

# Entitlements for People with Disabilities 2011

Citizens Information Board  
information · advice · advocacy



## Payments for people with disabilities

| Payment  | Maximum personal rate (weekly) |                                   |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|  | Claimant                       | Qualified adult                   |
| <b>Incapacity Pension (PRSI-based)</b>   |                                |                                   |
| Aged under 65  | 193.50                         | <b>Under 66</b> <b>66 or over</b> |
| Aged 65  | 230.30                         | 138.10 206.30                     |
| <b>Illness / Injury / Health and Safety Benefit (PRSI-based)</b>                                   | 188.00                         | 124.80                            |
| Reduced rates of IB apply if average weekly earnings in the relevant tax year were less than €300. |                                |                                   |
| <b>Disability Allowance (means-tested)</b>   | 188.00                         | 124.80                            |
| <b>Blind Pension (means-tested)</b>  | 188.00                         | 124.80                            |
| <b>Disablement Benefit (PRSI-based)</b>  | 219.00                         |                                   |
| <b>Training bonus for people with disabilities (HSE)</b>   | 31.80                          |                                   |
| <b>Blind Welfare Allowance (HSE)</b>   |                                | n/a                               |
| Claimant   | 58.50                          |                                   |
| Child dependant  | 4.40                           |                                   |
| <b>Mobility Allowance (HSE)</b>  |                                |                                   |
| Higher rate  | 208.50 monthly                 |                                   |
| Lower rate   | 104.25 monthly                 |                                   |
| <b>Motorised Transport Grant (HSE) (maximum rate)</b>  |                                | 5,020.50 (once-off payment)       |

## Social insurance (PRSI) payments

**Illness Benefit**

- Short-term payment based on PRSI contributions for people 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
- Paid for maximum of 2 years
- Incapacity Pension. You can claim if the illness/disability persists

**Incapacity 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 Incapacity 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
- People with specific disability-related extra needs may be eligible for a special needs supplement (for example heating or dietary needs)
- Administered by 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
- 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 OB21, 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 people 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

## 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

## Payments for carers

| Payment  | Maximum personal rate (weekly)  |                      |
|--|---|----------------------|
|  | Caring for 1  | Caring for 2 or more |
| <b>Carer's Benefit (PRSI-based)</b>  | 205.00  | 307.50               |
| <b>Carer's Allowance (means-tested)</b>  |   |                      |
| Carer under age 66   | 204.00  | 306.00               |
| Carer aged 66 and over   | 239.00  | 358.50               |
| A half-rate carer's allowance may be paid in addition to an existing social welfare payment. |   |                      |
| <b>Domiciliary Care Allowance</b>  | 309.50 (monthly)  |                      |
| <b>Respite Care Grant</b>  | 1,700 per year for each person being cared for (paid on first Thursday in June) |                      |

**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
- Not payable with Jobseeker's Benefit/Allowance, Supplementary Welfare Allowance
- Apply on Form CR1 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

## Carers' support organisations

**Carers' Association**  
Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.  
t (057) 932 2920/ (057) 932 2664  
carersireland.com

**Caring for Carers Ireland**  
Carmody Street, Ennis, Co. Clare  
t (065) 686 6515  
caringforcarsers.ie

**Care Alliance Ireland**  
Coleraine House, Coleraine St., Dublin 7  
t (01) 874 7776  
carealliance.ie

## Additional payments

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Over 80 Increase</b>   | 10.00 weekly  |
| <b>Living Alone Increase</b>  | 7.70 weekly   |
| <b>Island Increase</b>  | 12.70 weekly  |
| <b>Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner Grant (with qualified children)</b> | 6,000 (once-off payment)  |
| <b>Bereavement Grant (PRSI-based)</b>                                     | 850 (once-off payment)  |
| <b>Fuel Allowance</b>   | €20 weekly, paid for 32 weeks to end of April.<br>€3.90 weekly extra in smokeless fuel areas. |
| <b>Qualified Child Increase (paid if you have a dependent child)</b>      | <b>Full rate</b> 29.80<br><b>Half rate</b> 14.90  |

## 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

## 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 a week without affecting their payment
- Can include FÁS training and Community Employment (CE) schemes.

**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 Incapacity 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.
- Participants getting Disability Allowance continue to get it, along with a minimum top-up payment of €20 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.
- 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

## Medical card/GP visit card

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

| Single person living alone                             | Medical card | GP visit card* |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| Aged up to 66  | 184.00       | 276.00         |
| Aged 66-69   | 201.50       | 302.00         |
| <b>Single person living with family</b>                |              |                |
| Aged up to 66  | 164.00       | 246.00         |
| Aged 66-69   | 173.50       | 260.00         |
| <b>Married couple/One-parent family</b>                |              |                |
| Aged up to 66  | 266.50       | 400.00         |
| Aged 66-69   | 298.00       | 447.00         |
| <b>Additional allowances for each dependent child</b>  |              |                |
| 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 €0.30 per mile/ €0.18 per km). 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**  
All medical card and Long-Term Illness Card holders pay 50 cent per prescription with a monthly ceiling of €10 per family. Forms and information available on [medicard.ie](http://medicard.ie).

## Medical card income guidelines for people over 70

|                      | Weekly income | Annual income | Amount of savings disregard |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Single person</b> | 700           | 36,400        | 36,000                      |
| <b>Couple</b>        | 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**  
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**  
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 1                      | 153.25 |
|   | 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 [hse.ie](http://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 land and property assets 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 could 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.

## 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.

## Transport

**Free Travel Pass**

- Free travel is available on public transport and some private bus and ferry services for people aged 66 and 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.

## 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. The scheme is limited to certain medical and surgical appliances and the free examinations provided for under dental and optical benefits.

**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.

**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. See the Citizens Information Board's book *Entitlements for Children with Disabilities*.

**Aids and appliances**  
The HSE helps medical card holders with purchase costs of necessary medical and surgical aids and appliances (such as 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.

**Assist Ireland**  
Website from 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

## 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  | 1,650 |
| Couple, both blind   | 3,300 |
| Incapacitated Child Tax Credit   | 3,300 |
| Dependent Relative Tax Credit (Available if relative's income does not exceed €13,837) | 70    |

**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%). You can claim a Guide Dog Allowance (max €825) at the standard rate of 20% under medical expenses relief.

**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

**Citizens Information National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities**  
National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities provides independent, representative advocacy services for vulnerable people with disabilities. It is managed by the Citizens Information Service with five regional based teams in Dublin, Westmeath, Offaly, Waterford and Leitrim. Contact the Citizens Information Board for more information.

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

**Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS)**  
Hainault House, The Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24  
t Minicom: (01) 413 9670 or e slis@slis.ie  
slis.ie

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

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

**Revenue Commissioners**  
revenue.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](http://citizensinformation.ie).

## For copies of this wallchart contact:

**Citizens Information Board**  
George's Quay House  
43 Townsend St  
Dublin 2  
citizensinformationboard.ie

t +353 1 605 9000  
f +353 1 605 9099  
e info@ciboard.ie

## Citizens Information

LOG ON  
[www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)

LO-CALL  
1890 777 121  
Mon to Fri, 9am-9pm

DROP IN  
260 locations nationwide

\* rates charged for 1890 (Lo-Call) numbers may vary between service providers.