



Irish Haemophilia Society



A Guide to Benefits & Allowances for Parents of a Child with Haemophilia

INTRODUCTION

We have recently dealt with a relatively large number of queries from members of the Society in relation to benefits and allowances, and therefore felt the need to produce our own booklets on these subjects. As a parent of a child with haemophilia, you may qualify for either the Carer's Benefit or the Carer's Allowance. This booklet contains useful information and a brief overview of some of the entitlements and benefits that are available to parents of a child with haemophilia which we hope you will find useful. And don't forget you can contact Anne Duffy in our office on 01 6579900 if you have a query.



CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
INTRODUCTION	2
LONG TERM ILLNESS SCHEME	4
DOMICILIARY CARE ALLOWANCE	5
RESPIRE CARE GRANT	6
CARER'S BENEFIT	7
CARER'S ALLOWANCE	8
HALF-RATE CARER'S ALLOWANCE	9
CHILD BENEFIT	10
EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATIONAL SCHEME	13
BACK TO SCHOOL CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR	14
ONE PARENT FAMILY PAYMENT	15
INCAPACITATED CHILD TAX CREDIT	18
UNEMPLOYMENT	19
REDUNDANCY	20
MORTGAGE INTEREST SUPPLEMENT	22
RENT SUPPLEMENT	24
USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION	27

LONG TERM ILLNESS SCHEME

- People with haemophilia can get prescribed drugs, medicines and medical and surgical appliances for the treatment of haemophilia **free of charge**.
- This scheme is **not** means tested. It is separate from the Medical and GP Card Schemes.
- You will get a long term illness book which lists the drugs and medicines which will be provided free of charge through your community pharmacist. Other drugs and medicines **not** related to the specified condition must be paid for in the normal way.
- If your doctor or occupational therapist prescribes a **medical or surgical appliance**, it will be supplied to you from your Local Health Office.

How to apply

You can get an **application form from your family doctor (GP) or Local Health Officer**.

Where to apply

Send the **completed application form directly to your Local Health Office**.

DOMICILIARY CARE ALLOWANCE

- This is a monthly payment made to the parent or carer of a child with certain conditions. In some cases, this may apply to the parents of a child with severe haemophilia.
- Neither the child's nor the carer's means are taken into account for the payment.
- The Department of Social and Family Affairs now administers this scheme.

How long Domiciliary Care Allowance lasts:

- This allowance is paid until the child reaches 16 (then the child may qualify for Disability Allowance in his/her own right).
- You may get a half rate payment if your child is in residential care Monday to Friday and goes home at weekends.
- While getting a Domiciliary Care Allowance, you may also be eligible for Carer's Allowance or Carer's Benefit and a Respite Care Grant.

How to apply

To apply, fill in a Domiciliary Care Allowance form or text "FORM DCA" followed by your name and address to 51909 (standard text rates apply). You can get an application form in your Social Welfare Local Office or Citizens Information Centre. You should complete Parts 1 to 5 of the application form and have your child's GP complete parts 6 and 7.

To ensure that the Medical Assessor has all of the relevant information required please make sure that:

- You complete Part 4 of the application form where you outline the additional care and attention the child requires
- Part 6 and Part 7 is completed by your child's GP, **and**
- That you attach any reports or assessments related to your child's disability from the Consultant Paediatric Haematologist.

Where to apply

Domiciliary Care Allowance

Social Welfare Services Office
Department of Social and Family Affairs
College Road
Sligo

Locall: 1890 500 000

Website: www.welfare.ie



RESPIRE CARE GRANT

- This grant of €1,700 is paid automatically by the Department of Social and Family Affairs in June each year to **all** carers getting Carer's Benefit, Carer's Allowance or caring for someone who gets Constant Attendance Allowance.
- Payable also, to those who are providing full time care to an older person or a person with a disability, regardless of the carer's means. The carer must not be working outside the home for more than 15 hours per week or getting an unemployment payment. The grant is paid for **each** person being cared for.
- You do not need to apply for it, if you are automatically entitled to receive the Respite Care Grant. If you received the grant in the last year, the Department will contact you to verify that you still qualify for payment.
- In some cases, you can apply for the grant retrospectively.



