

Budget 2019

Main social welfare changes and rates of payments



An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection

€20.5 billion to be spent on social welfare in 2019 Includes €361.6 million of additional Budget Measures

€5 increase in max. rate of all weekly payments e.g. pensioners, lone parents, jobseekers, carers, people with disabilities, widows - 1.47 million beneficiaries

Proportionate increases for people on reduced rate payments
and for qualified adult dependants

€5.20 increase for qualified child dependants aged 12 and over, in all weekly payments

€2.20 increase for qualified child dependants up to age 12, in all weekly payments

€25 increase in the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance for each qualifying child

Earnings disregard for Working Lone Parents increased by €20 to €150 per week

Working Family Payment recipients to benefit from a new maintenance disregard

New Hot School Meals Pilot Programme for DEIS schools to commence in 2019

Daily Expenses Allowance (formerly Direct Provision Allowance) to increase to €38.80 for adults and to €29.80 per week for children

One additional week of Fuel Allowance (to 28 weeks) in 2019 – 373,800 households to benefit

New Social Insurance Parental Benefit payment to be paid for 2 weeks for each parent - to commence in November 2019

Self-employed to become eligible for Jobseeker's Benefit from Quarter 4, 2019

€2 million increase for materials funding for Community Employment Scheme

National Minimum Wage increases to €9.80 per hour from 1 January 2019

A 100% Christmas Bonus will be paid in early December 2018 to 1.2 million recipients

Christmas Bonus to be paid to 1.2 million people this year

€264.3 million to be paid to long-term welfare recipients in December 2018

A **100% Christmas Bonus** will be paid in December 2018 to recipients of a long-term Social Welfare payment (min €20 payment).

People in receipt of the following payments will receive the Bonus:

- State Pensions and Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's Pensions
- Invalidity Pension, Blind Pension, Disability Allowance, Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit, Partial Capacity Benefit, Disablement Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance and Guardian's payments.
- One-Parent Family Payment, Jobseeker's Transition Payment, Deserted Wife's Benefit and Allowance and Farm Assist.
- Back to Work Enterprise Allowance, Community Employment, Rural Social Scheme, TÚS and Job Initiative.
- Long-term Jobseeker's Allowance, Supplementary Welfare Allowance, Daily Expenses Allowance (formerly Direct Provision Allowance).

Improvements in Weekly Payments – from week beginning 25 March 2019

- €5 increase in all weekly payments including all Pensions, Maternity/Paternity/Adoptive Benefit, Illness Benefit, Blind Pension, Carer's Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension, One-Parent Family Payment, Jobseeker's Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance and Farm Assist, with proportionate increases for people in receipt of reduced rate payments. This includes increases in employment programmes such as, Back to Education Allowance, CE, TÚS and Rural Social Scheme.
- Proportionate increases in weekly payments for qualified adult dependants.
- €5.20 increase for each qualified child dependant aged 12 and over, in all weekly payments.
- €2.20 increase for each qualified child dependant up to age 12, in all weekly payments.
- Jobseekers aged under 26 on a reduced rate payment to get €5 increase per week – 13,000 to benefit.
- Daily Expenses Allowance (formerly Direct Provision Allowance) will increase by €17.20 to €38.80 per week for adults and by €8.20 to €29.80 per week for each child – 5,200 adults and children to benefit.

Families and Children

- €5 increase in all working-age weekly payments, including One-Parent Family Payment, Jobseeker's Transition Payment and Maternity/Paternity/Adoptive Benefits.
- €5.20 increase for each qualified child dependant aged 12 and over, in all weekly payments.
- €2.20 increase for each qualified child dependant up to age 12 in all weekly payments.
- Earnings disregard for working lone parents receiving One-Parent Family Payment or Jobseeker's Transition Payment to increase by €20 to €150 per week – 13,200 families to benefit.
- Working Family Payment recipients to benefit from a new maintenance disregard of €95 per week in respect of housing costs, with the remainder to be assessed at 50% - an estimated 5,500 families expected to benefit.
- New Social Insurance Parental Benefit payment to be paid for two weeks for each parent - to commence in November 2019.
- Self-employed to become eligible for Jobseeker's Benefit – to be introduced in Quarter 4, 2019. This is a further extension of social welfare benefits to the self-employed based on their Class S PRSI contributions.
- New Hot School Meals Pilot Programme for DEIS schools to commence in 2019 – 7,200 children to benefit.
- €25 increase in the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance for each qualifying child, increasing the rate to €150 for children aged 4-11, and €275 for children aged 12 years and over – some 145,000 families with 265,000 children to benefit.

