

## **2. Benefits and Entitlements**

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## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### Introduction

#### Your Rights and Entitlements in Ireland

This section outlines your benefits and entitlements when returning to Ireland. Some payments are subject to the Habitual Residence Condition and many returning Irish emigrants have experienced great difficulty in applying for social assistance, therefore it is very important that you familiarise yourself with the Habitual Residence Condition. Please read **Factsheet 2A** for more information.

**This is a guide. It is not a legal document.**

#### Social Welfare

The Department of Social and Family Affairs' mission is to promote a caring society through ensuring access to income support and related services, enabling active participation, promoting social inclusion and supporting families.

The Department covers a range of income supports such as the provision for unemployment, illness, maternity, widowhood, retirement and old age. Other provisions include employment supports for jobseekers and people at work on low pay and a range of secondary benefits such as free travel for pensioners.

If you wish to contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the contact details are:

Department of Social and Family Affairs,  
Information Section,  
LoCall: 1890 66 22 44  
Web: [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

#### Payments are divided into 3 categories:

- 1. Contributory:** These payments are related to social insurance contributions while in employment
- 2. Non-Contributory:** These are means-tested payments made to people who do not have enough contributions to qualify for a contributory benefit payment or who have used up their entitlement.
- 3. Universal:** These do not depend on insurance contributions or a means test i.e. Free Travel.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2A. Habitual Residence Condition

Habitual Residence is a condition which you must satisfy in order to qualify for certain social welfare assistance payments and Child Benefit. This condition took effect from 1 May 2004 and affects all applicants regardless of nationality.

#### Habitual Residence – What is it and how it might affect me?

If you wish to qualify for any Social Assistance payments you must prove that you are habitually resident in Ireland or any part of the Common Travel Area. This means that you must show you have a proven close link to Ireland or other parts of the Common Travel Area. For example if you have lived in Ireland or other parts of the Common Travel Area all of your life, you will satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition. The Common Travel Area is Ireland, Great Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

#### How can I prove that I am Habitually Resident?

There are 5 factors that are considered:

1. Your residence in Ireland (or the Common Travel Area)
2. Your reasons for leaving Ireland (or the Common Travel Area)
3. Your employment record in Ireland and abroad
4. Your main centre of interest (i.e. do you have close family in Ireland? A home? A job? Friends?)
5. Your future intention to remain in Ireland (have you arranged a job? Have you bought a house? Signed a rental agreement?)

#### Who will be considered to be Habitually Resident?

If you satisfy the 5 factors above, you will be considered habitually resident.

You might be considered habitually resident if:

You have lived in Ireland or the Common Travel Area all your life

**Or**

You have been living in Ireland for the last 2 years, have worked in Ireland and you intend to continue living in Ireland (making it your permanent residence)

**Or**

You have lived in the Common Travel Area for 2 years and then you move to Ireland and intend to make it your permanent home

**The Common Travel area is Ireland, Great Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.**

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2A. Habitual Residence Condition

#### What payments are subject to the Habitual Residence Condition?

- Jobseekers Allowance
- State (Non-Contributory) Pension
- Blind Pension
- Widow/Widower's (Non-contributory) Pension
- Orphans (Non-Contributory) Pensions
- Carer's Allowance
- Disability Allowance
- Supplementary Welfare Allowance\*
- Family Benefits\* (One Parent Family Payment, Child Benefit)

*\*An EEA national who is employed or self-employed in Ireland paying PRSI contributions is entitled to Irish payments, which include Supplementary Welfare Allowance and Family Benefits under EU Law. You should contact your local Health Centre or the Department of Social Welfare for more information.*

#### How does the Habitual Residence Condition affect my claim for social assistance in Ireland?

If you do not satisfy the requirements for Habitual Residency, you will not be entitled to any social assistance payments. You must be either living in Ireland or the Common Travel Area for a continuous two-year period before you can apply for a social assistance payment in Ireland or you must be able to prove a permanent link with Ireland.

#### Returning emigrants – who will be affected?

Those returning from anywhere in the Common Travel Area will not be affected. Anyone else may be affected. In answer to a Dáil Question the then Minister, Mary Coughlan TD, stated (with regard to returning emigrants) "...that it is expected that the vast majority will be able to prove habitual residence without difficulty because of (for example) their strong family ties with Ireland and previous residence in the State...." It was not the intention of the 'Habitual Residence Condition' to cause difficulties for Irish people wanting to return home.

#### What if I have been deported home to Ireland?

If you have been deported home to Ireland from a country outside the EU, you can make a case that you satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition, as you are unable to return to your previous domicile.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2A. Habitual Residence Condition

**If you are coming from outside the Common Travel Area you may experience initial difficulties.** To make things easier for yourself you should gather as much documentation as you can before returning to Ireland.

**Coming from a country outside the Common Travel Area** – You would be advised, when leaving a country outside the Common Travel Area to come to Ireland with as much documentation as possible that shows you are severing your links with that country – you will need proof that you are transferring your pension to Ireland, details showing the sale of your property, closing your bank accounts or giving up your tenancy. All of this documentation will be useful to show habitual residence in Ireland in the event of you needing to apply for a range of benefits from the Irish State.

**Coming from a Common Travel Area country** – If you have spent all your life in the Common Travel Area before claiming Benefits you will satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition. You should quote your UK National Insurance number to help with this. Your residency may be verified by your passport, your employment records, bank statement, utility bills etc.

#### **What if I do not satisfy the 'Habitual Residence Condition'?**

If you do not satisfy the 'Habitual Residence Condition' you may qualify for a payment called "Exceptional Needs Payment" under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme, to meet a once off exceptional or urgent need. The Health Services Executive will consider your case and decide if you are eligible for this payment. You can get more information on Supplementary Welfare Allowance from your local Health Centre or the Department of Social and Family Affairs or please read **Factsheet 2-B**.

#### **Where can I find out more information?**

If you need more information you should contact your local social welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs. Your local telephone directory will have a listing of social welfare offices in your area.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2B. Supplementary Welfare Allowance

#### Supplementary Welfare Allowance

Supplementary Welfare Allowance provides a basic weekly allowance to eligible people who have little or no income; however you must satisfy a means test. People on low income may also qualify for a weekly supplement under this scheme to meet certain special needs. In addition payments can also be made in respect of urgent or exceptional needs. This scheme is administered by the Health Service Executive (HSE) through the Community Welfare Officers on behalf of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### How do I qualify for Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA)?

You will normally qualify for Supplementary Welfare Allowance if you satisfy the following conditions:

- You are living in the state
- You satisfy the means test
- You have applied for any other benefits or allowances
- You satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition (please read **Factsheet 2-A**)
- You have registered for work with FÁS if you are of working age.

You will **not normally** qualify for Supplementary Welfare Allowance if you are:

- In full-time work (working for more than 30 hours per week)
- In full-time education
- Involved in a trade dispute (You may claim Supplementary Welfare Allowance for your dependants).

#### What is the means test?

A means test is a way of checking if you (and/or your spouse) have enough income to support yourself and what amount of payment, if any, you may qualify for. The following are the main items taken into account for the means test:

- All cash income, including most social welfare and Health Centre payments, except Child Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance and Blind Welfare Allowance
- The value of any benefit or privilege, for example, free board and lodging if you under the age of 24
- The value of investments, savings (but not PRSA's) or property (but not the value of your own home).

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2B. Supplementary Welfare Allowance

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read Factsheet 2-P to find out the maximum amount of Supplementary Welfare Allowance you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

If I am eligible for Supplementary Welfare Allowance, what other payments may I get?

- Basic Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA)
- Rent Supplement or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- Exceptional Needs Payments
- Urgent Needs Payments

You may also be eligible for:

- Medical Card or GP Visit Card (Please See Factsheet 4)

#### How do I qualify for Rent Supplement?

You may be eligible for rent supplement if:

- You satisfy the qualifying conditions **AND**
- At the time you took on the tenancy originally you could afford the rent **AND**
- You have a reasonable expectation that you would be able to afford the rent in the future **AND**
- You have experienced a substantial change in your circumstances such as illness or loss of employment leading to an inability to pay the rent.

You must also satisfy **one** of the following criteria:

- You must be assessed by a housing authority as having a housing need
- You must be regarded by a housing authority as being homeless
- You must be a tenant of accommodation provided by approved bodies under the Capital Assistance Scheme
- A person aged 65 years or over
- You must be in receipt of Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension, Blind Pension or an equivalent type payment from another EEA (European Economic Area) country
- The Health Services Executive must decide that you are eligible for the supplement.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2B. Supplementary Welfare Allowance

#### How do I qualify for an Exceptional Needs Payment?

You may be paid an Exceptional Needs Payment to assist with essential once-off expenditure in exceptional circumstances, for example funeral expenses or some other unforeseen expense. Payment is at the discretion of the Community Welfare Officer (CWO).

#### How do I qualify for an Urgent Needs Payment?

You may be granted an Urgent Needs payment even if you are not normally eligible to receive assistance under the Supplementary Welfare Scheme. Payments are normally made to assist with immediate needs such as food, clothing in the aftermath of a fire or flood. Depending on your circumstances you may have to pay back all or part of what you have been paid, for example, if you are working or once an insurance claim has been settled.