CARER'S BENEFIT

This is a **short term** payment made to insured people who leave employment temporarily to care for someone who needs full time care.

How to qualify for Carer's Benefit:

You must have 156 PRSI paid contributions in Class A, B, C, D, E or H

and

- 39 contributions paid in the relevant tax year.
- or**
- 39 contributions paid in the 12 months immediately before the start of Carer's Benefit.
- or**
- 26 contributions paid in the relevant tax year **and** 26 paid in the relevant tax year prior to that.
- The relevant tax year is the second last complete tax year before the year in which you make your claim. For claims made in 2010, the relevant tax year is 2008.
- You must leave employment (of at least 32 hours a fortnight) to look after someone with a disability in need of full time care. You must have worked for at least eight weeks in the six-month period prior to becoming a full time carer. If you are self-employed and paying Class S PRSI contributions, you are **not** eligible for Carer's Benefit.

How long does Carer's Benefit last?

- It is paid for up to 24 months and increases are paid for qualified children.
- If you are caring for more than one person, an additional 50% is payable.
- You can do limited work while in receipt of Carer's Benefit in the same way as for Carer's Allowance. The maximum weekly earnings for anyone who workspart-time or who is self employed is €332.50.

CARER'S ALLOWANCE

This is a **long term** means tested payment for people on low income who are looking after someone in need of full time care because of age, certain illnesses, physical or learning disability.

How to qualify for Carer's Allowance:

- Be aged 18 or over and satisfy both a means test and a habitual residence test.
- Living with the person you are looking after, **or** be providing full time care and attention if the person is not living with you.
- The person you are caring for must be aged 16 or over, require full time care and attention for at least 12 months (medical certification is required). They can be under the age of 16 if a Domiciliary Care Allowance is being paid.
- Carer's who are providing full time care to more than one person receive an additional payment of up to 50% of the maximum personal rate.
- If you are aged over 66 and satisfy the conditions, you may still receive Carer's Allowance. If you are over the age of 80, you are entitled to an Over-80 Increase on top of your payment.

Income Disregards:

The first €332.50 per week of your income is disregarded when your entitlement is calculated (whether from employment or self-employment, capital or occupational pension). The disregard for a couple is €665.

Working:

- You can work outside the home for up to 15 hours a week or engage in limited self employment in the home, while receiving Carer's Allowance. Approval is required from the Department of Social and Family Affairs and your income is means tested. (see disregards above).
- You may work part time as a home help for the Health Service Executive for up to 15 hours a week and this income is not assessed as means.
- You may also attend an educational or training course or take up voluntary work for up to 15 hours per week. If the person you care for is attending a non-residential course of rehabilitation training or an approved non-residential day-care centre, this will not affect your Carer's Allowance.

HALF-RATE CARER'S ALLOWANCE

- If you are getting certain social welfare payments in your own right, you may keep your main payment **and** get an extra half-rate Carer's Allowance. These payments include disability payments – although you must meet the criteria for caring and be fit to care.
- Half-rate Carer's Allowance is **not** payable with Jobseeker's Benefit and Allowance, Back to Work Allowance, or Supplementary Welfare Allowance.
- If you are being claimed for as a qualified adult on your spouse or partner's social welfare payment (with the exception of Supplementary Welfare Allowance) and you are providing full time care to another person, you may apply for half rate Carer's Allowance and retain your current increase for a Qualified Adult in full.



CHILD BENEFIT

This is payable to the parents or guardians of children under 16 years of age, or under 19 years of age if the child is in full time education, FÁS Youthreach training **or** has a disability.

If you had a multiple birth you will be entitled to a special grant at the time of birth and again when the children are 4 and 12 years old. Child Benefit is paid at one and a half times the monthly rate for twins, and at double the monthly rate for triplets and other multiple births.