- Weekly Fuel Allowance of €22.50 will be paid for 28 weeks in 2019, extended from 27 weeks – extra week will apply to the current Fuel Allowance season – some 373,800 households to benefit.
- Daily Expenses Allowance (formerly Direct Provision Allowance) will increase by €17.20 to €38.80 per week for adults and by €8.20 to €29.80 per week for each child, from week beginning 25 March 2019 – 5,200 adults and children to benefit.

Employment Supports

- National Minimum Wage will increase from €9.55 per hour to €9.80 per hour with effect from 1 January 2019 - 151,800 employees (i.e. 8.9% of all employees) currently on the minimum wage, to benefit.
- Self-employed to become eligible for Jobseeker's Benefit – to be introduced in Quarter 4, 2019. This is a further extension of social welfare benefits to the self-employed based on their Class S PRSI contributions.
- New Social Insurance Parental Benefit payment for employees and the self-employed to be paid for two weeks for each parent - to commence in November 2019.
- Working Family Payment recipients to benefit from a new maintenance disregard of €95 per week in respect of housing costs, with the remainder to be assessed at 50% - an estimated 5,500 families expected to benefit.
- Earnings disregard for working lone parents receiving One-Parent Family Payment or Jobseeker's Transition Payment to increase by €20 to €150 per week - 13,200 families to benefit.
- People receiving the Back to Work Family Dividend will receive a €5.20 increase for dependent children aged 12 and over and an increase of €2.20 for dependent children under age 12. Over 7,000 families to benefit.
- €5 increase in Back to Work Enterprise Allowance and employment programmes such as CE, TÚS and Rural Social Scheme – almost 40,000 people to benefit.
- Threshold for Employer's rate of PRSI will increase from €376 to €386, from 1 January 2019, ensuring they are not faced with extra PRSI costs because of minimum wage increase.
- Additional materials funding of €2 million for the nationwide Community Employment Scheme to be made available in 2019. The scheme supports voluntary and community companies to provide local services for their communities.

Supporting Carers and People with Disabilities

- €5 increase in the maximum weekly rate of Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit, Illness Benefit, Blind Pension, Disability Allowance and Invalidity Pension.
- €5.20 increase for each qualified child dependant aged 12 and over, in all weekly payments.
- €2.20 increase for each qualified child dependant up to age 12 in all weekly payments.
- Domiciliary Care Allowance to be paid for an additional 3 months, where the child being cared for sadly passes away.
- €300,000 to be provided to commission research in 2019 on the additional costs of living with a disability.
- Weekly Fuel Allowance of €22.50 will be paid for 28 weeks in 2019, extended from 27 weeks – extra week will apply to the current Fuel Allowance season – 373,800 households to benefit.
- Carer's Support Grant of €1,700 per annum to continue to be paid in 2019, to benefit over 118,000 carers.

Improvements for Pensioners

- €5 increase in all maximum weekly pension payments including State Pension Contributory and Non-Contributory, Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's and Disablement Pension, with proportionate increases for people on reduced rates of payment.
- Proportionate increases in weekly payments for qualified adult dependants.
- Weekly Fuel Allowance of €22.50 will be paid for 28 weeks in 2019, extended from 27 weeks – extra week will apply to the current Fuel Allowance season – 373,800 households to benefit.
- An extra €5 million is being invested in the Free Travel scheme in 2019, increasing the funding to €95 million.
- An extra €5 million is being provided towards the TV Licence scheme in 2019, increasing the funding to €60.2 million.

