

Entitlements for People with Disabilities 2010

Citizens Information Board
information · advice · advocacy



Payments for people with disabilities

Paid by the Department of Social Protection (DSP)

Weekly maximum rates				
Payments	Personal rate		Qualified adult	
Illness Benefit	196.00		130.10	
Invalidity Pension	Under 65 201.50	Over 65 230.30	Under 66 143.80	Over 66 206.30
Disability Allowance	196.00		130.10	
Blind Pension	196.00		130.10	
Supplementary Welfare Allowance	196.00		130.10	
Disablement Benefit	227.00 (maximum personal pension)			
Increase per qualified child €29.80				
Additional payments				
Domiciliary Care Allowance (monthly)	309.50 per child			
Over-80 Increase	10.00			
Living Alone Increase	7.70			
Fuel Allowance: 32 weeks (Sept-April)	Standard rate: Smokeless Fuel Area:	20 per week 23.90 per week		

Social insurance (PRSI) payments

- Illness Benefit**
- Short-term payment based on PRSI contributions for those unable to work due to illness
 - Minimum 104 paid PRSI contributions required
 - Apply within 7 days of becoming ill
 - No payment made for the first three days of illness
 - To claim Illness Benefit get a first social welfare medical certificate (which includes a claim form) from your doctor
 - For claimants with 260 (5 years) or more contributions, payment is for maximum of 104 weeks (2 years)
 - Claimants with between 104 and 259 weeks contributions qualify for up to 52 weeks payment
 - Invalidity Pension may be claimed if the illness/disability persists

- Invalidity Pension**
- Long-term payment for people with sufficient paid/credited PRSI and permanently incapable of work due to illness/disability
 - Claimant may also get Free Travel and Household Benefits
 - Apply on Form INV 1 to your Social Welfare Local Office or Invalidity Pensions, New Claims Section, DSP, Longford

Means-tested payments

- Disability Allowance**
- Long-term means-tested social welfare payment for people between 16 and 66 with a disability that is expected to last at least a year
 - Apply on Form DA 1 to Social Welfare Local Office or Disability Allowance Section, DSP, Ballinalee Road, Longford
- Blind Pension**
- Long-term means-tested payment made to people, aged between 18 and 65, who are blind or have low vision
 - Can be paid with another social welfare payment such as Illness Benefit or Widow/er's Pensions
 - Apply on Form BP 1 to Blind Pension Section, DSP, Sligo

- Blind Welfare Allowance**
- Supplementary HSE payment to a person who is:
 - blind or has low vision,
 - getting Blind Pension or Disability Allowance,
 - in need of extra support
 - Apply to your Local Health Office

- Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA)**
- Means-tested payment for people who do not qualify for other payments and cannot meet their needs from their own means
 - Includes other financial supports: rent and mortgage interest supplements, payments for urgent needs and emergencies
 - The HSE sets a maximum rent supplement at local area level – Tenant's own minimum contribution to weekly rent is €24.00
 - People with specific disability-related extra needs may be eligible for a special needs supplement (for example heating or dietary needs)
 - Administered by HSE Community Welfare Officers

Occupational Injuries Benefits (OIB)

OIB applies to people with an occupational disease or who have been injured due to an accident at work - or while travelling directly to or from work. Main benefits are Injury Benefit and Disablement Benefit.

- Injury Benefit**
- Short-term payment (26 weeks) for insured people who are unable to work due to an accident at work or an occupational disease
 - Apply for Injury Benefit with a first social welfare medical certificate (which includes the claim form) available from your doctor

- Disablement Benefit**
- Payment for insured people who have lost physical or mental abilities as the result of an occupational disease or a work-related accident
 - Payment made where the level of disablement is assessed at 1% or more
 - Can be paid as a single lump sum (called Disablement Gratuity) when the disablement is assessed as less than 20% or as a regular payment (called Disablement Pension) when the disablement is assessed at more than 20%
 - Apply on Form OB2.1, available from your Social Welfare Local Office or Disablement Benefit Section, DSP, Store Street, Dublin 1