Since January 2010, children aged 18 will not get Child Benefit.

A compensatory payment will be paid in 2010 to families on low income with children aged 18 in full-time education or with a disability. You will get a compensatory payment if your child aged 18 is getting Disability Allowance **or** if you are getting:

- A social welfare payment and getting an increase in your payment for the child aged 18.
- Family Income Supplement.

Birth of your baby

If your baby is born in Ireland, when you register the birth of your baby the Department of Social and Family Affairs will begin a Child Benefit claim for your child:

- If you are not claiming Child Benefit for another child, a new claim is created by the Department and a partially completed claim form (and a special FREEPOST envelope) is sent to you for your signature and payment details. The baby is also given a Personal Public Service (PPS) Number.
- If you are claiming Child Benefit for another child, your new baby is added to the Child Benefit claim and payment begins automatically from the month after the birth. A letter confirming payment will be sent to you by the Department. The baby is also given a Personal Public Service (PPS) Number.

Children aged 16 to 18 years

If you want to keep your Child Benefit for a disabled child **or** a child in full time education **or** a child on a full time Youthreach course aged under 19, you will need to fill in the right form one month before your child's 16th birthday.

This form must also be signed and officially stamped by:

- The school/college if your child is in full-time education.
- FÁS if your child is on a full-time Youthreach course **or**
- A doctor if your child has a disability.

If your child is aged 16, 17 or 18 and you are getting Child Benefit for him or her, you must notify the Department of Social and Family Affairs immediately if:

- Your child leaves school/college/FÁS YOUTHREACH course before the certified date
or
- Your child is able to support himself/herself before reaching age 19 or the date certified by the doctor.

Full time education (aged 16 and over)

- If your child is over 16 years of age and in full time education you will get Child Benefit until June. You will not get another payment until your child returns to full time education in September. The Child Benefit section will send you an application form in August. If your child returns to full time education in September, fill in and return this application form. When you get your payment it will include any arrears due to you, including Child Benefit for July and August.
- If you don't get a form in the post from the Child Benefit section, fill in form CB2 in September.

CHILD BENEFIT AND EU REGULATIONS

Non-EU/EEA citizens

Non-EU/EEA citizens must be "habitually resident" in Ireland to qualify for Child Benefit. If you are a non-EU/EEA citizen and legally working in this State, you **may** qualify for Child Benefit if your child is also resident here.

How to apply:

Child under 16 years of age

If your baby is born in Ireland the Child Benefit section will send you either an application form or a letter confirming payment.

If your child is **not** born in Ireland **or** his/her birth is **not** registered within the required time, you must fill in Child Benefit (form CB1). You must send this form (CB1) with a copy of your baby's birth certificate by FREEPOST to the Child Benefit Section (see 'Where to apply' below). You can get a birth certificate for your child from the General Register Office. A special copy will be given to you for Child Benefit, which the Department will not return.

Children aged 16 to 18 years

If your child is between 16 and 18 fill in Child Benefit (form CB2). If you are already getting Child Benefit for this child, the Child Benefit section will send you an application form in the post. Send your form by FREEPOST to the Child Benefit Section.

Where to apply

Child Benefit Section

Department of Social and Family Affairs

Social Welfare Services Office

St Oliver Plunkett Road

Letterkenny

Donegal

Tel: (01) 704 3000

Lo-call: 1890 400 400

Website: www.welfare.ie

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATIONAL SCHEME

The **Early Childcare Supplement** was replaced in January 2010 by what's now called the **Early Childhood Care & Educational Scheme** which gives a free pre school year to all children between the ages of 3 years 3 months and 4 years 6 months.

How to apply

There is no application form for the Early Childhood Care & Educational Scheme. To get a place for your child, apply to a participating playschool or day-care centre. You can get a list of participating services from your local City or County Childcare Committee.



