



## **Department of Social and Family Affairs**

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### **Minister Coughlan Notes Crosscare Report**

Mary Coughlan Minister for Social and Family Affairs today said that since the 1<sup>st</sup> January this year to 17<sup>th</sup> September a total of 30,199 claims for rent supplement have been awarded.

“The report of the Social Partners Group established under Sustaining Progress on the introduction of Rent Supplement changes which has just been published is authoritative and wide ranging – all the Health Boards were consulted as was a representative group of Community Welfare Officers who implement the measures, and there has been no reported case of homelessness as a result of these reforms,” said Minister Coughlan.

“A significant survey was carried out by all the health boards at the request of the Social Partners group. Based on that survey and discussions with Community Welfare Officers, the Social Partners group concluded that the new measures are not having any significant adverse impacts. The Group also welcomed the new initiative, announced in July, to meet the long term housing needs of rent supplement recipients.

“I note the Crosscare report published today, however none of its recommendations call for the reversal of the measures which prompted the report,” added Minister Coughlan.

The report published last week by the Social Partners Group also indicated that no one had been made homeless by these measures – contrary to the allegation contained in the Crosscare report published today.

**Ends – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2004**