Maximum weekly rate (Commences March 2019)	Personal Rate		Increase for a Qualified Adult		Increase for a Qualified Child		
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019 – Under 12	2019 – Age 12 & over
Social Insurance Payments	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
State Pension (Contributory)							
- Personal Rate - Under Age 80	243.30	248.30			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Personal Rate - Aged 80 and over	253.30	258.30			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Increase for Qualified Adult - Under 66			162.10	165.40			
- Increase for Qualified Adult - 66 and over			218.00	222.50			
Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory) Pension/Deserted Wife's Benefit							
- Under Age 66	203.50	208.50			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	243.30	248.30			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 80 and over	253.30	258.30			31.80	34.00	37.00
Incapacity Pension	203.50	208.50	145.30	148.90	31.80	34.00	37.00
Carer's Benefit/Constant Attendance Allowance	215.00	220.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
Disablement Benefit	229.00	234.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
Jobseeker's/Illness/Health & Safety/Injury Benefit	198.00	203.00	131.40	134.70	31.80	34.00	37.00
Maternity/Paternity/Adoptive/Parental Benefit	240.00	245.00					
Death Benefit							
- Under Age 66	228.50	233.50			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	247.70	252.70			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 80 and over	257.70	262.70			31.80	34.00	37.00

Working Family Payment (formerly Family Income Supplement)		
Family Size	2018 Income Limit	2019 Income Limit
1 child	€511	€511
2 children	€612	€612
3 children	€713	€713
4 children	€834	€834
5 children	€960	€960
6 children	€1,076	€1,076
7 children	€1,212	€1,212
8 children or more	€1,308	€1,308
The level of WFP payment will continue to be based on 60% of the shortfall between net weekly family income and the applicable weekly family threshold.		

Child Benefit		
	2018 Rate	2019 Rate
Monthly Rate	€140 per child	€140 per child
Twins – Child Benefit is paid at one and half times (150%) the normal monthly rate for each child.		
All other multiple births – Child Benefit is paid at double (200%) the normal monthly rate for each child.		

Social Assistance Payments	Personal Rate		Increase for a Qualified Adult		Increase for a Qualified Child		
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019 – Under 12	2019 – Age 12 & over
State Pension (Non-Contributory)	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	232.00	237.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 80 and over	242.00	247.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Increase for Qualified Adult - Under 66			153.30	156.60			
Carer's Allowance							
- Under Age 66	214.00	219.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 66 and over	252.00	257.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
Disability Allowance/Blind Pension	198.00	203.00	131.40	134.70	31.80	34.00	37.00
Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's (Non-Contributory) Pension	198.00	203.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
One-Parent Family Payment	198.00	203.00			31.80	34.00	37.00
Pre-Retirement/Deserted Wife's Allowance	198.00	203.00	131.40	134.70	31.80	34.00	37.00
Jobseeker's Allowance - Aged 26 or over	198.00	203.00	131.40	134.70	31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 25	152.80	157.80	131.40	134.70			
- Aged 18 -24	107.70	112.70	107.70	112.70			
Supplementary Welfare Allowance - Aged 26 or over	196.00	201.00	131.40	134.70	31.80	34.00	37.00
- Aged 25	152.80	157.80	131.40	134.70			
- Aged 18 -24	107.70	112.70	107.70	112.70			
Farm Assist	198.00	203.00	131.40	134.70	31.80	34.00	37.00

Other Social Welfare Payments		
	2018 weekly	2019 weekly
Guardian's Payment (Contributory)	€181.00	€186.00
Guardian's Payment (Non-Contributory)	€181.00	€186.00
Fuel Allowance (Fuel Season in 2019 is 28 weeks)	€22.50	€22.50

	2018 monthly	2019 monthly
Domiciliary Care Allowance	€309.50	€309.50
	2018 annually	2019 annually
Carer's Support Grant	€1,700.00	€1,700.00
	2018 annually	2019 annually
Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance – each qualified child aged 4-11	€125.00	€150.00
Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance – each qualified child aged 12 and over	€250.00	€275.00

	2018 once off payment	2019 once off payment
Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner Grant	€6,000	€6,000