



€10 increase for Pensioners

Special €11 per week increase for Widows & Widowers aged 66 and over on Contributory Pensions

€8 and €10 increases in Child Benefit – effective from April 2003

€7 increase for Widows & Widowers under age 66, Carers & people getting Invalidation pensions under age 65

€6 per week increase for people on Other Payments

€100 increase in Respite Care Grant & Increase in Income Disregards for Carer's Allowance

All weekly increases effective from January 2003

INCREASES

Personal Rates

- Increase of €10 per week for pensioners aged 66 and over and for people on Retirement Pension and Invalidation Pension aged 65 or over. This increase applies to full rate pensions and there are proportionate increases for contributory pensioners on reduced rates. **(January 2003)**
- Special increase of €11 per week for widows and widowers aged 66 and over on Widow's/Widower's (Contributory) Pension and for women getting Deserted Wife's Benefit who are aged 66 and over. **(January 2003)**

- €7 per week increase for widows and widowers aged under 66 in receipt of a Widow's/Widower's (Contributory) Pension on a full rate payment with proportionate increases for people on reduced rates. **(January 2003)**
- €7 per week increase for people getting Invalidation Pension aged under 65 on full rate payments with proportionate increases for those on reduced rates. **(January 2003)**
- €7 per week increase for people under age 66 who are getting Carer's Allowance or Benefit. **(January 2003)**

- €7 per week increase for people getting Disablement Benefit. **(January 2003)**
- €6 per week increase for people getting Unemployment Benefit/ Assistance, Disability Benefit/Allowance, Blind Pension, Pre-Retirement Allowance, Farm Assist, Supplementary Welfare Allowance and One-Parent Family Payment. **(January 2003)**

Child Benefit

- Increase of €8 for each of the first two children.
- Increase of €10 for the third and each subsequent child. **(April 2003)**



Qualified Adult Allowances

- Increase of €7.70 per week in QAA for Old Age (Contributory) Pension, Retirement Pension and Invalidity Pension where the qualified adult is aged 66 or over.
- Increase of €6.70 per week in QAA for Old Age (Contributory) Pension and Retirement Pension where the qualified adult is under age 66.
- Increase of €6.70 per week in QAA for Old Age (Non-Contributory) Pension where the qualified adult is under or over age 66.
- Increase of €5 per week in QAA for Invalidity Pension where the qualified adult is under age 66.
- Increase of €4 per week for other qualified adult payments.

These rates apply to full rate qualified adult allowances with proportionate increases for people on reduced payments.
(January 2003)

Carers

- Increase of €10 per week for people in receipt of Carer's Allowance aged 66 and over.
- Increase of €7 per week for people getting Carer's Allowance who are under age 66.

- Improvements in the means test for Carer's Allowance increasing the weekly income disregard by €19 per week for single people and €38 per week for couples bringing the disregards to €210 and €420 per week respectively. **(April 2003)**
- Increase of €54.77 in the income threshold to €150 for people in receipt of Carer's Benefit who wish to engage in limited employment or self-employment. **(April 2003)**
- Respite Care Grant increased by €100 from €635 to €735. Carers looking after more than one person will receive a grant of €1,470. **(June 2003)**

Families and Children

- Child Benefit increases to €125.60 for each of the first two children and to €157.30 for the third and each subsequent child. **(April 2003)**
- Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance to be increased by €30 to €150 for children aged 12 years and over. **(June 2003)**
- Family Income Supplement (FIS) weekly income thresholds to be increased by €17 per week to benefit every family on FIS. See Table overleaf. **(January 2003)**
- Child Dependant Allowance to be paid to people who are getting

short-term Social Welfare payments for 27 weeks, or more where their children are in full-time education up to the age of 22 years, or up to the end of the academic year after their 22nd birthday. **(October 2003)**

- School Meals Scheme to be enhanced.

Pensioners

- Disregard for Rent/Mortgage Interest Supplement to be increased by €13 per week to €23 per week. **(January 2003)**
- Increase in weekly rent supplement limits under the Capital Assistance scheme from €36.82 to €40 for a single person and from €39.36 to €45 for households. **(January 2003)**
- Improvements to After Death payments. **(June 2003)**
- Telephone Allowance to be extended to people aged 70 or over, residing in nursing homes where they have their own telephone account. **(January 2003)**
- Free Schemes to be extended to pensioners under age 70 in receipt of a qualifying payment and whose spouse/partner is getting a social welfare payment in their own right and the total income of the spouse/partner is less than €203.16 per week. **(January 2003)**



OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Qualified Adult Allowances

- Upper income ceiling for tapered rates in respect of qualified adults to be increased from €196.81 per week to €203.16 per week and retention of full Child Dependant Allowance. (January 2003)

Islander Allowance

- Entitlement to Islander Allowance to be extended to people under age 66 getting Invalidity Pension, Disability Allowance, Unemployability Supplement and Blind Pension – currently €12.70 per week. (April 2003)

Medical Appliances

- Funding of €950,000 towards improvements in the scheme. (January 2003)

Unemployment

- Assessment of Benefit and Privilege for unemployed people aged 29 and over to be abolished (May 2003)
- Additional funding of €250,000 towards Technical Assistance and Training Fund.

Assessment of Maintenance Payments

- Means assessment of maintenance payments for Disability Allowance, Unemployment Assistance, Farm Assist, Pre-Retirement Allowance, Old Age (Non-Contributory) Pension, Widow's /Widower's (Non-Contributory) Pension and Blind Pension to be standardised, in line with current

arrangements for the One-Parent Family Payment. (May 2003)

Fuel Poverty

- Action and research programme to improve the fuel efficiency of dwellings occupied by Fuel Allowance recipients.