- Additional Occupational Injuries Benefits**
- Incapacity Supplement**
An increase to Disablement Benefit for those permanently incapable of work and not eligible for another social welfare payment.
 - Constant Attendance Allowance**
An increase to a Disablement Benefit (of 50% or more) for people who need daily help at home for at least six months
 - Medical care**
Refund for certain medical care expenses not covered by the HSE or by the Treatment Benefit.
 - Claim within six weeks of the start of treatment

Social Welfare complaints and appeals

The Department of Social Protection (DSP) deals directly with complaints about the service customers receive (for example delays, mistakes or other comments on services). A Comment and Complaint leaflet is available in all social welfare offices and from welfare.ie

Appeals
You can appeal decisions on social welfare payments to the independent Social Welfare Appeals Office. A list of the schemes within the jurisdiction of the Office is available on the office's website.
The Social Welfare Appeals Office, D'Olier House, D'Olier Street, Dublin 2
Lo-call: 1890 747 434 e swappeals@welfare.ie socialwelfareappeals.ie

Health Service Executive (HSE) payments

Payment	Weekly rate
Blind Welfare Allowance	
Claimant	61.00
Increase for child dependant	4.40
Mobility Allowance (per month)	Higher rate: 208.50 Lower rate: 104.25
Motorised Transport Grant (maximum rate)	5,020.50 (once-off payment)

Medical /GP visit card

Weekly income limit for people under 70 (gross less PRSI and tax deductions)

Single person living alone	Medical card	GP visit card*
Aged up to 66	184.00	276.00
Aged 66-69	201.50	302.00
Single person living with family		
Aged up to 66	164.00	246.00
Aged 66-69	173.50	260.00
Married couple/One-parent family		
Aged up to 66	266.50	400.00
Aged 66-69	298.00	447.00
Additional allowances for each dependent child		
First two children under 16	38.00	57.00
Third and subsequent under 16	41.00	61.50
First two children over 16	39.00	58.50
Third and subsequent over 16	42.50	64.00
In full-time third-level education and not grant-aided	78.00	117.00

*The GP Visit Card is not available to people aged over 70, who should apply for a medical card instead (see below).
Additional allowances for rent/mortgage expenses, for childcare costs and travel costs to work (actual cost of public transport or mileage at 18c/km or 30c/mile). People aged 16 to 25 who are dependent on their parents will not be entitled to a card unless their parents hold a card. Hardship cases are dealt with individually on merit.

Prescription charges
Legislation is being introduced to bring in prescription charges. When passed, medical card and long term illness card holders will pay 50 cent per prescription item, to a monthly ceiling of €10 per family.

Medical card income guidelines for people over 70

	Weekly income	Annual income	Amount of savings disregard
Single person	700	36,400	36,000
Couple	1,400	72,800	72,000

If your income is above these limits and you have difficulty meeting your medical needs you may apply for a discretionary medical card.

Hospital charges

Public Hospital Outpatient Charge 100.00
Payable by people who attend A&E departments without a referral letter from a GP.
Medical card holders do not pay this charge.

Daily charge for a bed in a public ward 75.00
This charge is not payable by a number of groups including medical card holders.

Long-stay charges* (payable after 30 days in a public hospital or in long-stay public ward of acute facilities)	Class 1 (24 hr nursing care)	Weekly
	Class 2	114.95

* Long-stay charges only apply to patients who were in public care before 27 October 2009. New rates now apply – see rates for individual nursing homes on www.hse.ie

Nursing Homes Support Scheme

Known as the 'Fair Deal', this scheme provides state support for people who need long-term care.

- Under the scheme, you contribute 80% of assessable income and 5% of assets (over €36,000) each year and the State then pays the difference between this and the actual cost of nursing home care. The 5% contribution based on the value of your assets including your home can be deferred and paid after death (called a Nursing Home Loan). Contributions based on the value of your home are only deducted for 3 years.
- Covers all types of nursing homes including approved private voluntary and public.
- Arrangements for people in nursing homes on 27 October 2009 do not change (these people can opt for their current arrangement or switch to the Fair Deal) but all new applicants are assessed under the Fair Deal.
- Apply to your HSE Local Health Office.

Schemes and services

Drugs Payment Scheme
Scheme for non medical card holders where an individual or family pays a maximum of €120 per calendar month for prescribed drugs and medicines. Application forms available from pharmacies or the HSE.

