



Minister Doherty Announces a New Social Insurance Scheme of Jobseeker's Benefit for the Self-Employed

Monday 29 April 2019

Today the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty T.D. announced the introduction of a new social insurance benefit scheme for the self-employed from this November. The new scheme of Jobseekers Benefit (Self-Employed) will support those who lose their self-employment and are covered by social insurance.

This new initiative will provide assurance to people setting up or running their own business that the State is there to support them if their efforts to create employment and an income for their families and employees suffer as a consequence of their business ceasing.

Arrangements are currently underway in the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection to ensure the necessary legislation is in place for the new scheme and that the administrative and technical solutions are in place in advance of November for the operation of this scheme.

Speaking on the importance of the scheme, Minister Doherty said:

“This new benefit supports the Government’s aim of creating a supportive environment for entrepreneurship, including providing an income safety net to employees and self-employed alike. This Government has sought to encourage enterprise and, particularly, has sought to introduce a new deal for the self-employed when it comes to their access to benefits.

“We have already extended Treatment Benefits and Invalidity Pension to the self-employed in recent years to ensure that they reach some parity with employees in the benefits they can access from the social insurance system. The introduction of a new Jobseeker’s Benefit scheme for the self-employed represents the next step in the Government’s work to extend PRSI benefits and will provide an income safety net to thousands of small and medium businesses throughout the country.”

It is estimated that up to 6,500 individuals could benefit from this support at any point in time in a full year. Under the scheme applicants will have access to the full range of employment supports available to other jobseekers such as referral to group information sessions, one to one interviews and subsequent caseworker support.

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Note for Editors

- This is a new statutory social insurance benefit scheme for the self-employed
- The key objective of the new Jobseeker's Benefit scheme for the Self Employed is to provide a social insurance support to self-employed contributors whose business has ceased
- Applicants will have to satisfy a PRSI contribution condition
- Self-employed persons who do not have sufficient PRSI contributions will continue to be able to apply for jobseekers allowance which is a social assistance means tested scheme
- Drafting of the necessary legislation has commenced for the new scheme to be available from November 2019
- The payment rates for this scheme are the same as the Jobseeker's Benefit scheme, as follows:

Maximum Personal Rate	€203.00
Maximum Increase for a Qualified Adult	€134.70
Maximum Increase for a Qualified Child (Under 12)	€34.00
Maximum Increase for a Qualified Child (12 and Over)	€37.00

The new benefit will be paid for 9 months for people with 260 or more self-employment PRSI contributions paid. It will be paid for 6 months for people with fewer than 260 self-employment PRSI contributions paid (same as current Jobseeker's Benefit scheme).

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Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection