scheme will be amended to
 - allow time spent on the Work Placement Programme and JobBridge count as the qualifying period for the scheme

- allow persons on eligible payments undertake short SOLAS-funded courses without impacting on their eligibility
- allow time spent in casual employment count towards the qualifying period for the scheme, where a person is progressing to a new full-time job offered by a different employer
- allow linking periods for illness payments provided on qualifying payment immediately prior to commencement of employment.

40. These measures will assist employers take on additional staff from the many well qualified people on the live register.

Fifthly, reforming institutions to deliver better services to the unemployed ...

41. The establishment of a single “one stop shop” public employment and benefits service in the National Employment and Entitlement Service (NEES) with clear targets for rolling out a new approach which includes:

- better targeting of services through profiling those entering the live register
- responsibility for delivering a more regular engagement with those on the Live Register at appropriate intervals, specifically targeting and tailoring the approach in so far as it is possible. Interventions will include referral to group engagement, education and/or training and placement/work experience opportunities at appropriate intervals
- provision of recruitment and job-matching services for employers and the unemployed
- the provision of appropriate career guidance support as part of the engagement and referral system
- effective communication and marketing of NEES services to employers
- more meaningful engagement between the Department of Social Protection and employers both nationally and at a local level
- improved service provision and monitoring of effectiveness through the roll out of a public services card, and
- the implementation of sanctions against those who refuse to engage with the activation process.

42. Given the urgent need to address unemployment and to develop a flexible and responsive system, the Department of Social Protection is examining the potential of contracting with the private sector as a means of complementing its own resources where required to deliver service and build up/access new skills and competencies in areas such as case management of clients, employer engagement and job-matching/placement.

43. The job matching function will be critical. It is well-established that so-called 'frictions' in matching workers and jobs – including transaction costs, search times and the inherent difficulty in predicting exactly how a job will evolve or how a worker will perform in practice – mean that labour market outcomes can be inefficient.
44. In particular, the market may produce outcomes in which unemployment persists even though there are workers willing to accept employment at a wage level employers are willing to pay. As such, sophisticated search and matching mechanisms are important factors in moving jobseekers back to employment.
45. The other element where private sector participation may be appropriate is job activation of long-term unemployed on what is known as a 'payment by results' basis. A similar activation outsourcing approach in other countries, including the UK and Australia, has proven effective in supporting the unemployed secure employment.
46. Any such contracts will be rigorously designed and managed, will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 (PSA) and will also complement the existing arrangements with the community and voluntary sectors.
47. In addition, SOLAS and other agencies under the Department of Education and Skills (e.g. Higher Education Authority, Skillnets) will roll out a new approach through better targeting of services appropriate to the profile of the unemployed and the needs of the labour market. This will be based on ensuring the range of programmes to be funded is informed by a shared analysis of the available data in relation to the profile of unemployed people, including the Live Register, Quarterly National Household Survey and Department of Social Protection profiling data. As indicated already, this will also be informed by the current cohort of long-term unemployed – including those previously employed in the ca. 205,000 jobs lost in the construction and retail sectors – who will require focused interventions over the next twelve months. To implement this:
- at a strategic level, an agreed and structured consultation process will be established between NEES and SOLAS, as well as other stakeholders including the Higher Education Authority and Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, in relation to the development and delivery of education and training programmes to meet the needs of those on the Live Register and national skills needs
 - effective protocols between NEES, SOLAS and Vocational Education Committees/Local Education and Training Boards will be agreed to ensure that the NEES can refer unemployed people to suitable education and training opportunities at appropriate intervals in accordance with case management activity, and

- a commitment by SOLAS (and the other relevant Education agencies) to specifically provide adequate numbers of placements for those who have been unemployed for 12 months or more, with a particular emphasis on those previously employed in the construction sector.
48. Pending full establishment of both NEES and SOLAS as well as the completion of the amalgamation of Vocational Education Committees into Local Education and Training Boards, interim protocols have been agreed to facilitate effective collaboration.