Long-term Illness Scheme
Under this scheme drugs, medicines and some approved appliances prescribed for the treatment of certain medical conditions are available free of charge. Apply to your Local Health Office.

Treatment Benefit Scheme
The Treatment Benefit Scheme is run by the Department of Social Protection. Under the scheme, you get a contribution towards the costs of treatment. The scheme is limited in 2010 to certain medical and surgical appliances and the free examinations provided for under dental and optical benefits. Medical card holders are legally entitled to dental, ophthalmic and aural services from the HSE but, in practice, the availability of these services varies from area to area.

Hearing aids
The HSE provide hearing aids, dental and optical services free of charge to medical card holders. Apply to your Local Health Office (LHO). Under the Treatment Benefit Scheme half the cost of each hearing aid (up to €760) is available. Application forms available from supplier.

Services for people with disabilities
The HSE provides services including basic health services as well as assessment, rehabilitation, community care and residential care. Many other services are provided by voluntary organisations. (For details of disability organisations see *National Directory of Voluntary Organisations* available from the Citizens Information Board.)

Assessment of need for children
The Disability Act 2005 provides for the assessment of need of people with disabilities and service statements that outline how these needs will be met. Assessment of need applies only to children under five.

Aids and appliances
The HSE helps medical card holders with purchase costs of necessary medical and surgical aids and appliances (e.g. wheelchairs and walking aids). The HSE may give assistance to those unable to meet the costs if equipment is considered necessary as part of hospital treatment. Contact Disability Services in your Local Health Office to check if assistance is available.

Assist Ireland
Web resource provided by the Citizens Information Board with information on assistive technology and a directory of products available from Irish suppliers. Helpline also available at Lo-call 1890 277 478 SMS: 086 383 7644 e support@assistireland.ie assistireland.ie

Communications

Scheme for Text Telephone Equality of Payment (STEP)
Text telephone users at home can receive a rebate of up to 70% of the cost of phone calls.

Application forms from:	
Deaf/Hearie 35 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1 t (01) 817 5700	Irish Deaf Society 30 Blessington Street, Dublin 7 t (01) 860 1878 irishdeafociety.ie
Minicom (01) 817 5777	deafhear.ie

Supports for carers

Carer's payments	Caring for one	Caring for 2 or more	Qualified child
Carer's Allowance Aged under 66	212.00	318.00	€29.80 (full-rate)
Aged 66 or over	239.00	358.50	€14.90 (half-rate)

A half-rate carer's allowance may be paid in addition to an existing social welfare payment

Constant Attendance Allowance (for carers of people getting Disablement Benefit) 213.00

- Carer's Allowance**
- Long-term means-tested payment for carers (over 18) looking after someone in need of full-time care for at least 12 months
 - Person receiving care can be under the age of 16 if a Domiciliary Care Allowance is being paid
 - Half-rate allowance paid to people receiving certain social welfare payments and taking care of someone with a disability
 - Not payable with Jobseeker's Benefit/Allowance, Back to Work Allowance, or Supplementary Welfare Allowance
 - Apply on Form CR 1 to Carer's Allowance Section, DSP, Longford

- Carer's Benefit**
- Short-term payment (up to 24 months) which can be claimed by insured people who leave a job (of at least 32 hours a fortnight) temporarily to care for someone who needs full-time care
 - If you are self-employed and paying Class S PRSI contributions, you are not eligible for Carer's Benefit
 - Apply to Carer's Benefit Section, DSP, Longford

- Carer's Leave**
- Employees, after one year's service, may take unpaid leave (maximum 2 years) to provide full-time care for someone who needs it

- Respite Care Grant**
- Annual payment (€1,700 per person cared for), made in the first week of June
 - Paid automatically by DSP to people receiving Carer's Allowance/Carer's Benefit/Constant Attendance Allowance/Domiciliary Care Allowance
 - Also paid to people providing full-time care to an older person or a person with a disability, or an older person, regardless of the carer's means

- Domiciliary Care Allowance**
- Monthly payment paid by the DSP for parent or carer of a child under 16 with a severe disability
 - No means-test

Carers' support organisations

- Carers' Association**
Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
t (057) 932 2920/ (057) 932 2664
carersireland.com
- Carer's Alliance Ireland**
Coleraine House, Coleraine St., Dublin 7
t (01) 874 7776
carealliance.ie
- Caring for Carers Ireland**
Carmody Street, Ennis, Co. Clare
t (065) 686 6515
mobhaile.ie/caringforcarers
- National Care Line**
t 1800 24 07 24

Employment supports

- Rehabilitative work and disability payments**
- People getting Disability Allowance and Blind Pension can do paid work considered to be rehabilitative or therapeutic and earn up to €120.00 a week without affecting their payment
 - Can include FÁS training and Community Employment (CE) schemes
 - Written approval is needed from the Department of Social Protection before taking up rehabilitative work (except in the case of Disability Allowance where you can commence work before getting approval)

- Community Employment (CE)**
CE provides part time and temporary jobs in the community. There are two categories of Community Employment: the Part-time Integration Option and the Part-time Job Option.
- Part-time Integration Option is for people of 25 or over
 - Part-time Job Option is for people who are 35 or over
 - You can participate from age 18 if you are getting a disability-related payment (Disability Allowance, Blind Pension and Invalidity Pension). You must be getting Illness Benefit for six months to be eligible for CE
 - Under both options participants work 19.5 hours a week/39 hours a fortnight and are paid an allowance by the sponsor
 - Apply to FÁS
- Rural Social Scheme (RSS)**
- Available to farmers and fishermen/women unable to earn an adequate living from their holding or from fishing.
 - If you are getting another social welfare or Health Service Executive (HSE) payment you should check if it will be affected with your local Social Welfare or Health Office.
 - Participants getting Disability Allowance continue to get it, along with a minimum top-up payment of €20 (2010) from RSS. This is different to CE.
 - The scheme is administered locally

- FÁS**
- People with disabilities are considered a priority for FÁS training courses, including specialist training. Where a training requirement has been identified and this training is not offered by FÁS, it is possible that FÁS may meet some of the costs.
 - If you are getting Disability Allowance or Blind Pension, the FÁS training allowance will be equivalent to your social welfare payment. In addition, FÁS pays a training bonus.
 - If you are getting Illness Benefit or Invalidity Pension, you must obtain an exemption from the Rules of Behaviour from the DSP before you can engage in FÁS training. Provided you have obtained this exemption, you will retain your social welfare payments in addition to receiving the FÁS training allowance. However, you will not receive the FÁS training bonus.
 - Participants on FÁS training courses continue to receive any secondary benefits they were in receipt of before taking up the FÁS training course. Also, DSP will restore your social welfare payment, if for any reason you are unable to continue your training.
 - The Wage Subsidy Scheme and Workplace/Equipment Adaptation Grant provide financial assistance to employers to encourage the employment of people with disabilities, make workplaces more accessible and equipment easier to use.
 - Other FÁS supports aimed at helping people with disabilities gain and retain employment include: Employee Retention, Job Interview Interpreter and Personal Reader grants; Supported Employment Programme and disability awareness training for employers.

To apply for any of these supports contact your local FÁS office. fas.ie

Transport

- Free Travel Pass**
- Free travel is available on public transport and some private bus and ferry services for those aged 66 or over and to some people under age 66 getting specific disability payments
 - Companion Travel Pass
Certain people, medically assessed as being unfit to travel alone, can have someone aged 16 or over accompany them
 - Application forms (FT1) available from Social Welfare Local Offices and from Free Schemes Section, DSP, Sligo

- Disabled Drivers and Passengers Tax Relief**
- Reliefs for drivers or passengers with physical disabilities (with a Primary Medical Certificate from the HSE) who use a specially-adapted vehicle
 - Contact: Disabled Drivers Section, Central Repayments Office, Revenue Commissioners, Coolshannagh, Co. Monaghan
t (047) 38010

Disabled Person's Parking Card

- Available to drivers or passengers with disabilities, aged 5 or over, for use in any car in which they travel
 - Costs €25
- Application forms available from:
Irish Wheelchair Association, National Mobility Centre, Ballinagappa Road, Clane, Co. Kildare
t (045) 893 094, iwa.ie or
Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland, Parking Card Section, Ballindine, Co. Mayo
t (094) 936 4266/4054, ddai.ie

- Primary Medical Certificate**
- A Primary Medical Certificate is issued by the HSE and confirms that a person meets the medical criteria set out in the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Regulations 1994.