#### How long can I claim Supplementary Welfare Allowance?

Supplementary Welfare Allowance is payable for as long as you satisfy the qualifying conditions.

#### How do I apply?

You should apply for Supplementary Welfare Allowance to the Community Welfare Officer (CWO) at your local Health Centre as soon as the need arises.

#### What do I need to provide?

You should bring the following:

- Your PPS number (formerly called RSI number)
- ID (Birth Certificate or passport)
- Evidence of any income
- A note from your local social welfare office and your last pay slip if you have just applied for Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance
- Your Child Benefit Book or Birth Certificates for any children you may be claiming for if you do not have PPS numbers for them
- Your rent book if you require assistance paying your rent
- A statement giving details of your mortgage interest payments if you are applying for help with your mortgage interest.

If you require further information you should contact the Community Welfare Officer (CWO) in your local Health Centre.

## **2. Benefits and Entitlements**

### **2B. Supplementary Welfare Allowance**

#### **What if I do not get Supplementary Welfare Allowance?**

You have the right to appeal the decision if you are not satisfied with the outcome. If you wish to make an appeal you should write to the Appeals Officer in your local Health Centre.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2C. Payments for the Unemployed

There are two categories of payments for unemployed people: **Jobseekers Benefit (JB)** and **Jobseekers Allowance (JA)**. To qualify for either of these you must be available for, capable of and genuinely looking for full time work.

#### Jobseekers Benefit (JB)

##### How do I qualify?

This payment is based on insurance contributions paid while in employment in Ireland or another EEA (European Economic Area) or EU (European Union) country. You will qualify for Jobseekers Benefit if:

- You are less than 66 years of age
- You have suffered a loss in employment
- You are fully unemployed for at least 3 days in any period of any 6 consecutive days
- You have paid enough social insurance contributions
- You are capable of taking up full time work
- You are available for and genuinely seeking work

##### How many social insurance contributions do I need?

You must have:

- 52 weeks PRSI contributions paid since first starting work and 39 weeks PRSI contributions paid or credited in the Relevant Tax Year

**Or**

- 26 weeks PRSI paid in the Relevant Tax Year and 26 weeks PRSI paid in the tax year before

The Relevant Tax Year for a claim is the second last complete tax year before the start of the Benefit Year, e.g., if you are making a claim in 2008, the Relevant Tax Year is 2006.

##### What if I paid my contributions in another EU country?

If you paid your social insurance contributions in a country covered by EC regulations and you have paid at least one full rate PRSI contribution since your return to Ireland, you may combine your insurance record in that country with your Irish PRSI contributions to help you qualify for Jobseekers Benefit.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2C. Payments for the Unemployed

If you have obtained **Form E301** from the countries in which you were previously employed, you must send it with your application to the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The **E301 Form** is a record of the social security contributions you have paid while employed in countries covered by EC Regulations and will speed up the processing of your application. If you don't have **Form E301** from the relevant countries, the Department of Social and Family Affairs will obtain the form for you.

#### What countries are covered by EC regulations?

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, The UK (including the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands).

**Note: Since June 1 2002 E.C. regulations apply with certain modifications to migrant workers in or from Switzerland.**

#### What if I paid my social insurance contributions outside the EU?

If you paid your social insurance contributions in a country outside the European Union (EU) you will **not** be able to use these to qualify for Jobseekers Benefit.

#### Can I transfer my Jobseekers Benefit to Ireland?

Yes, provided you paid your insurance contributions in a country covered by EC Regulations. If you have been in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit in a country covered by EC regulations for at least 4 weeks immediately before you return to Ireland you can transfer your benefits for up to 78 days. You must inform your local office in the country you are leaving at least 4 weeks before you return to Ireland so that they can make the necessary arrangements. You must register in Ireland within 7 days of your return. For more information contact the International Records Section in the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the **maximum** amount of Jobseekers Benefit you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2C. Payments for the Unemployed

#### How long can I claim Jobseekers Benefit?

You can claim Jobseekers Benefit for a maximum of 390 days provided you have enough social insurance contributions. If you have less than 260 contributions paid overall, your claim will be limited to 312 days.

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

If you are in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit, you may also be entitled to:

- Rent Supplement or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Fuel Allowance
- Smokeless Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- School Book Grant Scheme

You may also be entitled to:

- Medical Card or GP Visit Card (Please read Factsheet 4)

#### How do I apply?

To apply you must register (sign-on) with the Department of Social and Family Affairs at your local Social Welfare Office. You need to apply straight away as any delay may mean that you lose out on your full entitlements. For more information contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### What do I need to provide?

You need to bring:

- P45 and P60 Forms
- Proof of your identity (Long Version of your Birth Certificate or passport)
- Proof of your address

#### What if I do not qualify?

If your claim for Jobseekers Benefit is refused, you have the right to appeal the decision. If you still do not qualify (by not satisfying the PRSI Conditions), you can apply for Jobseekers Allowance (JA).

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2C. Payments for the Unemployed

#### Jobseekers Allowance (JA)

If you do not qualify for Jobseekers Benefit, you may be eligible for Jobseekers Allowance.

#### How do I qualify?

To qualify you must

- Be less than 66 years of age
- Be fully unemployed for at least 3 days in any period of any 6 consecutive days
- Be capable of taking up full time work
- Be available for and genuinely seeking full-time employment
- Satisfy the Habitual Residence Test (Please read **Factsheet 2-A**).

#### What is the means test?

A means test is a way of checking if you (and/or your spouse) have enough income to support yourself and what amount of payment, if any, you may qualify for. The following are the main items taken into account for the means test:

- Cash income, including most social welfare and Health Centre payments, except Child Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance and Blind Welfare Allowance
- The value of any benefit or privilege, for example, free board and lodging if you are under the age of 25
- The value of investments, savings or property (but not the value of your own home)
- Maintenance paid to you if you are separated or divorced.

#### Can I transfer my Jobseekers Allowance?

No. It is not possible to transfer Jobseekers Allowance.

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the **maximum** amount of Jobseekers Allowance you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2C. Payments for the Unemployed

#### How long can I claim Jobseekers Allowance?

You can claim Jobseekers Allowance for as long as you need to as long as you satisfy all the requirements.

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

If you are in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance, you may also be entitled to:

- Rent Supplement or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Fuel Allowance
- Smokeless Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- School Book Grant Scheme

You may also be entitled to

- Medical Card or GP Visit Card (Please read **Factsheet 4**)

#### How do I apply?

You must call into your local Social Welfare office to make a claim for Jobseekers Allowance. For more information on what office you should call to please contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### What do I need to bring with me?

You will need to bring:

- Details of availability and efforts to find work
- P45 (If you have been previously employed)
- Child dependant details
- Proof of your identity (long version Birth Certificate/Passport)
- Proof of your address

#### What if I do not qualify?

If your claim for Jobseekers Allowance is refused, you have the right to appeal the decision. If you still do not qualify, you may be entitled to other payments. You should contact your Community Welfare Officer (CWO) in your local Health Centre or you can contact your local social welfare office for further information.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2D. Payments for the People who are Sick or People with a Disability

There are a number of both social insurance (i.e. PRSI contribution based) and means tested payments for people who are sick or who have a disability. **Illness Benefit** and **Invalidity Pension** are based on PRSI contributions. Illness Benefit is intended for those with a short-term illness but it can be paid in the long-term. Invalidity Pension is a long-term payment. **Disability Allowance** and **Blind Pension** are long-term means tested payments. There is also the **Occupational Injuries Benefit Scheme** that applies to work related injuries and diseases.

#### Illness Benefit (IB)

Illness Benefit is a payment made by the Department of Social and Family Affairs to those in Ireland who are aged under 66, incapable of work because of illness and who have enough social insurance contributions.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify for Illness Benefit if:

- You are unable to work due to illness
- You are less than 66 years of age
- You have enough PRSI contributions

#### How many social insurance contributions do I need?

You must have:

- At least 52 weeks PRSI contributions paid since you first started work **and** 39 weeks PRSI contributions paid or credited in the relevant tax year (13 of these must be paid contributions)
- Or**
- 26 weeks PRSI contributions paid in the relevant tax year **and** 26 weeks PRSI contributions paid in the tax year immediately before the relevant tax year.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2D. Payments for People who are Sick or People with a Disability

If you do not have 13 paid contributions in the relevant tax year, you may use the following years instead:

- The two tax years before the relevant tax year
- The last complete tax year

**Or**

- The current tax year

The Relevant Tax Year for a claim is the second last complete tax year before the start of the Benefit Year, e.g., if you are making a claim in 2008, the Relevant Tax year is 2006.

#### **What if I paid my social insurance contributions in another EU country?**

If you paid your social contributions in a country covered by EC Regulations and you currently live in Ireland, the country in which you were last employed is generally responsible for paying your Illness Benefit. You must send your application for Illness Benefit to the Department of Social and Family Affairs. They will arrange to send it to the relevant country and will then tell you if you must take further action regarding your application. Under EC Regulations, the country in which you were last insurably employed is generally responsible for paying Illness Benefit.