Implementation

49. Delivery of this programme of change is a major element of the Programme for Government and is provided for within the terms of the Public Services Agreement. The relevant Departments and agencies have already instituted significant projects to design and implement the necessary organisation, staff, process, and IT system changes and to progress against these project plans.
50. Reflecting the importance the Government attaches to effective and joined-up implementation of 'Pathways to Work', the Government is establishing a new governance structure.
51. As part of these reforms, a Senior Official (Deputy Secretary) in the Department of Social Protection is being assigned specific responsibility for overseeing the implementation and interaction of various elements of the 'Pathways to Work' plan and reporting to Government in this regard.
52. This official and the Department will be responsible for:
- ensuring the development and rollout of the National Employment and Entitlements Service in the Department of Social Protection;
 - ensuring the development and implementation of effective arrangements for the delivery of appropriate further education and training interventions for priority NEES clients;
 - reporting on
 - engagement with NEES clients;
 - the response to, and outcome of, the referrals for training and education for clients of NEES.
53. The Department will also report to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs⁶ on a regular basis on progress in implementing the 'Pathways to Work' policy document.
54. In support of this governance for 'Pathways to Work':
- From an operational perspective:*
- An Inter-Departmental Programme Board will be established by end March 2012 to involve stakeholders and co-ordinate activities across the wider public service. The board will be chaired by the Department of Social Protection and will include representatives of the Departments of Education and Skills, Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, Public Expenditure & Reform, Taoiseach and the Director General of FÁS/SOLAS.

⁶ Through a dedicated sub-Committee.

- The Activation agenda, including the NEES /SOLAS relationship, will be a standing item on the agendas of the Management Board of the Department of Social Protection and Management Advisory Committee (MAC) in the Department of Education & Skills. The Department of Social Protection will have a representative on the MAC of the Department of Education and Skills.
- A Department of Social Protection representative will be on the SOLAS Board.
- There will be active engagement with the stakeholders (including, in particular, employers) of the Department of Social Protection/NEES and the Department of Education & Skills/SOLAS as services develop.

From a strategic perspective:

An Advisory group on working age policy (with a specific focus on activation) will be established before the end of March 2012 to include a range of international and domestic policy experts. This will meet quarterly and report to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs.