BACK TO SCHOOL CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR ALLOWANCE

This allowance is to help with the cost of uniforms and footwear for children attending school. The scheme operates from 1 June to 30 September each year. The allowance is provided by the Health Service Executive as part of the Supplementary Welfare Scheme.

To qualify you (parent or guardian) must meet a number of conditions:

- You must be getting certain social welfare payments or payments for training, employment schemes or adult education;
- Your total household income must be below a certain amount;
- The child/student must be between 2 and 22 years before 1 October of the year you apply **and** must be in full time education at a recognised school or college.

You may qualify for this Allowance if you are in one of these groups:

- You are getting a social welfare payment (including Family Income Supplement) or a Health Service Executive payment **or**
- You are taking part in an approved employment scheme **or**
- You are taking part in a recognised education or training course **or**
- You are involved in an Area Partnership Scheme **or**
- You are attending a FÁS, Fáilte Ireland or LES training scheme.

The following Income limits apply:

- To qualify for this allowance your total household income must be below specified amounts (see below).
- Your total household income is your main social welfare or Health Service Executive payment, the income of any dependent children on Youthreach and any other income you may have including wages (before tax but excluding PRSI and reasonable travelling expenses).
- Any income you get from Rent Supplement or Mortgage Interest Supplement, Family Income Supplement, Blind Welfare Allowance, Rehabilitative Training Allowance, rehabilitative employment (up to €120 per week), Home Help, Domiciliary Care Allowance, Mobility Allowance and Higher Education Grants Scheme is not counted.

2010 Income Limits for Couples

1 child	€563.60
2 children	€593.40
3 children	€623.20
4 children	€653.00

2010 Income Limits for a Lone Parent

1 child	€410.10
2 children	€439.90
3 children	€469.70
4 children	€499.50

ONE-PARENT FAMILY PAYMENT

This is a payment for men and women who are bringing children up without the support of a partner.

- To get this payment you must meet certain conditions **and** satisfy a means test. If you are divorced or unmarried, you must also have attempted to get maintenance from the child's other parent (father or mother).
- If you get a One-Parent Family Payment you can use the Household Budget Scheme to help you manage your bills. You may also be eligible for other benefits - Fuel Allowance, Family Income Supplement and the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme.

To qualify for a One-Parent Family Payment you must:

- Be the parent, step-parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian of a qualified child
- Have the main "care and charge" of at least one qualified child, who is under 18 years of age or aged 18 to 22 and in full-time education. The child must live with you. The One-Parent Family Payment is **not** payable if, a couple has joint equal custody of a child or children.
- Have earnings of €425 or less per week.
- Satisfy a means test.
- Be habitually resident.
- Not be cohabiting (that is, living with someone as husband and wife).

If you are separated or divorced you must:

- Have been separated for at least three months.
- Have made efforts to get maintenance from your spouse.
- Be inadequately maintained by your spouse.

If you are unmarried you will:

- Be required to seek maintenance from the other parent of your child.

One-Parent Family Payment and EU Regulations

- EU citizens, EEA citizens and Swiss nationals, working in Ireland and paying into the Irish Social Insurance System **do not have to meet the habitual residence criteria** to qualify for One-Parent Family Payment.
- In addition, you can get this payment if you become unemployed and are getting Jobseeker's Benefit. You must meet all other qualifying criteria for One-Parent Family Payment.

One-Parent Family Payment and Deserted Wife's Benefit

- If you had to transfer from Deserted Wife's Benefit to One-Parent Family Payment in order to be accepted as a participant on a

Community Employment Scheme, you can now apply to have your entitlement to Deserted Wife's Benefit restored. While this benefit is closed to new applicants, it is still paid to those who had qualified for it before 2 January 1997.

- The maximum weekly rate of payment for Deserted Wife's Benefit is higher than that of One-Parent Family Payment. If you qualify to have your entitlement to Deserted Wife's Benefit restored, you may also be due arrears.