If you paid your social insurance contributions in a country covered by EC regulations and you have paid at least one full rate PRSI contribution since your return to Ireland, you may combine your insurance record in that country with your Irish PRSI contributions to help you qualify for benefit.

If you have obtained **Form E104** from the countries in which you were previously employed, you must send it with your application to the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The **E104 Form** is a record of the social security contributions you have paid while employed in countries covered by EC Regulations and will speed up the processing of your application. If you don't have **Form E104** from the relevant countries, the Department of Social and Family Affairs will obtain the form for you.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2D. Payments for People who are Sick or People with a Disability

#### What countries are covered by EC regulations?

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus South), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, The UK (including the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands).

**Note: Since June 1 2002 EC Regulations apply with certain modifications to migrant workers in or from Switzerland.**

#### What if I paid my social insurance contributions outside the EU?

If you paid your social insurance contributions in a country outside the European Union (EU) you will not be able to use these contributions to qualify for Illness Benefit.

#### Can I transfer my Illness Benefit to Ireland?

It may be possible to transfer your Illness Benefit. You should contact your social welfare office in the country from which you are returning.

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the **maximum** amount of Illness Benefit you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

#### How long can I claim Illness Benefit?

If you have 260 weeks PRSI contributions paid since you first started work, you may get Illness Benefit for as long as you are unfit for work and you are under age 66. If you have between 39 and 259 weeks PRSI contributions paid, you may qualify for Illness Benefit for up to 52 weeks. At the end of this period, you must get an extra 13 paid contributions (or a lower number if it brings the total contributions up to 260) to re-qualify for Illness Benefit.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2D. Payments for the Unemployed

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

Under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance you may be entitled to:

- A Diet Supplement
- Exceptional Needs Payments
- A Heating Supplement
- A Rent or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Urgent Needs Payments
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- Smokeless Fuel Allowance

You may also be entitled to apply for

- Medical Card or GP Visit Card (See **Factsheet 4**)
- Long Term Illness Card (See **Factsheet 4**)

For more information contact your Community Welfare Officer in your local Health Centre.

#### How do I apply?

The application form is available from your doctor. You must complete this form and send it to your local social welfare office or to the Department of Social and Family Affairs, P.O. Box 1650, Dublin 1. If you have any questions, you should contact your local social welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### What if I do not qualify?

If you do not qualify you can appeal the decision. If you still do not qualify, you may be eligible for:

- Supplementary Welfare Allowance (See **Factsheet 2-B**)
- Disability Allowance
- Occupational Injury Benefit
- Disablement Benefit
- Invalidity Pension.

You should contact your local social welfare office or Community Welfare Officer (CWO) in your local Health Centre for further information.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2D. Payments for People who are sick or People with a Disability

#### Disability Allowance (DA)

You may get this payment if you have a disability that is expected to last at least one year.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify for Disability Allowance if:

- You are aged between 16 to 65
- You satisfy a means test
- You satisfy Habitual Residence Condition (Please read **Factsheet 2-A**)
- You have an injury, disease or physical or mental disability that is expected to continue for at least one year.

#### What is the means test?

A means test is a way of checking if you (and/or your spouse) have enough income to support yourself and what amount of payment, if any, you may qualify for. The following are the main items taken into account for the means test:

- Cash income belonging to you or your spouse or partner
- The value of any savings (but not PRSA's), investments, shares or land The value of any property (but not the value of your own home)
- Maintenance paid to you if you are deserted or separated

#### Can I transfer my Disability Allowance to another EU country?

No. It is not possible to transfer Disability Allowance.

#### I am in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in the UK. Can I transfer it to Ireland?

If you were awarded DLA before 1st June 1992 you might be able to transfer this benefit to Ireland or any other EU country. For further information you should contact the: Disabilities Benefits Unit, Warbreck House, Warbreck Hill Road, Blackpool, FY2 OYE, UK.

If you were awarded DLA after 1st June 1992 you cannot transfer the payment with you to Ireland.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2D. Payments for People who are sick or People with a Disability

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the **maximum** amount of Disability Allowance you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

#### How long can I claim Disability Allowance?

You can claim Disability Allowance for as long as you need to, provided that you satisfy all the qualifying conditions.

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

If you are eligible for Disability Allowance you are automatically entitled to a free travel pass. You may also be entitled to the following:

- Living Alone Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2-M**)
- Fuel Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2-N**)
- Household Benefits (Please read **Factsheet 2-K**)
- Rent and Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Medical Card or GP Visit Card (Please read **Factsheet 4**)
- Long-term Illness Book (Please read **Factsheet 4**)

#### How do I apply?

You must complete Form **DA1** and send it to the address clearly marked on the form. For more information contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs or your local social welfare office.

#### What do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- Your birth certificate (long version only)
- Your spouse or partner's birth certificate
- Your PPS number
- Your spouse and dependent children's PPS numbers
- Your marriage certificate
- Statement from your accountant if you or your spouse/partner are self-employed
- Your spouse or partner's recent payslip or P60 if you are in employment
- Statements from financial institutions (such as a bank or post office)

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2D. Payments for People who are sick or People with a Disability

#### What if I do not qualify?

If you do not qualify you can appeal the decision. If you still do not qualify you should apply for Supplementary Welfare Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2-B**). For further information you should contact your Community Welfare Officer (CWO) in your local Health Centre or you should contact your local social welfare office.

#### Occupational Injury Benefit

You may get this payment if you are ill due to an accident at work or have a prescribed occupational disease (Self-employed people do not qualify). You should contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs for more information.

#### Disablement Benefit

You may get this if you suffer loss of physical or mental faculty because of an occupational injury or a prescribed occupational disease. Contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs for more information.

#### Invalidity Pension

You may get this if you are ill and unfit for work and are likely to be permanently incapable of work. Contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs for more information.

#### Blind Pension

You may get this payment if you are visually impaired, satisfy a means test, satisfy the Habitual Residence Test and you are over 18 years of age. For more information contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### Blind Welfare Allowance

This is a means tested Health Service Executive payment paid to a blind person getting Blind Pension or Disability Allowance. You can apply for this to your local Community Welfare Officer (CWO).

## **2. Benefits and Entitlements**

### **2D. Payments for People who are sick or People with a Disability**

#### **Infectious Disease Maintenance Allowance**

The Health Service Executive pays this allowance. To qualify you must satisfy a means test, be undergoing treatment for a specified infectious disease and be aged less than 16 years of age. For more information contact your area's Health Services Executive.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2E. Family Income Supplement

Family Income Supplement (FIS) is a weekly tax-free payment for families, including one-parent families, at work on low pay.

#### How do I qualify?

You may qualify if you meet all the following conditions:

- You are an employee in paid full-time employment which is expected to last for 3 months
- You\* work at least 19 hours every week, or 38 hours every fortnight
- You have at least one qualified child who normally lives with you and/or is supported by you. A qualified child is any child under age 18 or aged 18 to 22 if in full-time education
- Your average weekly family income is below the amounts intended for your family size

\*If you are married or living with someone as husband and wife, you can combine the hours worked by your spouse or partner.

#### What counts as Family Income?

The main items that count as family income are:

- Your earnings or your spouse's earnings
- Any other income including Social Welfare or Health Services Executive payments, income from occupational pensions or any extra income you or your spouse may have from employment such as overtime, bonuses or commission.
- The following **do not** count as family income:
  - Child Benefit
  - Carer's Allowance
  - Supplementary Welfare Allowance
  - Rent Allowance for tenants affected by de-control of rents
  - Orphan's Allowance or Pension
  - Domiciliary Care Allowance
  - Foster child Allowance
  - Income from a charitable organisation
  - Unearned income (for example, income from property or rent of land)
  - In certain circumstances income from casual employment by the Health Services Executive as a "home help"
  - Income from providing accommodation to students studying Irish in Gaeltacht areas under a scheme administered by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2E. Family Income Supplement

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-O** to find out the **maximum** amount of Family Income Support you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

#### How long can I claim Family Income Support?

You can claim Family Income Support for 52 weeks provided you meet eligibility requirements. If your family size increases you must contact the Family Income Support Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### If you qualify for FIS you may also be entitled to:

- Smokeless Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance

#### When should I apply?

You should apply for FIS as soon as possible after you start work, otherwise you could lose the payment.

#### How do I apply?

You need to complete **Form FIS1** and send it to the address that is clearly marked on the form. For more information contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs or your local social welfare office.

#### What do I need to provide?

You will need to give the following documents:

- A number of recent payslips to show your income
- Your latest P60 (if you have one)
- Your Certificate of Tax Credits for the current year (if you have one).