23 February 2012

Appendix 1

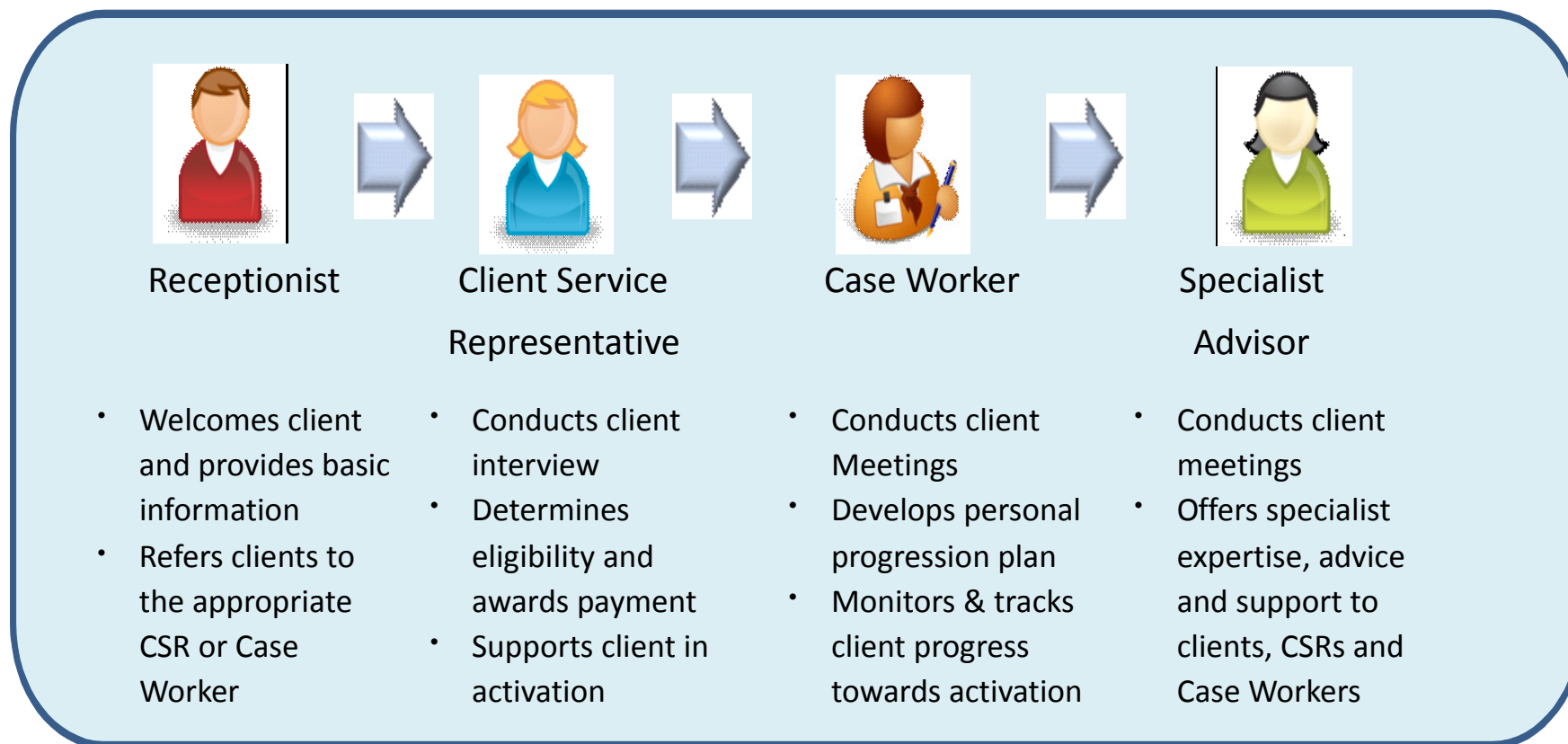
Pathways to Work

Future Model of Operations
Illustrative Case Examples

Case Example - Barry, 42, recently unemployed

Barry is a 42 year old married man with two young children, living in Dublin. He has over 15 years experience working as an IT consultant in a small practice. The firm recently went into liquidation and Barry is about to sign on for Jobseeker's Benefit while he looks for a new job. He knows he must be eligible as he has been paying PRSI for many years.

Due to his experience and contacts, Barry is strongly placed to find work in a new practice or as a self employed agent. However, while he assesses his options, he needs financial aid for his mortgage and family in the interim, while also availing of the job search options NEES can provide him.



Future Model of Operations – Client Service Functions

How the NEES Team will Manage Barry's Case...

1 Service Request: *"I am recently unemployed and need income support while I find a new job"*



Future Model of Operations

NEES will have a **user-friendly, web service** for clients providing coherent, structured information that is easy to navigate. The NEES web service will allow Barry to register and enter his personal information. It will tell Barry what documents he should bring with him for his appointment.

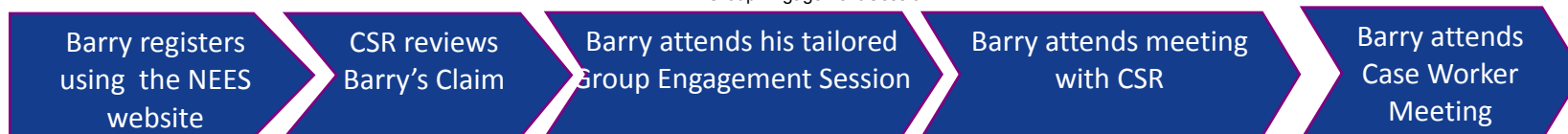
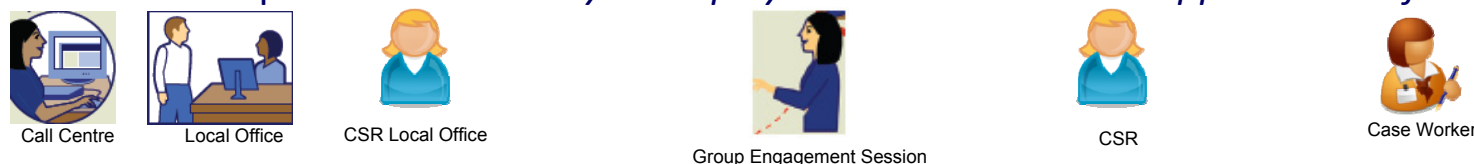
A NEES CSR reviews Barry's claim and uses the **customer profiling tool to determine his likelihood of finding a job**. Barry is profiled as having a high probability of finding a job. Therefore he requires minimal intervention and initially only **needs to attend a group information session**. The CSR **explains benefit entitlements to Barry and puts Barry's benefits into payment**.