One-Parent Family Payment and work

- If you take up full time work you may be eligible for extra tax allowances under the Revenue Job Assist scheme. You can work in a FÁS employment scheme and still retain part or all of your One-Parent Family Payment. **Contact your local FÁS office for details.**
- You can return to education through the Back to Education Programme and retain this payment, under certain conditions.
- You may qualify for the Back to Work Allowance (Employees) instead of a One-Parent Family Payment if you take up employment. If you want to become self employed, you may qualify for the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance.
- If you take part in certain employment schemes (for example, the Back to Work Allowance scheme), you will retain your secondary benefits, **not** including Rent/Mortgage Interest Supplement, as long as your weekly income (income less PRSI and reasonable travelling expenses) is less than €317.43 per week.
- Your income from the Back to Work Allowance scheme, the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance scheme and Family Income Supplement is **not** taken into account for the purpose of the €317.43 weekly income limit.

Transitional Payments

- If you have been getting One-Parent Family Payment and you have earnings above €425, you are entitled to a transitional payment that is the same as one half of your rate of One-Parent Family Payment for six months.
- You can only get a transitional payment if you have been getting One-Parent Family Payment for a continuous period of at least 52 weeks.
- New applicants with earnings over €425 will not qualify for this payment.
- You may be entitled to an increase in your One-Parent Family Payment if your pay is reduced. To get an increase in your payment, send a current payslip (showing your reduced pay) with a letter from your

employer, confirming your new work situation to your Local Social Welfare Office.

If your pay is reduced your Family Income Supplement payment will stay the same. If the number of hours you work each week is reduced to below 19 hours (38 hour per fortnight) you are no longer entitled to this payment and, you should notify the relevant section if, the hours you work fall below the minimum requirement.

You may be entitled to an increase in your Rent Supplement. If you rent from a local authority or housing association you should contact them to find out if you are entitled to a reduction in your rent.

How to apply

Complete the One-Parent Family application form. Send it with the relevant supporting documents to the Department of Social and Family Affairs at the address below:

- If you are **widowed**, you should apply within **3 months** of your spouse's death. If you are **unmarried**, you should apply within **3 months** of the birth of your child.
- If you are **separated / divorced**, you should apply within 6 months of the date you separated from your spouse **and** you need to be separated for 3 months before you apply.
- You can have your payment paid directly into your bank account or arrange to use your Social Services Card at the post office to collect your money. If you have a Social Services Card, sign the back of it and keep it in a safe place.

Where to apply

Department of Social and Family Affairs

Social Welfare Services

College Road

Sligo

Tel : (071) 915 7100

Lo-call: 1890 500 000

INCAPACITATED CHILD TAX CREDIT

It may be possible to claim this tax credit when a child with haemophilia meets the criteria for being incapacitated. This will not be the case for the vast majority of children with haemophilia.

Rates

In 2010, the credit is €3,660.

How to apply

Call or write to your local tax office outlining the credit claimed with the name or names of the child or children involved. The first claim also needs a doctor's certificate (preferably from the Consultant Paediatric Haematologist) showing:

- Date of diagnosis.
- Severity of condition.
- The doctor's certificate must state whether the incapacity permanently prevents the child from maintaining himself.

Where to apply

Visit Revenue on www.revenue.ie to find the Lo-call number for your region.



UNEMPLOYMENT

- If you are being let go from your job your employer must give you a P45 and you may have certain entitlements including notice and pay for annual leave earned but not taken. A P45 is a statement of your pay, tax and PRSI to date deducted by your employer. **It is a very important document. You need it if you are starting a new job as you need it to give to your new employer in order to avoid paying emergency tax and also if you are still unemployed in order to claim a tax refund, or to claim social welfare benefits.** If your employer does not give you a P45 you should ask for it. Since 2009, you should also receive an Income Levy Certificate for your own records.
- You may be entitled to notice if you are being let go from your job. The length of notice you are entitled to, will depend in the first place on your contract of employment. In addition, there is a minimum entitlement laid down by law.
- Your contract may give you a greater entitlement to notice than the statutory minimum, but it cannot give you less and you must have been working for your employer for at least 13 weeks.
- While the notice entitlements under your contract of employment can exceed the minimum periods above, any provision for notice in your contract for less than the above is invalid. This means that if your contract states that you will get less than the law provides, then this part of your contract has no effect.
- The law however does not preclude your employer or you waiving your rights to the legally specified notice period. The law also does not preclude you accepting payment in lieu of notice, if you wish. You may be required to work the notice period or you may accept payment in lieu of notice, if offered. Payment in lieu of notice means that you will not have to work for the period between receiving notice and the ending of your employment, but you will get the same amount of wages that you would have received, had you worked.