Housing

- Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability**
- Means-tested grant to make a home suitable for a person with a physical, sensory, intellectual disability or mental health difficulty
 - Maximum grant is €30,000 (€14,500 for new houses).

- Mobility Aids Grant Scheme**
- Means-tested grants for mobility equipment in the home.
 - Up to 100% of costs with a maximum of €6,000
 - Primarily for older people but people with disabilities can access the scheme.
 - Available to people with a maximum annual household income of less than €30,000.

Grants will not be made to the same applicant under both schemes.

- Housing Aid for Older People**
- Means-tested scheme which provides for grants to improve the homes of older people (over 60 generally).
 - Maximum grant is €10,500.

To apply for any of these grants contact the housing department of your City or County Council

Tax credits and allowances

Allowance for employing a carer: if you or your spouse are incapacitated, and you or a family member employ someone as a carer, relief can be claimed - at your highest rate of tax - for the cost of the employment (up to €50,000 max).

- Home Carer's Tax Credit**
- Tax credit of €900 for married couples (taxed jointly) where one spouse, with income not exceeding €5,080 works in the home (for example caring for a permanently incapacitated person)
 - Reduced tax credit applies where income is between €5,080 and €6,880

Blind Person's Tax Credit	
Single person	1,830
Couple, both blind	3,660
Incapacitated Child Tax Credit	3,660
Dependent Relative Tax Credit (Available if relative's income does not exceed €13,837)	80
Guide Dog Tax Credit (relief at highest rate)	165

Deed of Covenant
Tax relief on a Deed of Covenant is limited to 5% of your total income where the person receiving the covenant is aged 65 or over and is unrestricted if the person ('covenantee') is permanently incapacitated.

Medical expenses relief
Available for most unreimbursed, non-routine medical and dental expenses for yourself or another person. Expenses can include doctor visits, treatment in hospital, transport by ambulance, specialised dental treatment and certain items prescribed by a doctor. Relief is granted at the standard rate (20%).

- Refund of Value Added Tax (VAT)**
- A refund of VAT is available for certain aids and appliances
 - Aids/appliances must be used by someone with a disability to assist them with independent living and working
 - Claim forms available from Revenue, VAT (Unregistered) Repayments Section, Ennis, Co. Clare. Lo-call 1890 202 033

Education

Special Education Needs Organisers (SENOs)
Responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating delivery of educational services to children with disabilities at local level. Contact: National Council for Special Education, 1-2 Mill Street, Trim, Co. Meath
t (046) 948 6400 ncse.ie

- Fund for Students with Disabilities**
Funding for third-level and PLC students with disabilities administered by the Department of Education and Science. Apply directly to the college at the start of the academic year (Sept/Oct).
- Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)**
- Third-level admissions scheme for students with disabilities.
 - Places allocated on a reduced points basis to school leavers whose disability has affected their educational performance significantly
 - Details on the websites of participating third-level colleges
 - Apply through the Central Admissions Office (CAO)

Useful contacts
AHEAD - Association for Higher Education Access and Disability, East Hall, UCD, Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.
t (01) 716 4396
ahead.ie

All figures in tables are in euro (€)

Useful contacts:
Department of Social Protection
Lo-call (Information line): 1890 66 22 44
Lo-call (Leaflet line): 1890 20 23 25
welfare.ie

Health Service Executive (HSE)
CallSave: 1850 24 1850
hse.ie

Revenue Commissioners
revenue.ie

Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS)
The national agency for the provision of sign language interpreters.
Hainault House, The Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24
t/Minicom: (01) 413 9670 or (087) 980 6996
f (01) 413 9677
e.slis@slis.ie
slis.ie

FÁS
Jobs Ireland Lo-call: 1800 611 116
fas.ie

Further information:
See *Entitlements for People with Disabilities* and *Entitlements for Children with Disabilities*, both booklets available from the Citizens Information Board. Also online information on all entitlements available on citizensinformation.ie.

For copies of this wallchart contact:
2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion
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