NEES system will flag Barry as still receiving benefits **after 4 months and he will be called to an interview** where he will be asked for proof that he is genuinely seeking work. He will also be offered assistance in job search. On a two monthly basis **(6/8/10 months) Barry will again be contacted if he is still on the Live Register**.

After 12 months Barry is flagged again in the NEES management system. Barry is now **required to participate in a more detailed engagement with the NEES case management team**. The team will **assess whether Barry is fulfilling his responsibility to look for work**. The team may **direct Barry to specific work experience/training programmes**.

Looking at this from Barry's Perspective...

1 Service Request: "I am recently unemployed and need income support while I find a new job"



Customer journey steps

Barry logs on to the **NEES website** to see how he can apply for Job seeker's support. **He registers and applies online.** Barry is given an appointment to come to his local office.

Barry attends his local office and brings all required documentation. Barry meets a CSR who evaluates his situation. The **CSR completes customer profiling and decides entitlements.** Barry's profile indicates that he is near to the labour market. Barry does not need immediate referral to a case worker but **he is required to attend a group information session** if still on the live register after three months.

Barry appears on a report **after 4 months**, that he is still receiving benefit. Barry is asked for evidence that he is genuinely seeking work and is **offered access to support services.** Barry is reminded about the **possibility of sanctioning** if he is not seen to be genuinely seeking work. A similar process is triggered at **two monthly intervals.**

Barry appears on a report **after 12 months** that he is still receiving benefits. Barry is contacted by a CSR and asked to **attend a one-to-one meeting** with a member of the NEES case management team. Barry meets a NEES case worker who is knowledgeable about what NEES services are best suited to him, including training and vacancy opportunities. The case worker assists Barry with a **personal action plan**, and will refer him to specialised services and/or specific work experience/training programmes if deemed appropriate.