REDUNDANCY

When you lose your job due to circumstances such as the closure of the business or a reduction in the number of staff this is known as redundancy. Generally this situation arises if your job ceases to exist and you are not replaced.

Redundancy Payment

- Not all employees are legally entitled to a redundancy payment. In order to qualify for a statutory redundancy payment, an employee must:
 - Have at least two years' continuous service with the employer
 - Be aged 16 or over, and
 - Be in insurable employment under the Social Welfare Acts.
- A redundancy payment may be negotiated between the employer and the employee or their union. These negotiated payments may include employees not covered by the statutory redundancy scheme and may exceed the statutory minimum payment.
- An employee's continuity of employment or service is not broken by a period of sickness, lay off, holidays, adoptive leave, leave under the maternity protection legislation, parental leave, carer's leave or a career break.
- If an employee is dismissed before reaching the required two years service and then taken back within 26 weeks, their continuity of employment is not affected by the break.
- There is **no** entitlement to a redundancy payment if an employee is dismissed within one month of ending an apprenticeship. However, if the employer retains the former apprentice's services for **more than one month** after the apprenticeship finishes, the period of the apprenticeship counts in calculating any subsequent redundancy entitlement.

If you are unemployed

Whether you consider yourself to be retired or unemployed, you may be eligible for Jobseeker's Benefit if you are aged under 66 which lasts for a maximum of 15 months. You may then be eligible for Jobseeker's Allowance.

Jobseeker's Benefit

- To qualify you must be unemployed, aged under 66, capable of work, available for work and genuinely seeking work. If you have left work voluntarily, for example, if you have chosen early retirement, you may not get this benefit for 9 weeks after leaving work. After that, you will have to prove that you are available for and genuinely seeking work.
- If you are under the age of 55 and you have received a redundancy payment of more than €50,000, you may not get this benefit for 9 weeks.

You can do a certain amount of work and remain entitled to some Jobseeker's Benefit.

- You should check with the Department of Social and Family Affairs before taking up work to see exactly what the effect will be. As a general rule, Jobseeker's Benefit is payable for 390 days (65 weeks).
- However, if you are between 65 and 66 years of age when your benefit would normally end, you may continue to receive it until the age of 66, provided you meet the PRSI requirements. Alternatively at 65, you may be eligible for the State Pension (Transition).

Jobseeker's Allowance

- If you have used up your entitlement to Jobseeker's Benefit or you are not entitled to this benefit because you do not have enough PRSI contributions, you can apply for Jobseeker's Allowance if you are under 66.
- You must be unemployed, be capable of, available for and actively seeking work and pass a means test.
- In general, if you have a reasonable level of pension from a previous employment, you are unlikely to qualify for this allowance.



MORTGAGE INTEREST SUPPLEMENT

- This provides **short term** support to help you pay your mortgage interest repayments. You will only get assistance with the interest portion of your mortgage repayments. You will not get help with the portion that pays off the actual loan and house insurance. If you have a consolidated loan, only the portion of your loan that relates to the essential purchase, repair or maintenance of your home will be taken into account.
- You will not qualify for this supplement if you are in full time employment. With couples, if one of a couple is in full time employment, both are excluded from claiming the Supplement.

There are **Special Retention Arrangements** that may allow you to keep a proportion of your supplement as follows:

- You can continue to get the supplement while you are in employment, if you are participating in a Community Employment Scheme or getting a Back to Work Allowance or Back to Work Enterprise Allowance. There is a weekly income limit to qualify.