If you are starting employment for the first time or taking up a new job, you should contact your Tax Office for advice about your Tax Credits. For further information about FIS you should contact your local social welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2F. Maternity Benefit

Maternity Benefit is a payment made to women in Ireland on maternity leave from work and who have paid a certain amount of PRSI (Pay Related Social Insurance). You need to apply for the payment 6 weeks **before** you intend to go on maternity leave (12 weeks if you are self-employed). The amount of money paid to you each week will depend on your earnings. If you are already on certain social welfare payments then you will receive half-rate Maternity Benefit.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify for Maternity Benefit if:

##### For Employees

- Your employment is covered by the Maternity Protection Act 1994 immediately before the first day of your maternity leave
- You satisfy certain PRSI contribution conditions

##### For Self-Employed

- You are in insurable Self-Employment
- You satisfy certain PRSI contribution conditions

#### How many social insurance contributions do I need?

If you are employed you must have:

- At least 39 weeks paid PRSI\* Contributions in the 12 month period before the first day of your maternity leave
- Or
- At least 39 weeks paid PRSI\* Contributions since first starting work and at least 39 weeks paid or credited Contributions in the Relevant Tax Year
- Or
- At least 26 weeks PRSI\* Contributions paid in the relevant tax year and 26 weeks PRSI\* Contributions paid in the tax year before the relevant tax year.

*\*PRSI paid at classes A, E and H count*

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2F. Maternity Benefit

**If you are self-employed you must have:**

- 52 weeks paid PRSI contributions in the last Relevant Tax Year
- Or**
- 52 weeks paid PRSI contributions in the Tax Year prior to the Relevant Tax Year
- Or**
- 52 weeks paid PRSI contributions in the Tax Year following the Relevant Tax Year.

The Relevant Tax Year for a claim is the second last complete tax year before the start of the Benefit Year. If you are going on maternity leave in January 2008, the relevant tax year is 2006. The Tax Year prior to the relevant tax year is 2005 and the Tax Year following the relevant Tax Year is 2007.

#### **What if I paid my social insurance contributions in another EU country?**

If you paid your social contributions in a country covered by EC Regulations and you currently live in Ireland, the country in which you were last employed is generally responsible for paying your Maternity Benefit. You must send your application for Maternity Benefit to the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

If you were previously employed in a country covered by EC regulations and you have paid at least one full rate PRSI contribution since your return to Ireland, you may combine your insurance record in that country with your Irish PRSI contributions to help you qualify for Maternity Benefit.

If you have obtained **Form E104** from the countries in which you were previously employed, you must send it with your application to the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The **E104 Form** is a record of the social security contributions you have paid while employed in countries covered by EC Regulations and will speed up the processing of your application. If you don't have **Form E104** from the relevant countries, the Department of Social and Family Affairs will obtain the form for you.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2F. Maternity Benefit

#### What countries are covered by EC regulations?

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany\*, Greece, Hungary, Iceland\*, The Republic of Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, The UK (including the Isle of Man and the Channel Island).

**Note: Since June 1 2002, EC Regulations apply with certain modifications to migrant workers in or from Switzerland.**

*\*You cannot use contributions made in these countries while self-employed to qualify for Maternity Benefit.*

#### What if I paid my social insurance contributions outside the EU?

If you paid your social insurance contributions in a country outside the European Union (EU) you will **not** be able to use these to qualify for Jobseekers Benefit.

#### Am I entitled to Maternity Benefit if I am in receipt of other social assistance payments?

If you are in receipt of the following payments, half-rate Maternity Benefit is payable.

- One-Parent Family Payment
- Widow's (Contributory) Pension
- Widow's (Non-Contributory) Pension
- Deserted Wife's Benefit
- Prisoners Wife's Allowance
- Deserted Wife's Allowance
- Death Benefit by way of Widow's/Widower's or Dependent Parents' Pension (under the Occupational Injuries Scheme)

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out how to calculate the amount of Maternity Benefit you are entitled to if you are an employee or self-employed.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2F. Maternity Benefit

#### How long can I claim Maternity Benefit?

Maternity Benefit is paid for 22 continuous weeks. At least 2 weeks and not more than 14 weeks leave must be taken before the end of the week in which your baby is due. If your baby is born later than expected and you have less than 4 weeks maternity leave left, you may be entitled to extend your maternity leave to ensure that you have a full 4 weeks off following the week of the birth. In these circumstances Maternity Benefit will continue to be paid to you until the baby is four weeks old. You need to notify the Maternity Benefit Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs by sending them a letter from your GP stating the date on which your baby was born.

#### How do I apply?

You must complete Form **MB10** and you must send this to the address clearly marked on the Form **6 weeks before you intend to go on maternity leave, 12 weeks if you are self employed**. The **MB10** is available from the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### Movement of Families

If you are returning to Ireland with your child and your relationship with your partner has dissolved, you will have to seek permission from your partner before you can bring your child with you to Ireland. Emigrant Advice recommends that you seek legal advice in this instance.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2G. Child Benefit

#### What is Child Benefit?

In Ireland, Child Benefit (previously known as Children's Allowance) is payable to the parents or guardians of qualified children normally living with you and being supported by you.

#### Who is a qualified child?

A qualified child is:

- Under 16 years of age **Or**
- Under 19 if in full time education, attending FÁS Youthreach Training or is physically or mentally disabled and dependant on you
- In order for your child to qualify for Child Benefit, you, as the parent, must satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition (Please read **Factsheet 2-A**)

#### How does EC Regulations affect Child Benefit?

If you (the parent/legal guardian) work in Ireland or a country covered by EC Regulations, this country usually pays Child Benefit even if your family is living in another EU/EEA country. Please seek clarification with the Child Benefit section regarding your circumstances.

#### What countries are covered by EC Regulations?

Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, The UK (excluding the channel Islands).

#### How much am I entitled to?

Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the rates of Child Benefit.

#### When should I apply?

You need to apply for Child Benefit within 6 months of:

- The birth of your child
- The month the child became a member of your family
- The month you and your family came to live in Ireland

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2G. Child Benefit

#### How do I apply?

If you are claiming Child Benefit for the first time you need to complete **Form CB1**. You must include your child's birth certificate and send it to the address clearly marked on the form. If you are claiming Child Benefit for a child who is 16, 17 or 18, you must complete **Form CB2**. The form must be certified by:

- A school or college if your child is in full time education
- FÁS if your child is attending FAS Youthreach Training
- A medical Doctor if your child is physically or mentally disabled

If you require further information you should contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

Yes. If you have a child under six years of age you will be entitled to get the Early Childcare Supplement.

#### What is the Early Childcare Supplement?

The Early Childcare Supplement is a State payment paid to families in Ireland with child/children under six years of age. The purpose of the Early Childcare Supplement is to financially assist families with the cost of raising children, childcare costs etc.

#### How do I apply for the Early Childcare Supplement?

There is no separate application form for the Early Childcare Supplement. You must be getting Child Benefit. If you are getting Child Benefit in Ireland the Early Childcare Supplement will be paid to you on a quarterly basis (that is every three months).

#### How much am I entitled to?

Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the rate of the Early Childcare Supplement.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2H. One Parent Family Payment

One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) is a payment for men and women in Ireland who are bringing children up without the support of a partner. It is payable to an unmarried person, a widow/widower, a prisoner's spouse, a separated or divorced person or one whose marriage has been annulled. It is subject to certain conditions and you must satisfy a means test. If you are divorced or unmarried, you must also have attempted to seek maintenance from the child's other parent.

#### How do I qualify?

##### You will qualify for a payment if:

- You have the main care and charge of at least one child and that child is living with you (Your child must be less than 18 years of age if no longer in full time education or 18-22 if in full-time education)
- You are not cohabiting, that is, living with someone as husband and wife
- You have earnings of €400 or less per week (€425 from May 2008)
- You satisfy a means test
- You satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition (Please read **Factsheet 2-A**)

##### The following conditions also apply:

- If you are **separated/divorced** you must have been separated for at least 3 months and you must have made efforts to get maintenance from your spouse
- If you are **unmarried** you must be the parent of a qualified child and will be required to seek maintenance from the other parent of your child
- If your **spouse is in prison** s/he must have been sentenced to prison for a term of at least 6 months or have been in custody for at least 6 months without being sentenced

#### What is the means test?

A means test is a way of checking if you (and/or your spouse) have enough income to support yourself and what amount of payment, if any, you may qualify for. The following are the main items taken into account for the means test:

- Income from employment or self-employment
- All cash income
- The value of any benefit or privilege, for example, free board and lodging
- Maintenance payments, including maintenance being paid to you for a dependent child
- The value of investments, savings (but not PRSA's)
- The value of any property (but not the value of your own home)

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2H. One Parent Family Payment

#### Can I transfer my One-Parent Family Payment?

No. It is not possible to transfer your One-Parent Family Payment.

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the **maximum** amount of One Parent Family Payment you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

#### How long can I claim One-Parent Family Payment?

One-Parent Family Payment is payable for as long as you satisfy the qualifying conditions. The payment stops, however, if you marry or live with someone as husband and wife or if you no longer have dependent children or if your earnings exceed €400 per week (€425 from May 2008).

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

**If you are getting a One-Parent Family Payment, you may also be eligible for:**

- Fuel Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2-N**)
- Family Income Supplement (please read **Factsheet 2-E**)
- Supplementary Welfare Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2-B**)

**You may also be entitled to:**

- Medical Card or GP Visit Card (Please read **Factsheet 4**)

#### How do I apply?

To apply for One-Parent Family Payment, complete claim Form **ONP1**. This form is available from the Department of Social and Family Affairs or from your local social welfare office. You must send it with the relevant certificates and documents to the address that is clearly marked on the **ONP1 Form**. For further information contact your local social welfare office.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2H. One Parent Family Payment

#### What if I do not qualify?

If your claim is refused you do have the right to appeal the decision. For more information contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs. If you do not qualify for One-Parent Family Payment you may be eligible for other payments. You should contact your local Social Welfare Office or Community Welfare Officer (CWO) in your local Health Centre

#### PRSI Contributions

If you are in employment you are exempt from the 2% Health Contribution for as long as you are getting One-Parent Family payment. You should provide proof of payment to your employer.