Future Model of Operations

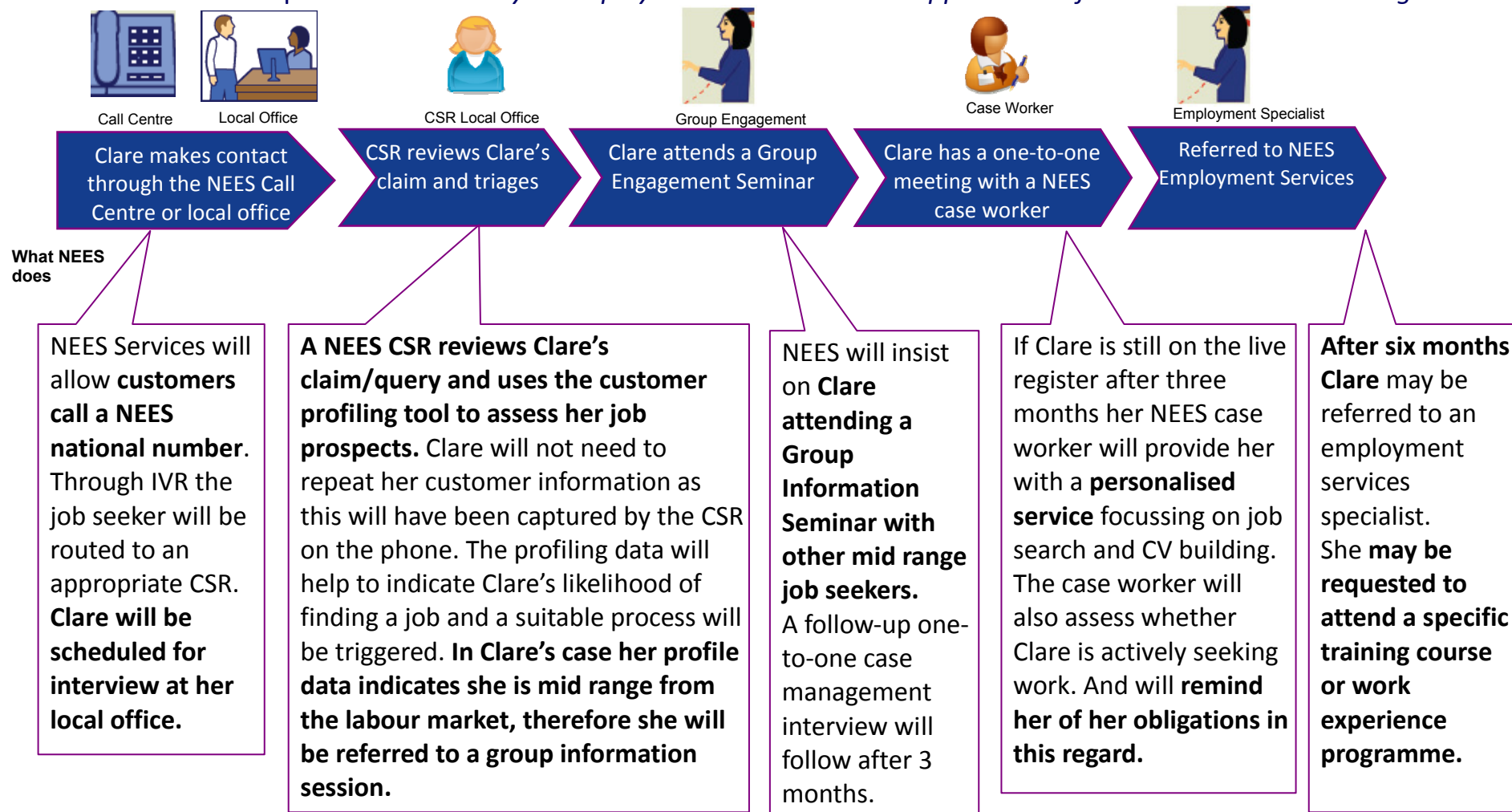
Case Example - Clare, 39, recently unemployed

Clare is a 39 year old lone parent who lost her job working in a hotel that unfortunately went out of business. She lives in a rural area of the country.

Clare has good PC skills, as well as experience working in an office environment and could apply these skills in a number of business sectors.

2 How the NEES Team will Manage Clare's Case...

Service Request: "I am recently unemployed and need income support and information about re-training"

