



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

www.welfare.ie

Publication of Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2010

The Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2010 was published today (Friday 28 May 2010). The Bill is available to view on www.oireachtas.ie

The Bill provides for a number of measures including changes to the One-Parent Family Payment to reduce, from April 2011, the qualifying age for receipt of the payment to when the youngest child reaches the age of 13. This section also provides for transitional arrangements for current recipients of the One-Parent Family Payment.*

The Bill also provides for a specific disqualification for receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance where the person refuses an offer of suitable employment. It also provides for a reduced rate of Jobseeker's Allowance or Supplementary Welfare Allowance for claimants who refuse to participate in an appropriate course of training or to participate in a programme under the National Employment Action Plan.

The Bill also provides for:

- The Minister to appoint persons other than serving staff to be appeals officers. This section will allow for the employment, on a temporary basis, of retired appeals officers, as appeals officers to clear backlogs in the Social Welfare Appeals Office.
- The publication of the names, addresses, fines and other penalties of persons who have been convicted of offences under Social Welfare legislation.



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The Bill will be debated in both Houses of the Oireachtas in June and early July.

*Currently the Department's One-Parent Family Payment is payable until the youngest child reaches 18 or 22 if in full-time education, where means and other conditions are met. Under the amended scheme, payment will be made until the youngest child in a lone parent family reaches age 13.

There will also be special provisions for families with children for whom Domiciliary Care Allowance is paid as well as for both married and co-habiting persons who are recently bereaved and who have children aged 13 years or older. (The Domiciliary Care Allowance is a monthly payment made to the carer of a child with a severe disability who lives at home). The new provisions will be introduced from April 2011, with transition arrangements in place for existing recipients.

These changes will bring Ireland's support for lone parents more in line with international provisions, where there is a general movement away from long term and passive income support. The EU countries that are achieving the best outcomes in terms of tackling child poverty are those that are combining strategies aimed at facilitating access to employment and enabling services (e.g. child care) with income support.

See www.oireachtas.ie for a copy of the Bill and an accompanying explanatory memo.

ENDS