



**Cullen - 420,000 pensioners to benefit from increases  
in weekly payments**

*42,000 pensioner couples to benefit by up to €41 a week*

Martin Cullen TD, Minister for Social and Family Affairs has said (3 January 2008) that commencing this week, some 420,000 pensioners will benefit from increases in weekly payments.

From today Thursday 3 January, the State Pension (Transition) and the Invalidity Pension (for recipients aged 65 years) increases by €14 to €223.30 per week.

From tomorrow Friday 4 January, the State Pension (Contributory) and the Widow's and Widower's (Contributory) Pension (aged 66 years and over) will also increase by €14 to €223.30 per week. Also from tomorrow Friday 4 January, Non-Contributory Pensioners will receive an increase of €12 bringing their payment to €212 per week and Non-Contributory Widows and Widowers will receive a €12 increase bringing their payment to €197.80 per week. Widows and Widowers in receipt of a Contributory Pension who are under 66 years, will receive a €12 increase bringing their weekly rate to €203.30.

The increases in welfare payments come as part of the €900 million Budget 2008 welfare package which will bring the total 2008 welfare spend by the Department of Social and Family Affairs to a record €17 billion.

In addition, the spouses or partners (aged 66 years and over) of over 42,000 contributory pensioners will also benefit from a special increase of up to €27 from this week. This increase applies to spouses or partners (also called 'Qualified Adults') aged 66 years and over of State Pension (Contributory), State Pension



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(Transition) and Invalidity Pension recipients. The maximum weekly rate for these Qualified Adults will be €200 per week from this week.

When combined with the increase in the personal pension rate, the impact of this measure means that over 42,000 pensioner couples will see their household income increase by up to €41 a week this year or nearly 11%.

Minister Martin Cullen TD said: "The 2008 Social Welfare Budget package makes significant progress towards achieving the Government's target rate for social welfare pensions. Since 2002, the level of the Contributory State Pension has increased by over 50% from €147.30 to €223.30 following the Budget. This level of improvement has had a marked impact on the living standards of older people." Minister Cullen continued: "The Government is also committed to increasing the pensioner qualified adult allowance to the level of the State Pension (Non-Contributory). In this year's Budget, an increase of €27 in the qualified adult rate bringing it to €200 per week or 94% of the target, has been reached. This measure will benefit all qualified adults aged 66 and over."

Minister Martin Cullen TD added: "The fuel season has also been extended to 30 weeks with effect from April. Under this scheme a fuel allowance of €18 per week is paid to all eligible households. This measure again will be of particular benefit to older people."

### **Editor's note:**

Pensioners who are paid directly into their bank/post office account will receive their pension increase from this week. Pensioners using a payable order (or Pension) Book will receive their increase in mid-February backdated to January along with their new payable order book (as has been the case in previous years).



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This is because of the lead in time involved in the production of Personal Payable Orders.

Details of the 2008 Social Welfare Budget increases are available from [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie) or the Department of Social and Family Affairs on 1890 66 22 44 (LoCall) from 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday. Note: The rates charged for the use of 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary among different service providers.

<b>Payment</b>	<b>Budget Increase Day:</b>
State Pension (Transition), Invalidity Pension.	Thursday 3 January 2008
State Pension (Contributory), Widow/er's (Contributory) Pension, State Pension (Non-Contributory), Widow/er's (Non-Contributory) Pension.	Friday 4 January 2008

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