Qualifying conditions:

- When you began your mortgage, you could afford the repayments.
- Your house is not up for sale.
- The amount of your mortgage interest payable does not exceed an amount the Health Service Executive considers reasonable to meet your residential needs.
- Only the portion of your loan that relates to the essential purchase, repair or maintenance of your home will be taken into account.
- It is reasonable to award this supplement regarding any arrears on the loan.
- You are habitually resident in this State.

You won't qualify for the Supplement if:

- You or your spouse or partner works more than 29 hours a week. (except under special retention arrangements see above)
- You are involved in a trade dispute.
- You are attending full time education.
- You are unlawfully in the State.
- You have made an application for asylum under the Refugee Act, 1996 and such application is awaiting final decision by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- You have made an application under the Aliens Act, 1935 to remain in the State and such application has not been determined.

- You are admitted to an institution (for example, a hospital) for a period in excess of 13 weeks.

How to apply

Complete an application form for Mortgage Interest Supplement. Part of the form will need to be filled in by your lending agency, in addition to a separate Supplementary Welfare Allowance application form, which is used to gather extra details relevant to your application for the supplement.

You will also need to bring the following documents:

- Identity documents for you and your dependents - full Birth Certificate, Passports, Driving License, Work Permit, Immigration Card.
- Documents to show your income and financial situation - Pay slips, P45, P35, P60 or bank statements
- Documents to prove where you live - electricity, gas or phone bills
- Documents to prove you have a mortgage and your ownership of the property - loan application, loan offer or a solicitor's letter

The Community Welfare Officer will usually visit you to confirm your circumstances.

Appealing a decision made by the Health Service Executive

- If you are not satisfied with a decision made in relation to Mortgage Interest Supplement, first find out why the decision was made by asking the Community Welfare Officer, who will give you the reasons in writing.
- If you have any extra documentation to back up your case, give this to the Community Welfare Officer. Then talk to the Superintendent Community Welfare Officer about the decision. They can change the decision if your case deserves it.
- If the decision is not changed, ask for an appeal form, including as much detail as possible and keep photocopies of everything.
- If your appeal is not successful, you can have the appeal referred to the Chief Appeals Office in the Social Welfare Appeals Office. You can request a face-to-face hearing **and** you can bring along a representative to help you argue your case.

Where to apply

Contact the Community Welfare Officer at your Local Health Centre.

RENT SUPPLEMENT

This is paid to people living in private rented accommodation who cannot provide for the cost of their accommodation from their own resources. In general, if your only income is a social welfare or Health Services Executive payment, you will qualify for a rent supplement.

- The amount of rent supplement will be calculated by your Community Welfare Officer and will generally ensure that your income after paying rent does not fall below a minimum level.
- You will **not** qualify if you are in full time employment. In the case of couples, if one of a couple is in full time employment, **both** are excluded from claiming rent supplement.
- You will be re-assessed for Rent Supplement and some of your additional income including some of your income from employment will be taken into account.
- As a result of the re-assessment, you may or may not continue to qualify for it. If you do qualify for Rent Supplement, you may get a different rate of supplement.

You may be eligible for Rent Supplement if, the accommodation is suitable for your needs, the rent is below the maximum rent level set for your county and you are:

- Assessed by a Housing Authority as having a housing need **or**
- Regarded by a Housing Authority as being homeless **or**
- Have accommodation provided under one of the Social Housing Schemes **or**
- Aged over 65 years **or**
- On certain disability payments such as - Disability Allowance, Blind Pension, Invalidity Pension and the equivalent payments from other EU countries or countries that Ireland has a bilateral social security agreement **and**
- Pass a Habitual Residence Test
- Pass a Means Test.