#### Are there any support groups for single parent families?

**OPEN** is Ireland's national network of lone parent self help groups that have joined together to represent the interests of lone parents living throughout the country. Contact OPEN for details of a lone parents group in your area:

OPEN, 7 Red Cow Lane, Smithfield, Dublin 7 Tel: +353 1 832 0264

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

**TREOIR** is the national federation of both statutory and voluntary organisations which provides services for unmarried parents and their children. It aims to promote the welfare and improve the standards of care for unmarried parents and their children. For more information contact:

TREOIR, 14 Gandon House, Custom House Square, IFSC, Dublin 1 Tel: + 353 670 0120 or LoCall: 1890 252 084 Web: [www.treoir.ie](http://www.treoir.ie)

**ONE PARENT** provides voice, support and action for one-parent families through membership, professional services and campaigning. For more information contact: One Parent, Cherish House, 2 Lower Pembroke St, Dublin 2.

Tel: + 353 1 662 9212 or LoCall: 1890 66 22 12

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

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2i. Widow's/Widowers Pensions

There are two types of Widow's/Widower's Pensions:

- **Contributory Pension:** You will be eligible for a contributory pension if you or your deceased spouse has enough PRSI contributions.
- **Non-Contributory Pension:** If you or your deceased spouse does not have enough PRSI contributions you may qualify for a non-contributory pension, provided you pass a means test.

### Widow's/Widower's Contributory Pension

A Contributory Widow's/Widower's Pension (CWP) may be payable if either the deceased person or the spouse has enough PRSI contributions.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify if:

- You are widowed

**Or**

- You are divorced from your late husband and have not remarried and you are not cohabitating (living with someone as husband and wife)

**And**

- You have enough PRSI contributions

**Or**

- Your late spouse was getting either a Retirement Pension or an Old Age (Contributory) Pension which included a full rate increase for you.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2i. Widow's/Widower's Pensions

#### How many social insurance contributions do I need?

A Widow's or Widower's (Contributory) Pension may be based on EITHER your own OR your late spouse's PRSI record. The two PRSI records cannot be combined for this purpose. Whichever record is being used must have:

- 156 weeks PRSI paid to the date pension age was reached or to the date your spouse died
- And**
- **Condition A:** either an average of 39 weeks PRSI paid or credited over the 3 or 5 tax years (whichever is more beneficial) before reaching pension age (currently age 66) or before your spouse died
- Or**
- **Condition B:** for a minimum pension, you need a yearly average of 24 weeks PRSI paid or credited since starting work up to the end of the tax year before reaching 66 years of age or the date your spouse died. (A yearly average of 48 weeks PRSI is required for the **maximum** pension).

#### What if I paid my social insurance contributions abroad?

If you or your spouse paid insurance contributions in other countries covered by EC Regulations or countries with which Ireland has a Bilateral Social Security Agreement these social insurance contributions can be used to qualify you for a Widows/Widowers Contributory Pension. For more information contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### What countries are covered by EC regulations?

Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus South), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland Republic of Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland The Netherlands, The UK

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2i. Widow's/Widower's Pensions

#### What countries are covered by the Bi-Lateral Social Security Agreement?

The countries are: Australia, Canada, Quebec, New Zealand, and The US. The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are expected to sign an agreement in 2005.

#### Can I transfer Widow's or Widower's Contributory Pension?

Yes, provided you have paid your social insurance contributions in a country covered by EC Regulations or a country with which Ireland has a Bi-Lateral Social Security Agreement. The country in which you were last insurably employed is generally responsible for paying your Widows/Widowers Contributory Pension. You should organise the transfer of your payment before you move to Ireland.

If you were last insurably employed in Ireland but have paid social insurance contributions in a country covered by EC Regulations or in a country with which Ireland has a Bi-Lateral Social Security Agreement these social insurance contributions can be combined with your Irish contributions. For more information contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

If you are in receipt of Widow's or Widower's Contributory pension, you may also be entitled to the following payments, provided you meet eligibility requirements:

- Fuel Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2-N**)
- Assistance under the Supplementary Welfare Scheme (Please read **Factsheet 2-B**)
- Extra Benefits (if you are aged 66 or over)
- Bereavement Grant
- Death Benefit under the Occupational Injuries Scheme

#### Am I entitled to claim two or more payments?

You can usually only get one social welfare payment at a time. However, you may get **half the personal rate** of Jobseekers, Disability, Occupational Injury, Maternity, Health and Safety or Adoptive Benefit, for a limited time as well as Widow's Contributory Pension.

If you are getting an Invalidity Pension and you satisfy the conditions for a Widow's or Widower's Contributory Pension, you may get **half the personal rate** of Illness Benefit to which you are entitled for a limited time instead of Invalidity Pension. This is paid in addition to the Widow's or Widower's Contributory Pension.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2i. Widow's/Widower's Pensions

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-O** to find out the **maximum** amount of Widow's/Widower's Contributory Pension you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

#### How long can I claim this payment?

You can claim this payment for as long as you remain widowed. If you remarry or begin living with another person as husband and wife you lose this payment.

#### How do I apply?

You will need to complete **WCP1 Form** which is available from post offices or your local social welfare office. You must post it to the address clearly marked on the form.

#### What if I do not qualify?

You have the right to appeal any decision if you are not satisfied with the outcome. If you still do not qualify for this payment you may be eligible for Widow(er)'s Non-Contributory Pension.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2i. Widow's/Widower's Pensions

#### Widow's/Widower's Non-Contributory Pension

A Widow's or Widower's Non-Contributory Pension is a means-tested payment payable to a widow or widower who does not qualify for a Widow's/Widower's Contributory Pension. Widow's/Widower's (Non-Contributory) Pension is a payment for widows/widowers who do not have dependent children. People with dependent children should apply for the One-Parent Family Payment.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify if:

- You are divorced from your late spouse and have not remarried
- You are not living with someone as husband and wife
- You satisfy a means test
- You are living in the State
- You satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition (Please read **Factsheet 2-A**)

#### What is the means test?

A means test is a way of checking if you (and/or your spouse) have enough income to support yourself and what amount of payment, if any, you may qualify for. The following are the main items taken into account for the means test:

- All cash income, including most social welfare and Health Centre payments, except Child Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance and Blind Welfare Allowance
- The value of any benefit or privilege, for example, free board and lodging.
- The value of investments, savings or property (but not the value of your own home)

#### Can I transfer Widow's or Widower's Non Contributory Pension to another country?

No. It is not possible to transfer this payment.

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-O** to find out the **maximum** amount of Widow's/Widower's Non-Contributory Pension you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2i. Widow's/Widower's Pensions

#### How long can I claim this payment?

You can claim this payment for as long as you remain widowed. If you remarry or begin living with another person as husband and wife you lose this payment.

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

If you are in receipt of Widow's or Widower's Non-Contributory pension, you may also be entitled to:

- Fuel Allowance (please read **Factsheet 2-N**)
- Assistance under the Supplementary Welfare Scheme (Please read **Factsheet 2-B**)
- Extra Benefits (if you are aged 66 or over)
- Bereavement Grant
- Death Benefit under the Occupational Injuries Scheme

#### How do I apply?

You must apply within 3 months of your spouse's death. You must complete claim **form WP1** and send it with the relevant certificates and documents to the address clearly marked on the form. For more information contact your local social welfare office.

#### What do I need to provide?

You will need:

- Your original Birth Certificate
- Your original Marriage Certificate
- Your late spouse's original Birth Certificate
- Your late spouse's Death Certificate

#### What if I do not qualify?

You have the right to appeal any decision if you are not satisfied with the outcome. If you still do not qualify you should contact your local Social Welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2J. Payments for Carer's

The two main payments for carers are Carer's Benefit which is based on PRSI contributions and Carer's Allowance which is means tested. There is also Domiciliary Care Allowance available from the Department of Health and Children, which may be paid in respect of a child with a disability. Recipients of these payments will be eligible for an annual Respite Care Grant.

