



Main Social Welfare Changes and Rates of Payment

€20 billion to be spent in 2018 for 2 million beneficiaries

Budget 2018 – Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

€5 increase in max. rate of all weekly payments e.g. pensioners, lone parents, jobseekers, carers, people with disabilities, widows - 1.47 million beneficiaries

€5 increase for jobseekers aged under 26 on a reduced rate of payment

**Proportionate increases for people on reduced rate payments
and for qualified adult dependants**

€2 increase in all qualified child dependant weekly payments – 400,000 children

Income disregard for working lone-parents increased by €20 to €130 per week

**Working Family Payment (formerly Family Income Supplement) thresholds
increased by €10 per week for families of 1, 2 or 3 children**

Back to Work Family Dividend will continue in 2018

National Minimum Wage increases to €9.55 per hour - will benefit 155,000 employees

One additional week of Fuel Allowance (to 27 weeks) – 375,000 households to benefit

New Telephone Support Allowance for 124,000 people living alone

New Youth Employment Support Scheme for young jobseekers

Enhanced JobsPlus Recruitment Incentive to hire older workers

A Christmas Bonus of 85% will be paid in early December to 1.2 million recipients

Extra 250 places for the Rural Social Scheme

For more information check www.welfare.ie and www.citizensinformation.ie. Telephone the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection on 071 919 3302 or 1890 66 22 44* from 9a.m. to 5p.m., Monday to Friday. Telephone the Citizens Information Phone Service on 0761 07 4000, 9a.m. - 8p.m., Monday to Friday. Contact your local Intreo Centre, Social Welfare Office or Citizens Information Centre. This Fact Sheet is intended as a guide only and does not purport to be a legal interpretation.

**The rates charged for 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary among different service providers. These rates may be considerably higher amongst mobile network providers.*

Improvements for Pensioners

- €5 increase in all maximum weekly pension payments including State Pension Contributory and Non-Contributory, Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's and Disablement Pension with proportionate increases for those on reduced rates of payment – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Proportionate increases in weekly payments for qualified adult dependants - from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- A new weekly Telephone Support Allowance of €2.50 will be paid from June 2018, to people who are receiving the Living Alone Allowance, subject to the same eligibility conditions as the Fuel Allowance payment.
- Weekly Fuel Allowance of €22.50 will be paid for 27 weeks in 2018, extended from 26 weeks.
- An extra €10 million is being provided towards the Free Travel scheme in 2018, increasing the funding to €90 million.

Improvements in Weekly Payments

- €5 increase in all weekly benefits and allowances including Maternity/Paternity/Adoptive Benefit, Illness Benefit, Blind Pension, Carer's Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension, One-Parent Family Payment, Jobseeker's Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance and Farm Assist with proportionate increases for people in receipt of reduced rate payments. This includes increases in employment programmes such as CE, TÚS and Rural Social Scheme – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Jobseekers aged under 26 on a reduced rate payment to get €5 increase per week – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Proportionate increases in weekly payments for qualified adult dependants – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- €2 increase for each qualified child dependant in all weekly payments – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- A new weekly Telephone Support Allowance of €2.50 will be paid from June 2018, to people who are receiving the Living Alone Allowance, subject to the same eligibility conditions as the Fuel Allowance payment.

Supporting Families and Children

- €5 increase in all working-age weekly payments, including One-Parent Family Payment, Jobseeker's Transition Payment, Back to Education Allowance and Maternity/Paternity/Adoptive Benefits – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- €2 increase for each qualified child dependant in all weekly payments – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Income disregard for lone parents receiving One-Parent Family Payment or Jobseeker's Transition Payment to increase by €20 to €130 per week.
- Working Family Payment (formerly Family Income Supplement – FIS) threshold to increase by €10 per week for families with 1, 2 or 3 children – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Maternity Benefit to be extended to support mothers of premature babies (born on or after 1 October 2017).
- Funding of €54 million for School Meals in 2018, up from €47.5 million in 2017. Some 18,400 extra children and 80 newly designated DEIS schools to benefit from September 2018.
- Weekly Fuel Allowance of €22.50 will be paid for 27 weeks in 2018, extended from 26 weeks.

Jobseeker and Employment Supports

- National Minimum Wage will increase from €9.25 per hour to €9.55 per hour with effect from 1 January 2018.
- €5 increase in all jobseeker payments – Jobseeker’s Benefit, Jobseeker’s Allowance, Farm Assist and Back to Work Enterprise Allowance and employment programmes such as CE, TÚS and Rural Social Scheme.
- €5 increase for Jobseekers under 26 and receiving a reduced rate of payment – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Working Family Payment (formerly Family Income Supplement) threshold to increase by €10 per week for families with 1, 2 or 3 children – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Youth Employment Support Scheme – focusing on helping young long-term jobseekers back to work to be introduced in 2018.
- The Back to Work Family Dividend will continue in 2018. There are 8,155 families, with 16,500 children, currently benefiting from this support. These families will also benefit from the €2 increase for each qualified child dependant.
- Enhancement of the JobsPlus scheme to support workers aged 50 or over into employment. Employers will receive a subsidy of €10,000 to employ any long-term unemployed person aged over 50.

Supporting Carers and People with Disabilities

- €5 increase in the maximum weekly rate of Carer’s Allowance, Carer’s Benefit, Illness Benefit, Blind Pension, Disability Allowance and Invalidity Pension - from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- €2 increase for each qualified child dependant – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- Carer’s Support Grant of €1,700 will continue to be paid for each person being cared for.
- A new weekly Telephone Support Allowance of €2.50 will be paid from June 2018, to people who are receiving the Living Alone Allowance, subject to the same eligibility conditions as the Fuel Allowance payment.
- Weekly Fuel Allowance of €22.50 will be paid for 27 weeks in 2018, extended from 26 weeks.
- An extra €10 million is being invested in the Free Travel scheme in 2018, increasing the funding to €90 million.

