



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Social Protection

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Burton: Funding for the Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance Scheme to be maintained - €82 million to be provided for the Scheme in 2011

Joan Burton, TD, Minister for Social Protection today (*31st May, 2011*) said that approximately 160,000 families are expected to benefit from the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance (BSCFA) over the summer months.

“This Scheme, which is administered by the Department of Social Protection, assists eligible categories of people help meet the cost of school clothing and footwear. The Allowance is paid in respect of eligible children between the ages of 2 and 17 years of age and between the ages of 18 and 22, if in full time education”, said the Minister.

The payment rates for the 2011 Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance scheme are €200 in respect of children aged 2 to 11 on 30 September 2011 and €305 for children aged 12 to 22 on 30th September 2011.

Minister Burton continued: “€82 million has been made available by Government this year for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance scheme. This level of support, which exceeds the €77.4million spent on the Scheme last year, shows the Government’s commitment to assisting families who are under pressure financially; in particular recognising that the start of a school year can be a very pressurised time on household budgets.”

The administrative arrangements for the 2011 Scheme will differ from those that applied in previous years. For this year, the majority of Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance entitlements will be fully automated with no application form required from customers. These customers will simply receive a letter from the Department of Social Protection in mid-June telling them when and how their payment will be made.

A customer who does not receive an automated payment will be required to complete an application form which will become available from 30th June 2011. These applications will then be processed from one centralised unit within the Department of Social Protection.

Minister Burton said that the administrative arrangements for the 2011 Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance scheme are an example of the efficiencies that can be achieved through the greater use of technology and she acknowledged the role of the staff in the Department of Social Protection in bringing about these efficiencies. The Minister also acknowledged the excellent work of the Community Welfare Service in administering the scheme in previous years under difficult circumstances.

It is expected that in excess of 80% of customers entitled to the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance in 2011 will automatically receive the Allowance, with payments to these customers issuing from the end of June 2011.

ENDS



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Notes for Editors

Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance 2011

Income Limits for 2011 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
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 2011;
- (b) €305 in respect of children aged 12 to 22 on the 30th September 2011.

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