#### Carer's Benefit

Carer's Benefit is a payment made to insured persons who leave the workforce to care for a person(s) in need of full-time care and attention. Under Carer's Leave Legislation, you may be entitled to unpaid temporary leave from your Employment to provide care to a person. If you are providing care for more than one person you may be entitled to an extra 50% of the personal rate of Carer's Benefit each week. If you want more information on Carer's Leave you should contact the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Tel + 353 1 631 3131 Web: [www.entemp.ie](http://www.entemp.ie)

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify for Carer's Benefit if:

- You are aged 16 or over and under 66
- You have been employed (in the State) for 8 weeks during the previous 26 week period.
- You satisfy PRSI contribution conditions
- You give up employment to care for a person(s) on a full-time basis (this employment must have been for a minimum of 16 hours per week or 32 hours per fortnight)
- You are not employed or self-employed outside the home for more than 15 (the maximum amount you can earn is €332.50 from April 2008)
- You are living in the State and you are not living in a hospital, convalescent home, or other similar institution

#### AND

The person(s) you are caring for is/are:

- Disabled and in need of full-time care and attention (medical certification is required)
- Not normally living in a hospital, home or other similar institution
- Where a Domiciliary Care Allowance is being paid by a Health Board in respect of a child no medical certification is required.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2J. Payments for Carer's

#### How many social insurance contributions do I need?

For a first claim you must have:

- 156 contributions paid since entry into insurable employment
- AND**
- 39 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year
- Or**
- 39 contributions paid in the 12 month period before the commencement of the Carer's Benefit
- Or**
- 26 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year and 26 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year prior to that.

The Relevant Tax Year for a claim is the second last complete tax year before the start of the Benefit Year, e.g., if you are making a claim in 2008, the Relevant Tax Year is 2006.

#### What if I paid my social insurance contributions abroad?

If you paid your social insurance contributions in another country you **cannot** use these to qualify for Carer's Benefit.

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the amount of Carer's Benefit you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions. Carer's Benefit is payable for up to 24 months.

#### How do I apply?

You must complete Form **CARB1** and send it to the address clearly marked on the form. For more information you should contact your local social welfare office.

#### What if I do not qualify?

If you do not qualify you should apply for Carer's Allowance.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2J. Payments for Carer's

#### Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is a payment for carers who look after certain people in need of full-time care and attention and who satisfy a means test. Carers who are providing care to more than one person may be entitled to up to an extra 50% of the maximum rate of Carer's Allowance each week, depending on the weekly means assessed.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify for Carer's Allowance if:

- You are aged 18 or over
- You satisfy a means test
- You live with the person(s) you are looking after or can be contacted quickly by a direct system of communication between your home and the home of the person you are caring for
- You are caring for the person(s) on a full-time basis
- You are not employed or self-employed outside the home in excess of 15 hours per week
- You are living in the State
- You satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition (Please read **Factsheet 2-A**)
- You are not living in a hospital, convalescent home or other similar institution

#### And

- The person(s) you are caring for is/are:
- Disabled and in need of full-time care and/or attention (medical certification is required)
- Not normally living in a hospital, home or other similar institution
- **Age 16 or over or under age 16** if a full rate Domiciliary Care Allowance is being paid in respect of him/her by a Health Services Executive (documentary evidence of this payment is required).

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2J. Payments for Carer's

#### What is the means test?

A means test is a way of checking if you (and/or your spouse) have enough income to support yourself and what amount of payment, if any, you may qualify for. The following are the main items taken into account for the means test:

- Any cash income you or your spouse or partner have (for a single person the amount of weekly income that is not taken into account is €332.50, for a married/cohabiting couple the combined weekly income that is not taken into account is €665),
- The value of investments, savings or property (except you own home)
- Any asset that could bring in money or provide you with an income, for example, occupational pensions or pensions or benefits from another country
- The first €7.60 of means assessed will not affect your payment, but for every extra €2.50 means you have, your weekly payment will be reduced by €2.50.

#### Can I transfer my Carer's Allowance?

No. It is not possible to transfer this payment.

#### Can I Get a Carer's Allowance if I am Getting Another Payment?

If you are getting another social welfare payment you will not be entitled to get Carers Allowance unless your current social welfare payment is less than the Carers allowance rate and you satisfy the conditions, you may get the Carer's Allowance **instead of** your existing payment. **Since September 2007** if you are getting certain social welfare payments and you are providing full-time care and attention to another person you can keep your main social welfare payment and get half-rate Carer's Allowance at the same time.

#### How much am I entitled to?

You must contact your local social welfare office to find out exactly how much you would be entitled to. Please read **Factsheet 2-P** to find out the **maximum** amount of Carer's Allowance you may be entitled to if you meet all the qualifying conditions.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2J. Payments for Carer's

#### **How do I apply?**

You must complete Form **CR1** and send it to the address clearly marked on the form. Forms are available from your local social welfare office or from the Department of Social and Family Affairs. For further information you should contact your local social welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### **What if I do not qualify?**

You have the right to appeal any decision if you are not satisfied with the outcome. If you still do not qualify you should contact your local social welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2K. Household Benefits Package

There are **3 allowances** that make up the Household Benefits Package:

#### **Allowance 1**

- Electricity Allowance or Natural Gas Allowance or Electricity (Group Account) Allowance or Bottled Gas Refill Allowance

#### **Allowance 2**

- Telephone Allowance

#### **Allowance 3**

- Free Television Licence

### **How do I qualify for the Household Benefits Package?**

You may qualify if:

You are aged 70 or over (regardless of your income or who lives with you) **Or**

- You are getting a Carer's Allowance **Or**
- You are caring for a person who gets Prescribed Relative's Allowance or Constant Attendance Allowance **Or**
- You are under age 70, are getting a qualifying payment AND live alone or only with certain "excepted people" (**see page 47** in this section) **Or**
- You are aged between 66 and 69, satisfy a means test AND live alone or only with certain "Excepted People" (**see page 48**).

### **What is Allowance 1?**

This allowance is an Electricity or Natural Gas Allowance. It is made up of 4 different options. If you have both you **must** select one, **either** electricity allowance or natural gas allowance.

**You cannot receive both.**

**Electricity Allowance:** The Electricity Allowance covers normal standing charges and up to 2,400 units of electricity each year.

**Natural Gas Allowance:** This is an alternative to electricity. It covers normal standing or supply charges and a certain amount of natural gas kilowatt hours each year. The amount varies depending on the tariff. You may get this allowance if you are a gas card customer.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2K. Household Benefits Package

**The Electricity (Group Account) Allowance:** If you live in self-contained accommodation (a flat or an apartment) and you have an electricity slot meter or your ESB bill is in your landlord's name, you may qualify for an Electricity (Group Account) Allowance. This is paid on the first Tuesday of each month to into a bank account or if you have a social welfare services card through your local post office.

**The Bottled Gas Refill Allowance:** is only available to you if you don't have an electricity or natural gas supply. If your home is not connected to an electricity or natural gas supply but you otherwise satisfy the conditions of the scheme, you may get the Bottled Gas Refill Allowance as an alternative. This is paid on the first Tuesday of each month to into a bank account or if you have a social welfare services card through your local post office

#### What is Allowance 2?

##### Telephone Allowance

The Telephone Allowance scheme provides a payment towards your mobile phone or landline phone. If you are living in a nursing or retirement home you may be able to get the telephone allowance provided you have your own personal telephone account.

If you use the Telephone Allowance for you landline phone it is paid as a credit on your phone bill.

If you use the Telephone Allowance for your mobile phone, you can use it to pay your monthly mobile phone bill or you can use it to but credit for your phone. This is paid on the first Tuesday of each month into a bank account, or if you have a social welfare services card through your local post office.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2K. Household Benefits Package

#### What is Allowance 3?

##### Free Television Licence

Once you qualify for the Household Benefits Package you become entitled to a Free Television Licence from the next renewal date of your Television Licence.

##### You must also satisfy these 3 criteria:

1. You must be permanently living (that is, year-round) at the address to which you wish the allowances to be applied. In general, the allowances do not apply if you live in a Nursing or Retirement Home or if the accommodation is not fully self-contained. However, if you are aged 70 or over and you live in such a Nursing or Retirement Home and have your own telephone account, you may get a Telephone Allowance
2. You must be the only person in your household who gets the allowances
3. You must be the registered consumer of electricity or gas if you are applying for Electricity or Natural Gas Allowance and the registered telephone account holder if you are applying for the Telephone Allowance.

#### What are the Qualifying Payments for persons aged between 66 and 70?

- State Contributory or State Non-Contributory Pension
- State Pension (Transition)
- Blind Pension
- Widow's or Widower's Contributory or Non-Contributory Pension
- Invalidity Pension
- Deserted Wife's Benefit or Allowance
- One-Parent Family Payment
- Prisoner's Wife's Allowance
- An ordinary Garda Widow's Pension from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- An equivalent Social Security Pension or Benefit from a country covered by EC Regulations, or from a country with which Ireland has a Bilateral Social Security Agreement

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2K. Household Benefits Package

#### What are the Qualifying Payments for persons aged under 66?

- Invalidity Pension
- Blind Pension
- Incapacity Supplement or Workmen's Compensation with Disablement Pension (for at least 12 months)
- Disability Allowance
- An equivalent Social Security Pension or Benefit from a country covered by EC Regulations, or from a country with which Ireland has a Bilateral Social Security Agreement (Please read page 49)

#### Who are considered “Excepted People”?

In certain cases you may live with the following people and still qualify.

