



Society of St. Vincent de Paul



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Society of St Vincent de Paul
Social Welfare Rates and Budget Changes 2011



Working Age Adult Welfare Rates

All rates of payment valid from January 2011

Jobseeker's Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance, One Parent Family Payment, Farm Assist, Carer's Benefit, Pre Retirement Allowance, Widow's and Widowers' (Non Contributory), Deserted Wife's Allowance, Prisoner's Wife's Allowance and Health and Safety Benefit weekly rates from January 2011.

Personal Rate only (PR)	€188.00
Qualified Adult. (QA)	€124.80
PR and QA	€312.80
Supplementary Welfare Allowance	€186.00

Jobseeker's Allowance or Supplementary Welfare Allowance paid to people aged 18-21 years remains unchanged at €100 a week.

Jobseeker's Allowance or Supplementary Welfare Allowance paid to people aged 22, 23 and 24 years is being reduced to €144.

Family Income Supplement

There has been no change to FIS rates of payment or income thresholds. To get this payment your net average weekly family income needs to be as follows:

Family size	Net family income less than
1 child	€506.00
2 children	€602.00
3 children	€703.00
4 children	€824.00
5 children	€950.00
6 children	€1,066.00

FIS is calculated as 60 cents for every €1 of net weekly pay which is under the above income thresholds. If you qualify for FIS the payment will last for 52 weeks.

Fuel Allowance

This payment is made to people on long term social welfare or HSE payments to help with the cost of their heating. The scheme operates for 32 weeks from the end of September to May. It is not necessary to reapply for this payment each year. There is a once off payment of €40 for households already entitled to the Fuel Allowance to off-set increased costs associated with the Carbon Tax.

Fuel Allowance Weekly Rate _____ €20 per week

Rent Supplement Scheme

In line with the reduction in the Supplementary Welfare Allowance rate there is an additional €2 weekly contribution towards the cost of rent. Those in receipt of this scheme must now pay €26 a week towards their rent.

Illness, Disability and Caring

Illness Benefit, Disability Allowance, Blind Pension, Injury Benefit and Incapacity Supplement weekly rates

Personal Rate _____	€188.00
Qualified Adult _____	€124.80
Carer's Allowance under 66 years _____	€204.00
Carer's Allowance over 66 years _____	€239.00

Half rate Carer's Allowance will continue to be paid to full time Carer's in receipt of another welfare payment.

Invalidity Pension

Personal Rate _____	€193.50
Qualified Adult _____	€138.10

Child Related Payments and Supports

Child Benefit

Child Benefit is paid to children under 16 years and to those under 18 years who are in full time education, FÁS, Youthreach training or who have a disability.

1st child per month	€140.00
2 children per month	€280.00
3 children per month	€447.00
4 children per month	€624.00
5 children per month	€801.00
6 children per month	€978.00
7 children per month	€1,155.00

Qualified Child Increase

This is a payment to children under 18 years in households getting a social welfare payment.

weekly full rate	€29.80
weekly half rate	€14.90

Lone Parents and those getting the Qualified Adult Allowance are entitled to the full rate of Qualified Child Increase while those whose partners have incomes of over €310 weekly or who have a social welfare payment in their own right are entitled to the half rate.

Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance

This is a once a year payment, paid out between June and September, to assist families with their back to school costs.

Application must be made each year to a Community Welfare Officer located in HSE Local Health Offices.

Age 2 - 11 yrs.	€200.00
Age 12 - 22 yrs	€305.00

To be eligible for this one off payment the household income must fall within the below thresholds:

Couple with		Lone Parent with	
1 child	€560	1 child	€407
2 children	€586	2 children	€433
3 children	€613	3 children	€459

The income threshold increases by €26 for each additional child.

Early Childhood Care and Education

The Early Childcare Supplement ended in December 2009. It has been replaced by the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) which gives access to a free pre-school part time place in an early years care and education programme to children in the year before they begin school. Children aged between 3 years and 3 months and 4 years and 6 months on 1st September each year are entitled to register for a free place. Parents need to choose which suits them best and register with the provider of their choice. They are entitled to either:

- Playschool session for 3 hours daily for 38 weeks or
- Childcare for 2 hours 15 minutes daily for 50 weeks

Childcare Community Subvention Scheme

This scheme supports community-based, not-for-profit childcare services so that they can provide quality childcare services at reduced rates to disadvantaged parents. The subsidies are available on a tiered basis for those who are in receipt of a social welfare payment, or are engaged in education, training or work experience programmes and for people getting Family Income Supplement (FIS).

Older People Welfare Rates

Pension rates remain unchanged in 2011.