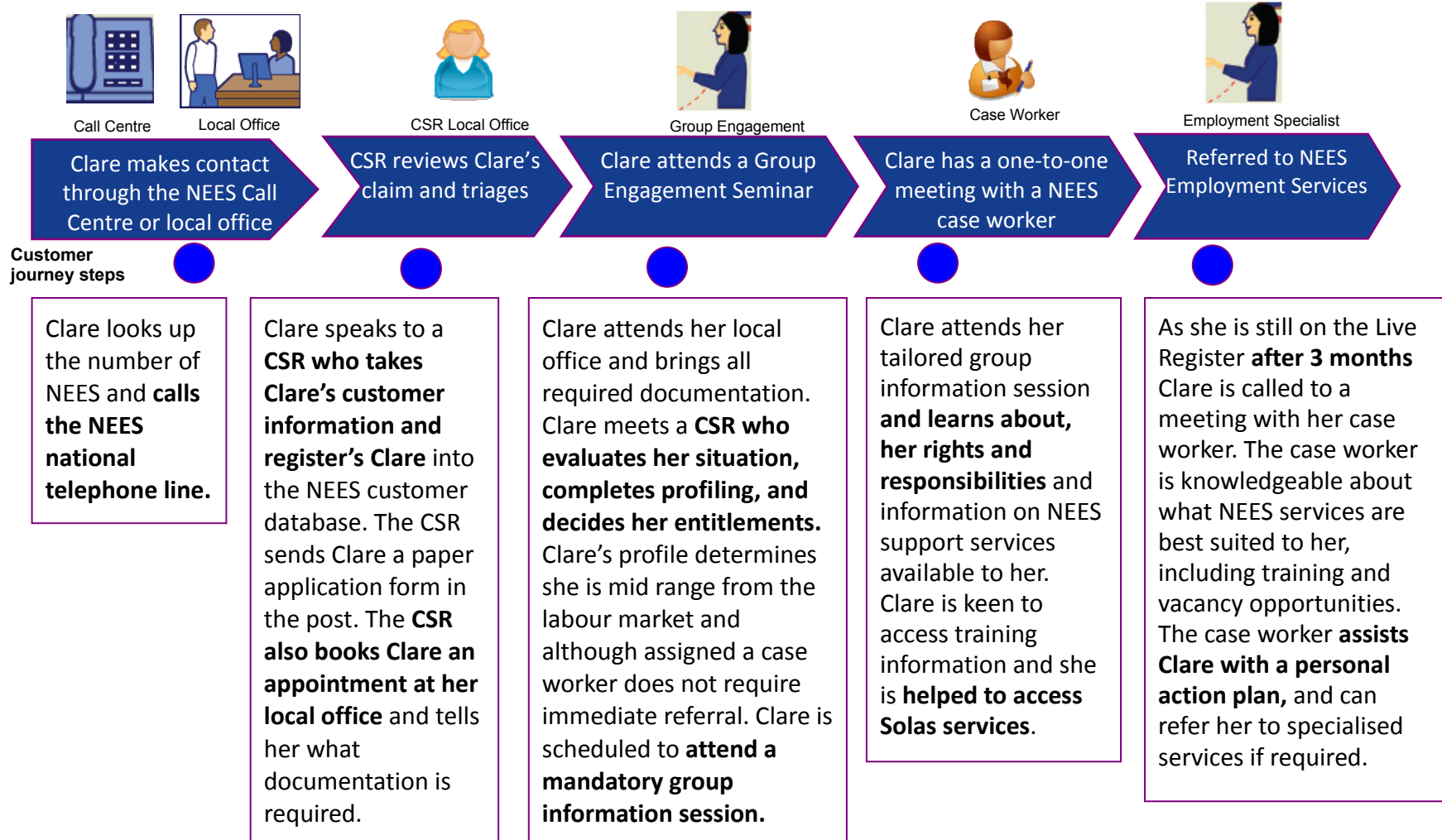


Future Model of Operations

Looking at this from Clare's Perspective...

2

Service Request: "I am recently unemployed and need income support and information about re-training"



Future Model of Operations

Case Example - Tom, 24, recently unemployed

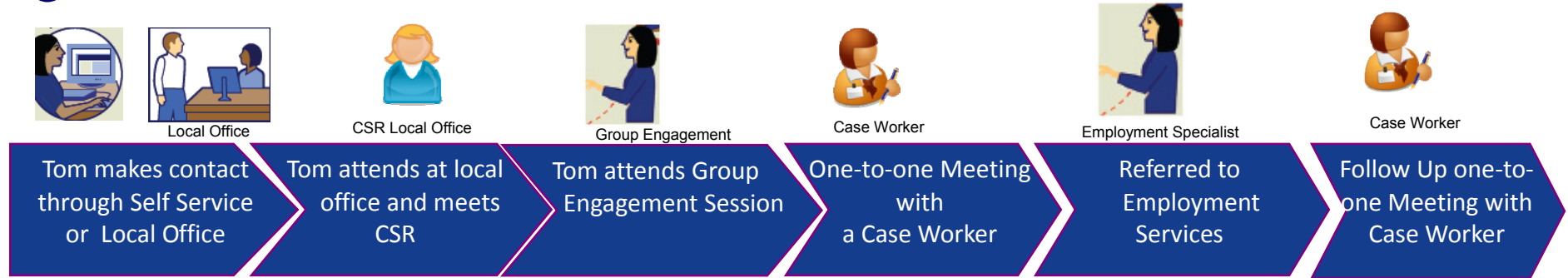
Tom is 24 and recently lost his job on a building site in Cork city. Tom left school at 16 and has had spells of unemployment at different stages.

Tom has no certifications. Tom is confused about what services are available to him.

