An Bille um Chaighdeáin in Oifigí Poiblí (Leasú), 2023
Standards in Public Office (Amendment) Bill 2023

Meabhrán Míníúcháin
Explanatory Memorandum
Purpose of the Bill

This Bill seeks to make amendments to both the Standards in Public Office Act 2001 and the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 to improve the overall functioning of the Ethics Framework. It achieves this by introducing several reforms that the Standards in Public Office Commission ("the Commission") itself has called for.

Provisions of the Bill

Section 1 is the short title and commencement section.

Section 2 is the definitions section.

Section 3 amends Section 23 of the Act of 1995 (as amended by section 7 of the Act of 2001) which allows for the Standards in Public Office Commission to initiate its own investigations into possible contraventions of the Ethics Framework without the requirement for a complaint to be referred.

Section 4 inserts a new section (5A) into the Act of 2001, entitled ‘Suspected conventions’.

Section 5 amends the Act of 2001 by way of the insertion of a new section requiring the Standards in Public Office Commission’s Annual Report to be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas, changing the current situation whereby the report must first be presented to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform before it can be laid before the Oireachtas.

Section 6 amends section 6 of the Act of 1995 to make the failure to disclose registerable interests an offence, subject to a summary conviction, a fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.

Section 7 amends the Second Schedule to the Act of 1995 to expand the definition of “registerable interests” to include liabilities in excess of a specified amount, excluding those related to the family home.

Deputies Mairéad Farrell and Pat Buckley,
Feabhra, 2023.