Contributory Pension and Transition Pension weekly rate

Personal rate under 80 years _____	€230.30
Personal rate over 80 years _____	€240.30
Qualified Adult under 66 years _____	€153.50
Qualified Adult aged over 66 years _____	€206.30
Personal rate + wife aged under 66 years _____	€383.80
Personal rate + wife aged over 66 years _____	€436.60

Non-Contributory Pension weekly rate

Personal rate aged 66 years and under 80 _____	€219.00
Personal rate aged 80 and over _____	€229.00
Qualified Adult aged 66 and under 80 _____	€144.70

Widow Widower's Contributory Pension and Deserted Wives Benefit weekly rates

Personal rate aged 66 and under 80 years _____	€230.30
Personal rate aged 80 years and over _____	€240.30

Invalidity Pension weekly rates

Personal rate aged 65 _____	€230.30
Qualified Adult aged over 66 years _____	€206.30

Living Alone increase weekly rate

€7.70

People in Low Pay

Changes to tax rules and the introduction of the Universal Social Charge (USC) add an inequitable burden to people on low pay.

Universal Social Charge

The Universal Social Charge replaces the income levy which was payable on incomes of more than €15,300 and the health levy previously payable on incomes of over €26,000. This new charge, the USC, is payable on all earned incomes, apart from social welfare payments, as follows:

Between €4,004 and €10,036 payable at 2%

Between €10,037 and €16,010 at 4%

Over €16,016 at 7%

Taxation changes

Both the PAYE allowance and personal tax credits have been reduced by 10%.

National Minimum Wage

SVP is also concerned at the €1 reduction in the National Minimum Wage which means a drop of €2,080 a year for workers on an average 40 hour week. While the Government protests that the drop in the NMW only applies to new workers, SVP knows that in reality, this will mean a downward pressure on wages and less security for these workers.

Third and Further Level

SVP is concerned that the following changes will have a long term negative effect on a generation of young people:

- Third level student service charge (or registration charge) will increase from €1,500 to €2,000 and will be called the Student Contribution. This will only apply to the first child in a household, if there are other students in the family they will continue to pay €1,500 if they do not qualify for a Maintenance Grant
- Student Maintenance Grants have been cut by 4% with immediate effect which means that the 2nd and 3rd payments for the academic year 2010/2011 will be affected
- From September 2011 students must travel 45 km instead of 24 kms from their home to their place of study to qualify for the non-adjacent rate of assistance under the Maintenance Grant Scheme
- There will be a new income band for students whose yearly family incomes are between €55,920 and €66,700 where half of the Student Contribution will be paid under the Maintenance Grant Scheme
- Mature students (over 23 yrs) will no longer be automatically eligible for the higher non-adjacent rate of payment under the Maintenance Grant Scheme
- While not a budgetary change the 2010 Higher Education Grants Scheme has been modified so that mature students will now have to wait three years before they can qualify for a student grant to continue their studies at post graduate level
- There will be a €200 contribution for PLC courses. Students who qualify for grants or the Back to Education Allowance will be exempt from this charge

Second Level

- Cuts to the education budget will mean a drop in teachers at second level. SVP is concerned at the removal of resource teachers for Travellers and Language Support teachers, We know that this will affect children most at risk of early school leaving
- The 5% cut to the programmes and services aimed at vulnerable children and young people such as the School Completion Programme and the National Educational Welfare Board will mean more marginalised children missing out on that extra support they need to stop them disengaging from school. SVP is worried that these children will lose out with long term damage to their future prospects
- The cut in capitation in schools will mean less subject and programme choice for pupils while the increase in the Pupil Teacher Ratio for the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (Leaving Cert Applied) will increase from one teacher per 17 pupils to one per 19 students from next September
- Families with children in secondary school will pay a school transport charge of €350 per pupil, with a maximum of €650 per household.

Primary School

Families with primary school pupils in rural areas will now pay €50 per year towards the cost of school bus transport to a maximum of €110 per family.

Medical Card Income Limits

There are two types of medical card:

- a full medical card which covers GP visits, prescriptions and a range of services in the public health system
- a GP Visit Card which covers the costs of GP visits only

Weekly income guidelines for both types of medical card remain unchanged despite an admission by Government that they are too low. The calculation is made after tax and PRSI have been deducted. Since January 2009 people over 70 years qualify for a medical card only if their gross weekly income is €700 for a single person and €1,400 gross for a couple.

Weekly Medical Card Income Threshold

GP Visit Card Income Threshold

Single person living alone	€184.00	€276.00
Single person 66 to 69 years	€201.50	€302.00
Single person living with family	€164.00	€246.00
Couple / lone parent with children	€266.50	€400.00

Various allowances apply for dependent children for both types of medical card. Reasonable childcare, rent, mortgage and travel to work costs are taken into account when assessing eligibility. Contact your local HSE Health Office for more details or www.hse.ie.

Prescription Charges

Medical card holders must pay a 50 cent charge per item per prescription from April 2010. A monthly ceiling of €10 per family will apply.

Drugs Payment Scheme

If prescribed drugs cost a household more than €120 a month a refund can be obtained from the HSE.

Dental Treatment

Under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme adults with full medical card holders are entitled to emergency treatment only.

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