€16 Million Paid Out So Far This Year For Back To School Expenses – Minister Brennan

Brennan Urges Applications From Eligible Families

Minister for Social Affairs, Séamus Brennan T.D., today revealed that €16.3 million in funding for back to school expenses has been paid to nearly 75,000 families so far this year under his Department's Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance.

"So far this year €16.3million, out of a total allocation of €18 million, has been paid out under the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance. Further applications under the scheme are being processed at the moment and I expect more to be received this week," said Minister Brennan.

"However, I'm concerned that many people who would qualify for a payment haven't yet made an application. I want to urge parents who may have an entitlement, and have not already applied, to contact their local Health Service Executive office for funding under the Scheme, if possible before the end of this week," added Minister Brennan.

The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance is a targeted payment designed to help people depending on certain social welfare and Health Service Executive (HSE) payments, or taking part in approved employment schemes or training courses, with the cost of children's school clothing and footwear. It is also available to people on low incomes who are getting Family Income Supplement. So far this year €16.3 million has been paid out under the allowance to nearly 75,000 families, benefiting more than 140,000 children.

The payment, which is income related, is funded by the Department of Social and Family Affairs and is administered by the HSE.

Parents get €80 for each eligible child aged between 2 and 11 years and receive €150 for each child aged between 12 and 22 years. Parents can apply to their local HSE office for funding under the Scheme up to the end of this month.

A couple with 1 child whose weekly income is at or below €368.10 may qualify for the Allowance. A couple with two children whose weekly income is at or below €387.40 may qualify. If they have three children, they may have income of €406.70 and qualify. (For families with more children, the income limit is increased by €19.30 for each additional child).

A lone parent with one child could have income of up to €250.90 per week and qualify for a payment. (For lone parent families, with more than one child, the income limit is increased by €21.60 for each additional child.)

Last year, a Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance was paid in respect of 153,409 children at a cost of €17.03 million; 95,761 were aged between 2 and 11 years, 50,568 were aged between 12 and 17 years and 7,080 were aged between 18 and 22 years.

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