CHANGES IN PRSI Employees

- Earnings ceiling for PRSI increased by €1,680 from €38,740 to €40,420 per year. (January 2003)

Class P (Optional) Sharefishermen

- Rate of contribution reduced from 5% to 4%.
- PRSI-Free Allowance increased to €2,500 from €1,321.
- Minimum contribution reduced from €253 to €200 per year. (January 2003)

GRANTS

Family Services

- €1 million for the Family Support Agency.

MABS

- Additional funding of €960,000.

Comhairle

- Additional funding of €1 million.

Combat Poverty Agency

- Additional funding of €200,000.

Emigrant Advice Centres

- Additional funding of €300,000.

Rural Transport Initiative

- Funding of €500,000 towards the cost of the Rural Transport Initiative in respect of Free Travel Pass holders.

Irish Deaf Society

- Special once-off research grant of €40,000.

Pensions Board

- €500,000 towards a National Awareness Campaign on occupational & personal pensions.

Schedule for Increases

January: All FIS customers will receive their increase in full from the beginning of January. Customers on short-term weekly payments (mainly Unemployment, Farm Assist, Disability Benefit, Carer's Benefit, and Supplementary Welfare Allowance) will receive their increase in full from their first pay-day in January.

Customers on long-term weekly payments (old age pensioners, widows, widowers, lone parents and people on invalidity pensions) and who are paid by electronic methods through Post Offices and Banks will receive their increase in full from their first pay-day in January.

February: Long-term customers on book payments will receive their increase in mid-February via a lump sum backdated to January. In some cases (Disability Allowance, Blind Pension, Retirement, Old Age Pensions) an advance payment to end-March will also be paid to those customers whose books are due for renewal in April.

April: Child Benefit customers paid by electronic methods will receive their increase in full from April 2003.

May: Child Benefit customers on book payments will receive their increase through a special payment in May, which will be backdated to April.



Maximum Weekly Rates

Weekly Personal Rate Present

Adult Allowance Present

Qualified New

Each Child Full Rate

Social Insurance Payments

Retirement/Old Age (Contributory) Pension

Under Age 80

Aged 80 and over

Widow's/Widower's (Con) Pension/Deserted Wife's Benefit

Under Age 66

Aged 66 and Under Age 80

Aged 80 and over

Invalidity Pension

Under Age 65

Aged 65 and Under Age 80

Aged 80 and over

Carer's Benefit

Disability/Unemployment/Health & Safety/Injury Benefit

Social Assistance Payments

Old Age (Non-Contributory) Pension

Aged 66 and Under Age 80

Aged 80 and over

Blind Pension

Under Age 66

Aged 66 and Under Age 80

Aged 80 and over

Widow's/Widower's (Non-Contributory) Pension/

Deserted Wife's/Prisoner's Wife's Allowance

Under Age 66

Aged 66 and Under Age 80

Aged 80 and over

Carer's Allowance

Under Age 66

Aged 66 and over

One-Parent Family Payment

Under Age 66

Aged 66 and over

Pre-Retirement/Disability Allowance

Supplementary Welfare Allowance

Unemployment Assistance - Short-term

- Long-term

Farm Assist

Other Social Welfare Allowances

Maternity/Adoptive Benefit - Minimum rate

Orphan's Pension/Allowance

Child Benefit

Number of Children

Present Monthly Rate

New Monthly Rate

| Number of Children | Present Monthly Rate | New Monthly Rate |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 child | € 117.60 | € 125.60 |
| 2 children | 235.20 | 251.20 |
| 3 children | 382.50 | 408.50 |
| 4 children | 529.80 | 565.80 |
| 5 children | 677.10 | 723.10 |
| 6 children | 824.40 | 880.40 |
| 7 children | 971.70 | 1,037.70 |
| 8 children | 1,119.00 | 1,195.00 |

Family Income Supplement (FIS)

Family Size

Present Income Limit

NEW Income Limit

| Family Size | Present Income Limit | NEW Income Limit |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 child | € 362.00 | € 379.00 |
| 2 children | 388.00 | 405.00 |
| 3 children | 413.00 | 430.00 |
| 4 children | 438.00 | 455.00 |
| 5 children | 470.00 | 487.00 |
| 6 children | 496.00 | 513.00 |
| 7 children | 517.00 | 534.00 |
| 8 children or more | 539.00 | 556.00 |

FIS is calculated at 60% of the difference between net weekly income (ie gross pay less Tax, Employees PRSI, Health Contribution, Superannuation) and the income limit for your family size.

147.30

157.30

104.80

19.30

153.70

163.70

121.50

19.30

123.30

130.30

21.60

21.60

144.80

155.80

21.60

19.30

151.20

162.20

93.00

19.30

123.30

130.30

113.10

19.30

147.30

157.30

82.80

16.80

153.70

163.70

82.80

16.80

132.70

139.70

16.80

16.80

118.80

124.80

95.20

16.80

134.00

144.00

82.80

16.80

140.40

150.40

95.20

16.80

118.80

124.80

82.80

16.80

134.00

144.00

82.80

16.80

140.40

150.40

82.80

16.80

118.80

124.80

82.80

16.80

122.60

129.60

82.80

16.80

137.80

147.80

82.80

16.80

118.80

124.80

82.80

16.80

134.00

144.00

82.80

16.80

118.80

124.80

82.80

16.80

118.80

124.80

82.80

16.80

118.80

124.80

82.80

16.80

135.60

141.60

82.80

16.80

91.00

97.00

82.80

16.80