- Your spouse or partner. If you get a payment for your spouse, he/she is called a qualified adult. If your spouse is getting a social welfare payment in his/her own right, your spouse will not qualify for a qualified adult payment.
- A dependent child (ren) under age 18 or up to age 22 if in full-time education (you must supply a certificate from the school or college for any child aged 18 or over).
- A person who is so incapacitated that they need constant care and attention for at least 12 months (you may need to supply medical certification).
- A person who would qualify for the allowances in their own right (for example, a person getting a State Pension).
- A person who is providing you, or someone else in your household, with constant care and attention, if you or that other person in the household is so incapacitated that you or they need constant care and attention for at least 12 months (you may need to supply medical certification). If the person is in employment for more than 10 hours per week or they are getting Jobseekers Benefit or Assistance they cannot be accepted as providing constant full-time care and attention.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2K. Household Benefits Package

#### What countries are covered by EC regulations?

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, The UK.

#### What countries are covered by the Bi-Lateral Social Security Agreement?

The countries are: Australia, Canada, Quebec, New Zealand, The US, The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

#### How much am I entitled to?

Please read **Factsheet 2-O** to find out the rates for the Electricity and Gas Allowance and the Telephone Allowance.

#### How do I apply?

You must complete **Form HB1** and return to the address clearly marked on the form. Forms are available from your local social welfare office or by contacting the Department of Social and Family Affairs. For further information you should contact your local social welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2L. Free Travel

The Free Travel Scheme operated by the Department of Social and Family Affairs, allows all people who are aged 66 or over and who are permanently residing in the State, to travel free of charge on most CIE public transport services and also the public transport services provided by a large number of private operators in various parts of the country. Certain people with an incapacity, under age 66 may also travel free.

#### How do I qualify for a Free Travel Pass?

You will qualify for a Free Travel Pass if:

- You are living permanently within the State
- You are aged 66 years or over
- You are less than 66 and satisfy certain conditions

#### How do I qualify if I am less than 66 years of age?

You will qualify if:

- You are in receipt of the following payments:
  - Invalidity Pension
  - Blind Pension
  - Disability Allowance
  - Incapacity Supplement or Workmen's Compensation with Disablement Pension, for at least 12 months
  - Carer's Allowance
  - A Social Security Invalidity Pension/Benefit, or an equivalent payment, for at least 12 months, from a country covered by EC Regulations, or from a country with which Ireland has a Bilateral Social Security Agreement
- **OR** You are a specified carer for people getting Constant Attendance Allowance or Prescribed Relatives Allowance from this Department
- **OR** You live in Health Services Executive approved residential care and you were previously getting either Disability Allowance or Disabled Person's Maintenance Allowance (from the Health Services Executive)
- **OR** You are blind or severely visually impaired and you satisfy the medical conditions for the Blind Pension
- **OR** You are a widow or widower aged 60 to 65 inclusive and your late spouse held a Free Travel Pass and prior to his/her death, you lived together on a permanent basis. In this case, you must be in receipt of the following payments:
  - State Pension (Transition)
  - Widow's or Widower's (Contributory) Pension
  - Widow's or Widower's (Non-Contributory) Pension

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2L. Free Travel

- One Parent Family Payment
- Widow's or Widower's Pension under the Occupational Injuries Benefits Scheme
- An equivalent Social Security Pension/Benefit from a country covered by EC Regulations or from a country with which Ireland has a Bi-Lateral Social Security Agreement (See below for more details)
- An ordinary Garda Widow's Pension from the Department of Justice

#### What countries are covered by EC regulations?

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, The Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus South), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, The Republic of Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, The UK (including the Channel Island and the Isle of Man)

#### What countries are covered by the Bi-Lateral Social Security Agreement?

The countries are: Australia, Canada, Quebec, New Zealand, The US and Switzerland.

#### How do I apply?

You must complete **Form FT1** and send it to the address clearly marked on the Form. Forms are available from your local social welfare office or by contacting the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2M. Living Alone Allowance

The Living Alone Allowance (LAA) is a weekly payment for people aged 66 or over who are in receipt of a payment from the Department of Social and Family Affairs and who are **either** entirely living alone **or** mainly living alone. LAA is also payable to persons who live alone and who are in receipt of Blind Person's Pension, Invalidity Pension, Disability Allowance or Unemployability Supplement. The objective of the payment is to compensate for the additional individual costs of living alone when compared to a couple or family.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify if:

- You live **either** entirely alone **or** mainly alone, and
- You are in receipt of one of the following payments from the Department of Social and Family Affairs:
  - A. If you are aged under 66**
    - Invalidity Pension
    - Disability Allowance
    - Blind Pension
    - Incapacity Supplement
  - B: If you are aged 66 or over**
    - State (Contributory) Pension
    - State (Non-Contributory) Pension
    - Blind Pension
    - State Pension (Transition)
    - Widow's or Widower's (Contributory) Pension
    - Widow's or Widower's (Non-Contributory) Pension
    - Invalidity Pension
    - Deserted Wife's Benefit/Allowance
    - Prisoner's Wife's Allowance
    - Widow's or Widower's Pension under the Occupational Injuries Benefit Scheme

#### When should I apply?

If you are under age 66 and getting one of the payments listed in (A) above you should apply for a Living Alone Allowance as soon as you start living alone. Or if you are getting one of the payments listed at (B) above, you should apply 3 months before you reach age 66. If you are aged 66 or over, you should apply as soon as you start living alone.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2M. Living Alone Allowance

#### How do I apply?

You must complete **Form LAA1** and send it to the address clearly marked on the form. Forms are available from your local social welfare office or from [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). For further information you should contact your local social welfare office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

#### Am I entitled to any other payments?

If you qualify for Living Alone Allowance, you may qualify for the following payments:

- Fuel Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2N**)
- Smokeless Fuel Allowance (Please read **Factsheet 2N**)
- Free Travel (Please read **Factsheet 2L**)
- Household Benefits Package (Please read **Factsheet 2K**)

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2N. National Fuel Scheme

The National Fuel Scheme is intended to help households that depend on long-term social welfare or Health Services Executive payments and are unable to pay for their own heating needs. The Scheme operates for 30 weeks from the end of September to the end of April.

#### How do I qualify?

You will qualify for Fuel Allowance if:

- You are living alone **Or**
- You are living with one of the following:
  - A dependent spouse or partner or dependent child(ren) **Or**
  - Other people getting one of the payments listed at below who would also qualify for Fuel Allowance in their own right **Or**
  - A person who gives you full-time care and attention if you are a person with a disabled or a long-term incapacity **Or**
  - Any person getting short term Jobseekers Allowance

#### **AND**

- You and other members of your household are unable to pay for your heating needs from your own resources. **To fulfill this condition, your household MUST satisfy a means test**

To qualify you must also fulfill the one of the following conditions:

#### **A: You are getting one of the following payments from the Department of Social and Family Affairs**

- State (Contributory or Non-Contributory) Pension
- State Pension (Transition)
- Widow's or Widower's (Contributory) or (Non-Contributory) Pension
- Incapacity Supplement
- Blind Pension
- Invalidity Pension
- Disability Allowance
- Deserted Wife's Benefit or Allowance
- One-Parent Family Payment
- Orphan's (Contributory) Allowance
- Orphan's (Non-Contributory) Pension
- Farm Assist
- State Pension (Transition)
- Prisoners Wife's Allowance

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2J. Payments for Carer's

**OR**

**B: You are getting one of the following payments from the Health Services Executive**

- Disabled Person's Rehabilitation Allowance
- Infectious Diseases Maintenance Allowance
- Basic Supplementary Welfare Allowance

**OR**

**C: You are taking part in an employment or educational scheme and are entitled to keep your secondary benefits OR**

**D: If you have paid your Social Security Contributions in another country**

- If you are getting a payment from a country covered by EC Regulations or a country with which Ireland has a Bilateral Social Security Agreement you may qualify for Fuel Allowance. You will be eligible if:
  - You are living in Ireland
  - You are aged 66 or over

**OR**

- You are under age 66 and getting an Invalidity Pension/Benefit (for over 12 months) or a Widow's/Widower's Pension or an equivalent payment from another country.

#### **What countries are covered by EC regulations?**

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, The Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus South), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, The republic of Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, The UK

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2J. Payments for Carer's

#### What countries does the Bi-Lateral Social Security Agreement cover?

The countries are: Australia, Canada, Quebec, New Zealand, the US Switzerland, The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

#### How much am I entitled to?

Please read **Factsheet 2-O** to find out the National Fuel Scheme rates.

#### When should I apply?

If you are getting a qualifying payment as listed in A or B above and you think you are eligible, you should apply **immediately**. The Fuel Allowance will **not** be backdated if you apply **AFTER** the start of the heating season, which is the last week in September.

#### How do I apply?

If you are receiving a payment from the Department of Social and Family Affairs you must complete **Form NFS1** and send it to the relevant address clearly marked on the Form. Forms are available from your local social welfare office or from your local post office.

If you are receiving a Social Security Payment from a country covered by EC Regulations or a country with which Ireland has a Bilateral Social Security Agreement you must complete **Form NFS1** and send it to the relevant address clearly marked on the Form. Forms are available from your local social welfare office or from your local post office.

If you are receiving a payment from the Health Services Executive (HSE), you should apply to your Community Welfare Officer (CWO) at your local Health Centre.

For more information you should contact the Department of Social and Family Affairs or your local social welfare office.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 20. Returning from the UK: What Benefits will transfer?