You will not qualify for Rent Supplement if you:

- Are in full time employment. However, if you are assessed as in need of housing under the Rental Accommodation Scheme **and** have been out of full-time employment for 12 months or more, you may be entitled to the Supplement.
- Have refused a third offer of local authority accommodation in an 18-month period. Therefore, you will not be eligible to claim Rent Supplement for 12 months.
- Are leaving local authority housing without reasonable cause.

- Are attending full-time education. If you are getting a Back to Education Allowance or participating in the Back to Education Programme you may be entitled to this supplement.

How to apply

- Fill in an application form for Rent Supplement.
- Part of the form will need to be filled in by your landlord or their agent.
- Another part of the form may need to be filled in by your local authority, to confirm you are on their housing list and have a housing need, that is, if you are not exempt from this rule.
- Complete a separate Supplementary Welfare Allowance application form which needs extra details relevant to your application for Rent Supplement. The Community Welfare Officer or local Citizens Information Service can help you fill in these forms.

You will also need the following documents:

- Identity documents for you and your dependents - full Birth Certificates, Passports, Driving License, Work Permit, Immigration Card.
- Documents to show your income and financial situation - Pay slips, P45, P35, P60 and bank statements.
- Documents to prove where you live - electricity, gas or phone bills.
- Documents relating to your tenancy - your rent book, lease or tenancy agreement.

The Community Welfare Officer will usually visit you to confirm your circumstances.

Where to apply

Contact the Community Welfare Officer at your local Health Centre.

Exceptional Needs Payment

This is a single, once-off payment intended to assist with exceptional expenses such as, serious illness or funeral costs.

You may be eligible for this payment if you are:

- Living in the state.
- Satisfy a means test.
- Have applied for any other benefit/allowance you may be entitled to.
- Have registered to work with FÁS (if you are of working age).

You will not normally be eligible if you are:

- In full time work (more than 30 hours a week)
- In full time education
- Involved in a trade dispute or on strike. However, a dependant adult or dependant child of a person on strike can apply.

Urgent Needs Payment

You may get an urgent needs payment no matter what your means, but might have to pay it back at a later date, for example, if you are earning or later get insurance compensation.

How to apply

It is recommended that you apply for funeral assistance before the funeral takes place, however, failing this, you should apply as soon as possible afterwards.

To apply for either type of needs payment you will need:

- Personal Public Service (PPS) numbers for yourself, your spouse or co-habitee and your children. (Child Benefit books or birth certificates, if you don't have PPS numbers for the children)
- Evidence of any income or social welfare assistance you are on.
- A rent book or statement of your mortgage interest payments, if you are looking for help with your rent or mortgage.

Where to apply

Contact the Community Welfare Officer at your local Health Centre.

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Social and Family Affairs

Information Services

College Road

Co. Sligo

Lo-call: 1890 662244 (general information) or 1890 500000

Website: www.welfare.ie

Carer's Allowance/ Carer's Benefit Section

Social Welfare Services

Ballinalee Road

Longford

Tel: (043) 334 0000 or (01) 704 3000 Lo-call: 1890 92 77 70

Respite Care Grant Section

PO Box 10085

Dublin 2

Tel: (01) 673 2222

Carers Association

Market Square

Tullamore

Co. Offaly

Tel: (057) 932 2920 Email: info@carersireland.com

Website: www.carersireland.com

National Employment Rights Authority

Employment Rights

Government Buildings

O'Brien Road

Carlow

Lo-call: 1890 80 80 90

Website: www.employmentrights.ie

Caring For Carers

Carmody Street Business Park

Ennis

Co. Clare

Tel: (065) 686 6515

Email: support@caringforcarers.org

You can find more information on benefits, allowances and entitlements at your local Citizens Information Centre or on www.citizensinformation.ie
Lo-call: 1890 777 121, Monday to Friday from 9am to 9pm.

[Information in this booklet has been taken from the Citizens Information Website]



The Irish Haemophilia Society
First Floor
Cathedral Court
New Street
Dublin 8
Tel: 01 6579900
Website: www.haemophilia.ie
Email: info@haemophilia.ie

