



# Domiciliary Care Allowance

## What is Domiciliary Care Allowance?

Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) is a monthly payment for a child, aged under 16 with a severe\* disability who requires ongoing care and attention, substantially\* over and above the care and attention usually required by a child of the same age.

**\* The definitions used for terms such as severe or substantial in this qualifying condition are detailed in the DCA Medical Guidelines used by the Department in assessing applications for DCA. For more information, log onto [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).**

The payment is not based on the type of disability but on how much extra care and attention the child needs because of it.

Further details of the allowance and the qualifying criteria are available on [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).

## Who may qualify?

You may qualify to receive the allowance for a child under 16 with a disability provided that:

- the disability is likely to last for at least one year,
- you provide for the care of the child,
- the child lives at home with you for at least 5 or more days a week,
- the child meets the medical criteria of the scheme,
- both you and the child are ordinarily resident in the state. This means that you both live in the Republic of Ireland and only leave Ireland for holidays,
- you must also be Habitually Resident in the state.

Payment is not made for a child who lives full time in residential care or in other placements. However, a half rate payment can be made for a child in residential care, who goes home for two or more days a week. For example, a child who attends residential services from Monday to Friday and goes home at weekends.

# When and how do I apply?

You should apply as soon as you consider that you and your child satisfy the qualifying conditions set out previously.

To apply, fill in form **Dom Care 1**.

To get an application form:

- Log on to **www.welfare.ie**.
- Text “FORM DCA” followed by your name and address to 51909 (from the Republic of Ireland only). Standard text rates apply.
- Drop in to your local Citizens Information Centre, your local Intreo Centre or your local Social Welfare Office.

Please use **BLACK** ball point pen and use **BLOCK** letters and place an X in the relevant boxes.

You should complete **Parts 1** to **5** of the form.

Please ask your G.P./Specialist to fill in **Parts 6** and **7** (the medical section) of the form and attach any reports or other information you have about your child’s disability and the impact it has on their care needs.

## Note:

**\* If your child has a Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD\*), you have the option of having an additional form, Dom Care 3, completed by the medical professional/specialist dealing with your child. While this is not compulsory, the completed form can provide more detail of your child’s medical condition and the specific care needs your child has as a result of their disability, this will assist the deciding officer in making their decision.**

## Note continued:

**In some instances, your medical professional/specialist may have recently provided a comprehensive report on your child’s medical condition and resultant care needs and in these circumstances this report will serve the same purpose as the Dom Care 3 form and it is not necessary to complete this additional form.**

**\* PDD, refers to a group of disorders characterised by delays in the development of socialisation and communication skills. Autism, Asperger’s Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder and Rett’s Syndrome are generally referred to under this category.**

While we understand that completing this form may be difficult for you, we need the information so that we can make a decision on your application.

## Note:

**Not all questions in the application form may apply to your child, so please answer the questions that are relevant to your own circumstances.**

Please let us know your mobile phone number and we will text you right away, confirming that we received your application.

It is in your best interest to apply as soon as you think that you qualify.

If you delay in applying, you will, subject to satisfying the qualifying conditions for the scheme, usually get Domiciliary Care Allowance from the month after we receive your application.

### **Note:**

**The payment can be back dated for up to 6 months if there was a good reason for not applying at the time you were originally qualified for the allowance.**

### **Note:**

**The medical assessor forms their opinion based on the information provided. Your child will not be seen by them. You need to make sure that you provide as much detailed and relevant information as possible, so that the medical assessor has all the facts available to them when carrying out their assessment.**

## How is my claim decided?

There are two stages to the decision process.

- 1)** A medical assessor reviews your application and determines in their opinion, if your child's disability means that he or she needs care and attention substantially over and above what another child of the same age without the disability needs.
- 2)** A deciding officer makes a decision on eligibility after considering this opinion and the application in its entirety.

### **Stage 1**

Medical assessors are qualified and experienced doctors employed by the Department. They provide a professional opinion to assist the deciding officer in reaching their decision.

The medical assessor takes the following into account:

- Your child's history as outlined in the application form.
- All supporting reports and information received.
- The parent or carer's description of the care and attention that the child needs.
- After this assessment is complete, the medical assessor passes their opinion to the deciding officer.

### **Stage 2**

After receiving the medical assessor opinion, the deciding officer reviews the application, considers the application in its entirety and then decides if your child qualifies for the payment.

If the application is allowed, we will write to tell you of when and how payment will be made and when your entitlement may be reviewed.

If the application is disallowed, we will write to tell you and let you know that you have the right to ask for a review of the decision or appeal the decision directly to the Social Welfare Appeals Office. The Social Welfare Appeals Office is an independent body.

You should send your completed application form and supporting documentation to:

### **Domiciliary Care Allowance Section**

Department of Social Protection  
Social Welfare Services  
College Road  
Sligo

Telephone: (071) 91 57100

LoCall: 1890 500 000

If calling from outside the Republic of Ireland please call + 353 71 91 57100

- Log on to [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).
- LoCall Information Line **1890 66 22 44** or if calling from outside the Republic of Ireland please call **+353 71 91 93313**
- Drop in to your local Citizens Information Centre, your local Intreo Centre or your local Social Welfare Office .

## Checklist for Domiciliary Care Allowance application

- Complete form **DOM CARE 1** as soon as you think you are qualified.
- If you are late applying and wish to have the payment backdated (for a max of 6 months), give the reasons for the delay in making your application.
- Send in any additional information, such as medical reports on your child that you have, this will help us to make the correct decision.
- If your child has a Pervasive Development Disorder (PDD), send in any recent reports from specialists you may have or you can have the **DOM CARE 3** FORM completed if you wish.

## Reviews and Appeals

If your application is refused, you may submit additional information and ask for the decision to be reviewed. If you provide new or additional medical evidence, another medical assessor will be asked to look at the case. A revised decision will be made if warranted.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this review or wish to appeal directly without a review being undertaken, you can appeal to the Social Welfare Appeals Office, which is independent of the Department of Social Protection.

### To appeal the decision:

Send your appeal directly to the Social Welfare Appeals Office at this address:

### Social Welfare Appeals Office

D'Olier House  
D'Olier Street  
Dublin 2

LoCall: 1890 74 74 34

or

by e-mail to [swappeals@welfare.ie](mailto:swappeals@welfare.ie) within 21 days of the date you were notified of the decision.

### Note

The rates charged for using 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary among different service providers.

This leaflet is intended as a guide only and is not a legal interpretation.