#### **I am returning to Ireland permanently from the UK. What benefits will transfer with me?**

- Bereavement Allowance (formerly known as Widow's Pension)
- Widowed Parent's Allowance (formerly known as Widowed Mother's Allowance)
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Winter Fuel Allowance - If you get it in Britain it will transfer with you although you may need to remind them if it does not come to you automatically

#### **What benefits will NOT transfer if I move to Ireland from the UK?**

- Invalid Care Allowance
- Pension Credit 'top-up' payment
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit (Note: if coming to rented property, you **will have to pay rent** in Ireland)
- Council Tax Benefit
- Disability Living Allowance awarded after 1st June 1992
- Severe Disablement Allowance awarded after 1st April 2001
- Working Families' Tax Credit
- Disabled Person's Tax Credit
- Child Benefit – Guardian's Allowance

**Note: If you are leaving the UK permanently or for more than 8 weeks and bringing a child you are caring for as the legal guardian, you must let the Child Benefit Centre know straight away. You have no right to remove a child, who is not your own, from the UK without authority so be careful to check your legal position. Their address is:**

Child Benefit Centre, PO Box 1, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE88 1AA, UK

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 20. Returning from the UK

#### What Benefits will transfer?

#### Must I satisfy conditions in order to transfer my benefits?

Yes. If you are in receipt of:

- **Severe Disablement Allowance** This payment will not transfer with you unless you were getting it before April 2001. If you were getting it before April 2001 it you might be able to transfer it to Ireland. You should check at your payment office for more information or you can ask for an Advanced Decision (see below)
- **Incapacity Benefit** Information provided by the Incapacity Benefits Section in the UK states: “people who are nationals of the European Community (EC) who are getting Incapacity Benefit and move permanently or temporarily to another EC country can still receive the payment.” **But it also states**, “This is provided that the normal conditions for getting benefit stay satisfied.”

You should check with your payment office for more information on whether you are entitled to transfer your Incapacity Benefit or ask for an Advanced Decision.

#### How can I get an Advanced Decision?

To get an Advanced Decision you must get **Form BF5** from the Incapacity Benefits Section (or from your local payment office). You must complete this form and you must write in **Part 9** under **Other Information** that you would like an advanced decision. All queries should be answered within 10 days of receipt.

#### Can I transfer Disability Living Allowance (DLA) from the UK to Ireland?

- If you were awarded DLA before 1st June 1992 you might be able to transfer this benefit to Ireland or any other EU country
- If you were awarded DLA after 1st June 1992 you cannot transfer the payment with you to Ireland. You should contact the:  
Disabilities Benefits Unit, Warbreck House, Warbreck Hill Road, Blackpool, FY2 OYE

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 20. Returning from the UK: What Benefits will transfer?

#### **What if none of my benefits transfer with me?**

If you have insufficient contributions or no contributions and you are under 66 years of age you will be assessed for Pre Retirement Disability Allowance or Jobseekers Allowance.

If you are aged 66 or over with an income of less than the State Non-Contributory Pension in Ireland you will have your income 'topped up' by the Irish State to this level. Any 'top up' payment is means tested and will fluctuate because the exchange rate from sterling to euro changes quite frequently.

If there is a delay transferring your benefits or assessing your claim for a benefit/pension in Ireland, you can make an application for Supplementary Welfare Allowance. This is a means tested short-term payment and you will have to pay it back.

#### **Where can I find more information about transferring my benefits from the UK to Ireland?**

For further information on transferring your benefits from the UK to Ireland you should contact:

The Pensions and Overseas Benefits Directorate, Department of Social Security,  
Tyneview Park, Benton, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE98 1BA  
Tel: + 44 191 218 7777

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2P. Rates of Payment (Budget 2008)

(These figures are correct at the time of publication but are subject to change) The figures below show the maximum amount of social welfare you would be entitled to if you meet all the conditions. To find out how much you are entitled to you must contact your local social welfare office.

	<b>Weekly Personal Rate</b>	<b>Qualified Adult Allowance QAA</b>	<b>Qualified Child Allowance</b>
<b>Maximum Weekly Rates</b>	€	€	€
<b>Supplementary Welfare Allowance</b>	197.80	131.30	24.00
<b><u>Payments for the Unemployed</u></b>			
<b>Jobseeker's Benefit</b>	197.80	131.30	24.00
<b>Jobseeker's Allowance</b>	197.80	131.30	24.00

You may get a reduced rate increase if your spouse or partner has earnings or income. For more information please contact your local social welfare office.

<b><u>Payments for people who are sick or disabled</u></b>			
<b>Illness Benefit</b>	197.80	131.30	24.00
<b>Disability Allowance</b>	197.80	131.30	24.00
<b>Disablement Benefit</b>	228.90		
<b>Invalidity Pension</b>			
- Under 65	203.30	136.50	24.00
- Over 65	223.30	173.00	24.00
<b>Incapacity Supplement</b>	197.80	131.30	24.00
<b>Blind Pension</b>	197.80	131.30	24.00

You may get a reduced rate increase if your spouse or partner has earnings or income of between €100.00 and €300.00 gross

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2P. Rates of Payment (Budget 2008)

<b><u>Family Income Supplement</u></b>	
<b>1 Child</b>	490
<b>2 Children</b>	570
<b>3 Children</b>	655
<b>4 Children</b>	760
<b>5 Children</b>	870
<b>6 Children</b>	970
<b>7 Children</b>	1,090
<b>8 Children or more</b>	1,170

The FIS you receive is 60% of the difference between your net family income (that is, gross pay minus tax, employee PRSI, Health Contribution, superannuation) and the income limit, which applies to your family.

No matter how little you may qualify for, you will still get a minimum of €20 each week.

#### **Maternity Benefit**

##### **Employees**

Your weekly rate of Maternity Benefit is calculated by dividing your gross income in the relevant tax year by the number of weeks you actually worked in that year.

You may get 80% of this amount, subject to a minimum payment of €221.80 and a maximum payment of €280 per week. These rates are effective from January 2008.

##### **Self-Employed**

Your weekly rate of Maternity Benefit is calculated by dividing your reckonable income in the relevant tax year by 52.

You may get 80% of this amount, subject to a minimum payment of €221.80 and a maximum payment of € 280 per week. These rates are effective from January 2007.

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2P. Rates of Payment (Budget 2008)

<b><u>Monthly rates of Child Benefit</u></b>	<b><u>April 2008</u></b>
<b>1 Child</b>	166.00
<b>2 Children</b>	332.00
<b>3 Children</b>	535.00
<b>4 Children</b>	738.00
<b>5 Children</b>	941.00
<b>6 Children</b>	1,144.00
<b>7 Children</b>	1,347.00
<b>8 Children or more</b>	1,550.00

	<b>Weekly Personal Rate</b>	<b>Qualified Adult Allowance QAA</b>	<b>Qualified Child Allowance</b>
<b>Maximum Weekly Rates</b>	€	€	€
<b><u>One-Parent Family Payment</u></b> - Under 66	197.80		All: 24.00

If you are getting One-Parent Family Payment, you could earn up to €146.50 per week and may still qualify for full payment. If you earn between €146.50 and €425.00, you may qualify for a reduced payment. If you are in receipt of One-Parent Family Payment, and your earnings subsequently exceed €425.00 per week, you will continue to receive transitional half-rate payment for 6 months. (May 2008)

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2P. Rates of Payment (Budget 2008)

<b><u>Widow's/Widower's Contributory Pension</u></b>			
- Under 66	203.30		24.00
- 66 and under 80	223.30		
- 80 or over	233.30		
<b><u>Widow's/Widower's Non-Contributory Pension</u></b>			
- Under 66	197.80		

<b><u>Payments for Carers</u></b>			All:
<b>Carer's Benefit</b>			24.00
- Caring for 1 person	214.70		
- Caring for 2 or more	322.10		
<b>Carer's Allowance</b>			
- Under 66 (Caring for 1 person)	214.00		
- Under 66 (Caring for 2 or more)	321.00		
- 66 or over (Caring for 1 person)	232.00		
- 66 or over (Caring for 2 or more)	348.00		

## 2. Benefits and Entitlements

### 2P. Rates of Payment (Budget 2008)

#### **Household Benefits Package**

##### **Electricity Allowance**

- Individual Account: Normal standing charges plus 2,400 units per year
- Group Account: €43.00 per month

##### **Natural Gas Allowance**

- Provides a credit of up to €106.50 for each two-monthly billing period in winter.
- Provides a credit of up to €48.50 for each two-monthly billing period in summer.

##### **Bottled Gas Refill Allowance**

- €43.00 per month

##### **Free Television Licence**

- Once you qualify for the Household Benefits Package you become entitled to a free colour television licence from the next due renewal date of your licence

##### **Telephone Allowance**

- Landline: This allowance provides a credit of €25.90 every month towards your telephone bill
- Mobile Phone: This allowance provides €25.90 per month paid at the post office or directly into a bank account.

<b><u>National Fuel Scheme</u></b>	<b><u>Per week</u></b>
Fuel	€18.00
Smokeless Fuel	<b>€3.90</b>

You may also get an additional Smokeless Fuel Allowance of €3.90 per week if you live in certain areas where the sale of bituminous fuel is banned