



**An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection**

www.welfare.ie

News Release: Tuesday 22 June 2010

Ó Cuív - €82 million provision for Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance

Ó Cuív encourages parents to apply early for assistance with back to school clothing and footwear costs

Text service makes it easier for parents to apply for relevant form

Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Social Protection today (Tuesday 22 June 2010) said that approximately 160,000 families are expected to apply for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear allowance over the summer months. This year some €82 million is earmarked to support parents with the costs of school clothing and footwear for their children. The Minister is encouraging parents who may be entitled to the allowance – a payment of €200 or €305 depending on the age of their children - to apply early for the support which is available.

Minister Ó Cuív said: "Although we are many weeks away until the start of the new school year, I am encouraging families who may be eligible for this scheme to apply in good time to ensure they have their payment before the new term starts. €82 million has been made available by Government this year for the scheme - an increase of €59 million on this scheme since 2006. This level of support shows the Government's ongoing commitment to assist families who are under pressure financially; we know in particular, that the start of a school year can be a very pressurised time on household budgets. Approximately 160,000 families with over 310,000 children will benefit from the Back to School Clothing and Footwear allowance in 2010."

Minister Ó Cuív added: "The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance helps parents to meet the cost of school uniforms and footwear for their children. Parents receive €200 for each eligible child aged between 2 and 11 years and €305 for each eligible child aged between 12 and 22 years. Parents are welcome to apply to their local HSE office for funding under the Scheme from now until the end of September."

A mobile text service can be used to obtain an application form for the allowance. For an application form text - **FORM BTSCFA** - to 51909 followed by your name and address. The Minister encouraged parents to apply early for the allowance as it may take a number of weeks to process applications and issue payments.



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A person may qualify for payment of the allowance if they are in receipt of a Social Welfare payment (including Family Income Supplement), or a Health Service Executive payment, are participating in an approved employment scheme or attending a recognised education and training course and have household income at or below certain set levels. The weekly income limit for the allowance for parents with one child is now €563.60 for couples and €410.10 for those parenting alone.

The scheme is administered on behalf of the Department of Social Protection by the Community Welfare Division of the Health Service Executive. Application forms are now available in Health Service Executive Offices and online at: www.welfare.ie/EN/Forms/Documents/bscfa.pdf or at communitywelfareservice.ie/cws_public/application-forms

Notes for Editors

Applications for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance can be made between the beginning of June and the end of September each year.

Application forms are available through the Department's mobile text service. For the application forms for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear simply text - **FORM BTSCFA** - to 51909 followed by your name and address.

Application forms are also available at www.welfare.ie/EN/Forms/Documents/bscfa.pdf or at communitywelfareservice.ie/cws_public/application-forms.

A person may qualify for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear scheme if they are:

- receiving a Social Welfare payment (including Family Income Supplement) or a Health Service Executive (HSE) payment
or
- taking part in approved employment schemes or training courses:
and
- receiving a Qualified Child Increase with their social welfare payment
and
- their household income is within the limits shown in the table below.

Weekly Income Limits for 2010 are:

Couple with:	Income Limit	Lone Parent with:	Income Limit
1 child	€563.60	1 child	€410.10
2 children	€593.40	2 children	€439.90



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3 children	€623.20	3 children	€469.70
4 children	€653.00*	4 children	€499.50*

*Limit is increased by €29.80 for each additional child.

RATES OF PAYMENT

The rates of payment are:

- a. €200 in respect of children aged 2 to 11 on the 30th September 2010;
- b. €305 in respect of children aged 12 to 17 on the 30th September 2010;
- c. €305 in respect of children aged 18 to 22 on the 30th September 2010 who are in full time education.
- d. As a special measure introduced in Budget 2009, an additional amount of €215 is payable for children aged 18 ONLY in respect of whom compensatory Child Benefit is in payment. Total payment in respect of eligible children aged 18 is €520.

PRESS RELEASE ENDS