How the NEES Team will Manage Tom's Case...

3

Service Request: "I am recently unemployed and need income support"



What NEES does

Future Model of Operations

NEES Services will allow customers to log on to a secure NEES Website and register online. **When registering customers will be told what personal documents are required and how to book an appointment at their local NEES Office.** Alternatively a customer can walk in to a local office.

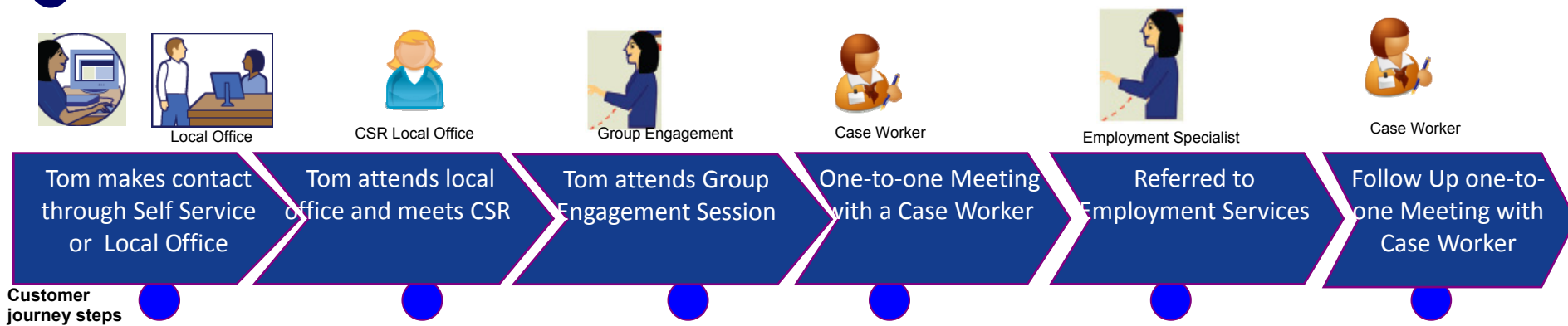
A NEES CSR reviews Tom's claim/query. As Tom entered some data online, the CSR does not duplicate by asking the same questions. **The CSR will use the customer profiling tool to assess Tom's likelihood of finding a job. Depending on the profile a suitable process will be triggered.** As Tom's profile indicates he is far from the labour market **Tom's case will be highlighted for his case worker on the case management team.**

The **case worker** will provide a **personalised service** and assist the customer to navigate the NEES options. The first responsibility of the NEES case worker is to assist the customer create a **progression plan** and consider **work experience/ training /skilling options**. A NEES case worker may refer the customer to a **specialist** if and when required.

The case management team have **up to date information** about Tom through a **case management system** Tom is **automatically scheduled for frequent attention** based on his profiling score.

Looking at this from Tom's Perspective...

3 Service Request: "I am recently unemployed and need income support"



Future Model of Operations

Tom wants to apply for jobseekers support but is not sure how the process works. **Tom logs onto the NEES website.** Tom navigates his way to the 'apply online' section and enters his mandatory information as required. Tom determines that he is eligible for jobseekers allowance and the system allows him to **book an appointment at his local office.**

Tom attends his interview at his local office and brings all of his required documentation. **Tom meets a customer service representative (CSR) who evaluates his situation.** The CSR completes customer profiling, checks entitlements, makes the benefit award decision. **Based on his profile Tom is assigned a Case Worker and told he has to attend a mandatory group engagement session.**

Tom attends a tailored group engagement session for NEES clients who are far from the labour market.

Tom meets with a case worker who explains his **rights and responsibilities.** Together with his case worker he **writes a personal action plan** and discusses progression opportunities. His case worker tells him about additional services that may benefit him including training and employment services.

Tom's case worker refers him to a specialist and books the appointment for him. Tom meets with an **employment specialist** who assists with the job matching process. He may be **referred directly to specific work experience or training programmes.**

Tom's case worker **contacts him on a regular basis** to assess how his progression plan is going and **answers any questions.** His case worker reminds him of his obligations to find work or there will be a risk that his benefits may be reduced as he **will be sanctioned.**