

DISABILITY INFORMATION – FACTSHEET 1

PAYMENTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



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. Payments are made either by the Department of Social and Family Affairs or by the Health Board. Disability Benefit and Invalidity Pension are based on PRSI contributions. Disability 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.

If you are sick and do not qualify for any of these payments you may be eligible for Supplementary Welfare Allowance which is means tested.

Social Insurance (PRSI) Payments

Sufficient PRSI contributions are required to qualify for these payments.

Disability Benefit

This is a short-term payment for those under age 66, unable to work due to illness. You must have 39 weeks PRSI paid since you started work and 39 weeks PRSI paid or credited in the Relevant Tax Year including 13 weeks paid in a recent year or 26 weeks paid in the Relevant Tax Year and 26 weeks paid in the year before that (for 2003 the Relevant Tax Year is 2001). You should apply within 7 days of becoming ill by obtaining from your doctor a First Social Welfare Medical Certificate that includes a claim form. No payment is normally made for the first three days of illness. If you have 5 years PRSI paid Disability Benefit can be paid long-term.

Invalidity Pension

This is a long-term payment for those permanently incapable of work due to illness or incapacity. You must have 260 weeks (i.e. 5 years) PRSI paid since starting work and 48 weeks PRSI paid or credited in the last complete tax year before the date of your claim. Claim forms are available from the Invalidity Pension Claims Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

Means Tested Payments

A means test is applied to determine eligibility for these payments.

Disability Allowance

This is a long-term payment for those aged 16-65 with a disability (expected to last at least one year). Your means and that of your spouse/partner are taken into account but your parents' means are not considered. If you become a long-stay patient in hospital or residential care you retain your payment. You can earn €120 per week from rehabilitative type work without it affecting your Disability Allowance.

Before you start work you must get approval from the Department of Social and Family Affairs. Application forms (DA 1) are available from your local Social Welfare Office or from the Disability Allowance Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

Blind Pension

This is a long-term payment for those aged 18 or over who are blind or have low vision. Application forms (BP 1) from your local Social Welfare Office or from the Blind Pension Section.

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Blind Welfare Allowance

This is a Health Board payment for those who are blind or have low vision and receiving Blind Pension or Disability Allowance.

Infectious Diseases Maintenance Allowance

This is a Health Board payment for those aged 16 or over undergoing treatment for a prescribed infectious disease.

Mobility Allowance

This is a monthly payment from the Health Board for those aged 16-65 with severe disabilities who are unable to walk and would benefit from a change of surroundings.

Supplementary Welfare Allowance

This payment is for those who do not qualify for some other payment and have insufficient means to meet their needs. It is administered by the Health Board. Also available are a Diet Supplement where a special diet is required for a medical condition and a Heating Supplement for those living alone or with certain dependents, who have exceptional heating expenses due to ill-health or infirmity. Apply to the Community Welfare Officer at your local health centre.

Occupational Injuries Benefits

For people who are injured at work (or travelling directly to or from it) or who have contracted a disease due to the type of work they do.

Virtually all employees are insured for Occupational Injuries Benefit. Apply for a declaration that the accident/disease occurred at work on form DB/OB 1 which is available from the Injury Benefit Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

Injury Benefit

Short-term payment (26 weeks) for those who are unfit for work. Claim forms (Social Welfare Medical Certificate) available from doctor.

Disablement Benefit

Long-term payment for those who sustain a loss of physical or mental faculty (the rate paid depends on degree of disablement). You should apply for Disablement Benefit before payment of Injury Benefit stops.

Claim forms (OB 21) available from your Social Welfare Office or from the Disablement Benefit Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

Additional benefits

Other benefits available include Unemployability Supplement for those permanently incapable of work, Constant Attendance Allowance and Medical Care.

PAYMENTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Payment	Maximum Weekly Rates, €					
	Claimant		Qualified Adult		Child Dependant	
Disability Benefit (DB)						
Average weekly earnings						
88·88 +	124·80		82·80		16·80	
63·49 – 88·87	97·80		53·70		16·80	
44·44 – 63·48	80·60		53·70		16·80	
Less than 44·44	56·10		53·70		16·80	
Invalidity Pension						
			Under 66		Over 66	
Aged under 65	130·30		93·00		113·10 19·30	
Aged 65 and over	157·30		93·00		113·10 19·30	
Disability Allowance (DA)						
	124·80		82·80		16·80	
Blind Pension (BP)						
			Under 66		Over 66	
Aged under 66	124·80		82·80		95·20 16·80	
Aged 66 or over	144·00		82·80		95·20 16·80	
Blind Welfare Supplementary Allowance						
BP claimant 18+	38·80		–		4·40	
Couple claiming BP	77·60		–		–	
DA claimant, 16–17	–		4·60		3·90	
Infectious Diseases Maintenance Allowance						
	124·80		84·00		16·80	
Supplementary Welfare Allowance						
	124·80		82·80		16·80	
Injury Benefit/Unemployability Supplement						
	124·80		82·80		16·80	
Disablement Benefit	155·90					
Island Allowance	12·70					
Over 80 Allowance	6·40					
Living Alone Allowance	7·70					

Further information and application forms are available from the following:

Department of Social and Family Affairs
Invalidity Pension, Disability Allowance, Disablement Benefit
Social Welfare Services Office,
Government Buildings,
Ballinalee Road,
Longford.
Tel: (01) 704 3000, or (043) 45211

Blind Pension, Free Schemes
Pension Services Office
College Road,
Sligo.
Tel: (01) 704 3000, or
(071) 916 9800
LoCall: 1890 500 000

Injury Benefit, Medical Care
Social Welfare Services Office
157–164 Townsend Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: (01) 704 3000

Disability Benefit
Department of Social and Family Affairs,
Áras Mhic Dhiarmada,
Store Street,
Dublin 1.
Tel: (01) 679 777

Health Boards
Eastern Regional Health Authority,
Main Customer Service
Department,
Dr. Steevens' Hospital,
Dublin 8.
Tel: Freephone: 1800 520 520

East Coast Area Health Board,
Southern Cross House,
Southern Cross Business Park,
Boghall Road,
Bray,
Co. Wicklow.
Tel: (01) 201 4200

Northern Area Health Board,
Swords Business Campus,
Balheary Road,
Swords,
Co. Dublin.
Tel: (01) 813 1800

South Western Area Health Board,
Oak House, Limetree Avenue,
Millennium Park,
Naas,
Co Kildare
Tel: (045) 880 400
Locall: 1890 737 343

Mid-Western Health Board,
31/33 Catherine Street,
Limerick.
Tel: (061) 316 655

Midland Health Board,
Arden Road,
Tullamore,
Co. Offaly.
Tel: (0506) 21868

North Eastern Health Board,
Navan Rd,
Kells,
Co. Meath.
Tel: (046) 928 0500

North Western Health Board,
Manorhamilton,
Co. Leitrim.
Tel: (071) 982 0400
LoCall: 1850 636 313

South Eastern Health Board,
Dublin Road,
Lacken,
Kilkenny.
Tel: (056) 778 4100

Western Health Board,
Merlin Park Regional Hospital,
Galway.
Tel: (091) 751 131

Southern Health Board,
Áras Sláinte, Dennehy's Cross,
Wilton Rd
Cork.
Tel: (021) 454 5011

Further information on benefits is available in 'Entitlements for People with Disabilities', published by Comhairle and available from your local Citizens Information Centre – check the Golden Pages