Rural Ireland

- Rural Social Scheme – 250 additional places in 2018, increasing overall number to 3,350.
- €5 increase in the maximum weekly rate of Farm Assist, with proportionate increases for qualified adult dependants – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- €2 increase in weekly rate of Farm Assist for each qualified child dependant – from week beginning 26 March 2018.
- A new weekly Telephone Support Allowance of €2.50 will be paid from June 2018, to people who are receiving the Living Alone Allowance, subject to the same eligibility conditions as the Fuel Allowance payment.
- Weekly Fuel Allowance of €22.50 will be paid for 27 weeks in 2018, extended from 26 weeks.

Christmas Bonus to be paid to 1.2 million people this year

€219 million to be paid to long-term welfare recipients in December 2017

A Christmas Bonus of 85% will be paid in December to recipients of a long-term Social Welfare payment (min €20 payment).

People in receipt of the following payments will receive the Bonus:

- State Pensions and Widow’s/Widower’s/Surviving Civil Partner’s Pensions
- Invalidity Pension, Blind Pension, Disability Allowance, Carer’s Allowance, Domiciliary Care Allowance and Guardian’s payments.
- Long-term Jobseeker’s Allowance, Jobseeker’s Transition Payment, One-Parent Family Payment, Deserted Wife’s Benefit and Allowance and Farm Assist.
- Back to Work Enterprise Allowance, Community Employment, Rural Social Scheme, TÚS, Gateway and Job Initiative.



Maximum Weekly Rates Note: Commencement date of rate increases is week beginning 26 March 2018	Personal Rate		Increase for a Qualified Adult		Qualified Child Increase	
	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018
Social Insurance Payments						
State Pension (Contributory)	€	€	€	€	€	€
- Aged 66 and under 80	238.30	243.30	158.80*	162.10*	29.80	31.80
- Aged 80 and over	248.30	253.30	213.50**	218.00**	29.80	31.80
Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory) Pension/Deserted Wife's Benefit						
- Under Age 66	198.50	203.50				
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	238.30	243.30				
- Aged 80 and over	248.30	253.30			29.80	31.80
Invalidity Pension	198.50	203.50	141.70	145.30	29.80	31.80
Telephone Support Allowance	2.50 per week with effect from June 2018					
Carer's Benefit/Constant Attendance Allowance	210.00	215.00			29.80	31.80
Disablement Benefit	224.00	229.00				
Jobseeker's/Illness/Health & Safety/Injury Benefit	193.00	198.00	128.10	131.40	29.80	31.80
Maternity/Adoptive Benefit/Paternity	235.00	240.00				
Death Benefit						
- Under Age 66	223.50	228.50			29.80	31.80
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	242.70	247.70			29.80	31.80
- Aged 80 and over	252.70	257.70			29.80	31.80

Social Assistance Payments						
State Pension (Non-Contributory)						
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	227.00	232.00	150.00	153.30		31.80
- Aged 80 and over	237.00	242.00				31.80
Telephone Support Allowance	2.50 per week with effect from June 2018					
Carer's Allowance						
- Under Age 66	209.00	214.00				31.80
- Aged 66 and over	247.00	252.00				31.80
Disability Allowance/Blind Pension	193.00	198.00	128.10	131.40		31.80
Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's (Non-Contributory) Pension	193.00	198.00				
One-Parent Family Payment	193.00	198.00				31.80
Pre-Retirement/Deserted Wife's Allowance	193.00	198.00	128.10	131.40		31.80
Jobseeker's Allowance - Aged 26 or over	193.00	198.00	128.10	131.40		31.80
- Aged 25	147.80	152.80	128.10	131.40		31.80
- Aged 18 -24	102.70	107.70	102.70	107.70		31.80
Supplementary Welfare Allowance - Aged 26 or over	191.00	196.00	128.10	131.40		31.80
- Aged 25	147.80	152.80	128.10	131.40		
- Aged 18 -24	102.70	107.70	102.70	107.70		
Farm Assist	193.00	198.00	128.10	131.40		31.80

* For those under age 66 years ** For those aged 66 years or over

Working Family Payment (formerly FIS)		
Family Size	2017 Income Limit	2018 Income Limit
1 child	€511	€521
2 children	€612	€622
3 children	€713	€723
4 children	€834	€834
5 children	€960	€960
6 children	€1,076	€1,076
7 children	€1,212	€1,212
8 children or more	€1,308	€1,308

The level of WFP payment will continue to be based on 60% of the shortfall between net weekly family income and the applicable weekly family threshold.

Child Benefit		
	2017 Rate	2018 Rate
Monthly Rate	€140 per child	€140 per child

Twins – Child Benefit is paid at one and half times (150%) the normal monthly rate for each child.
All other multiple births – Child Benefit is paid at double (200%) the normal monthly rate for each child.

Other Social Welfare Payments		
	2017 weekly	2018 weekly
Guardian's Payment (Contributory)	€176.00	€181.00
Guardian's Payment (Non-Contributory)	€176.00	€181.00
Fuel Allowance (Fuel Season in 2018 for 27 weeks)	€22.50	€22.50

	2017 monthly	2018 monthly
Domiciliary Care Allowance	€309.50	309.50

	2017 annually	2018 annually
Carer's Support Grant	€1,700	€1,700

	2017 Once off payment	2018 Once off payment
Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner Grant	€6,000	€6,000