Jobseeker's benefit – Five-day payment week

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What changes to the jobseeker's benefit payment week were announced in Budget 2012 and when do they take effect?

From 26 July 2012, the rate of jobseeker's benefit is changing to reflect a five-day rather than a six-day week. This will affect casual and part-time workers who are getting jobseeker's benefit. As this change is taking effect from 26 July, the first payments affected will be in respect of the week ending 01 August 2012.

2. I am getting jobseeker's allowance; will this change affect me?

No. There is no change to the payment week for people who are getting jobseeker's allowance.

3. I am fully unemployed; will this change affect me?

No. There will be no change to the weekly rate of jobseeker's benefit. This change only affects people who work part-time or are in casual employment **and** who also claim jobseeker's benefit for the days they are not working. If you do not work at all, you are not affected by this change, but if you stop claiming jobseeker's benefit, this change may affect your last weekly jobseeker's benefit payment.

4. Who can claim jobseeker's benefit for the days they are not working?

There are 4 types of people who can claim jobseeker's benefit while partly employed:

- Part-time workers
- Casual workers
- Systematic short-time workers
- People who work week on/week off

5. What is the difference between a part-time worker and a casual worker?

A part-time worker usually has an ongoing arrangement with their employer to regularly work a certain amount, for example, the same days every week. A casual worker has no such arrangement with any particular employer.

6. What is a systematic short-time worker?

A systematic short-time worker is a person who was employed full-time but, due to lack of work, has been put on short-time by their employer for a certain period.

7. Which of these four groups is affected by this change?

Part-time workers, casual workers and people who work week on/week off, and who get jobseeker's benefit for the days they are not working will be affected by this change.

8. Why are systematic short-time workers not affected?

Systematic short-time workers are already paid on a five-day basis so they are not affected by this change.

9. How are part-time workers, casual workers and people who work week on/week off affected?

Their weekly payment will be reduced – see the table at the end of this document for more details.

10. Will this change affect the length of time I will get jobseeker's benefit?

No. Jobseeker's benefit will be paid for the same length of time as before this change was introduced.

11. I am a casual or part-time worker and I work on Sundays; how does this change affect me?

Sunday work is not counted for jobseeker's benefit. This change only affects other days of the week in which you work. In other words, if you only work on Sundays, you are getting full-rate jobseeker's benefit and will continue to do so. If you also work other days in the week, then you will be affected by this change and your weekly payment will be reduced – see the table at the end of this document for more details.

12. I am a casual or part-time worker and I usually work Saturdays; how does this change affect me?

Your weekly payment will be reduced– see the table at the end of this document for more details.

13. I am a casual or part-time worker and I usually work consecutive days; how does this change affect me?

Your weekly payment will be reduced – see the table at the end of this document for more details.

14. Am I still entitled to the same amount of holidays?

Yes. You will still be entitled to take 2 weeks holidays in any calendar year.

15. I am a casual or part-time worker and I sometimes get paid jobseeker's benefit for just one day in the week; how does this change affect me?

You will no longer be paid jobseeker's benefit in situations where you used to receive payment for one day.

16. How do these changes affect payment rates?

The tables below show examples of changes to some typical jobseeker's benefit payment rates.

Table 1: Single person with no dependants (maximum weekly rate)

No. of days worked in the payment week	Effective days of unemployment in the payment week	Previous weekly payment	New weekly payment
0	6	€188.00	€188.00
1	5	€156.70	€150.40
2	4	€125.30	€112.80
3	3	€94.00	€75.20

Table 2: Couple with no child dependants (maximum weekly rate)

No. of days worked in the payment week	Effective days of unemployment in the payment week	Previous weekly payment	New weekly payment
0	6	€312.80	€312.80
1	5	€260.67	€250.24
2	4	€208.53	€187.68
3	3	€156.40	€125.12

Table 3: Couple with one child dependant (maximum weekly rate)

No. of days worked in the payment week	Effective days of unemployment in the payment week	Previous weekly payment	New weekly payment
0	6	€342.60	€342.60
1	5	€285.50	€274.08
2	4	€228.40	€205.56
3	3	€171.30	€137.04

17. Where can I get more information?

The Department will write to all customers affected by this change, explaining how they will be affected. For more information, see www.welfare.ie.