

# Budget 2020

Main social welfare changes and rates of payments



INDEPENDENT

SEÁN  
**CANNEY TD**

Minister for Rural Affairs, Natural Resources and Digital Development

## €21.2 billion to be spent on social welfare in 2020 Increases to be paid from January

**Children** - €3 increase from €37 to €40 per week for children aged 12 and over in all weekly payments e.g. lone parents, jobseekers, farmers, people with disabilities, widows, participants on Community Employment schemes

**Children** - €2 increase from €34 to €36 per week for children up to age 12 in all weekly payments

**Hot School Meals scheme** - to be extended for up to 35,000 additional schoolchildren

**Living Alone Allowance** - €5 increase per week for people with disabilities and pensioners living alone

**Fuel Allowance** - an extra €2 in Fuel Allowance payment per week - 370,000 households to benefit

**Household Benefits package** - eligibility to be broadened for people under age 70 to allow for another adult to reside in the household

**Working Lone Parents** - earnings disregard for working lone parents in receipt of One-Parent-Family payment or Jobseekers Transition payment to increase by €15 to €165 per week

**Working Family Payment threshold** - increase of €10 per week in the income thresholds for families with up to 3 children

**Jobseekers aged 25** - to receive full rate Jobseeker's Allowance

**Jobseekers under 25** - if living independently and in receipt of State supports (e.g. Rent Supplement, RAS, HAP) to receive the full rate of Jobseeker's Allowance

**New targeted activation measures to be introduced** - €2.5m to be provided

**Blind Welfare Allowance to be disregarded in social welfare means assessments**

**Carers** - to benefit from an increased number of hours they can work or study every week outside the home - increased from 15 hours to 18½ hours

**A 100% Christmas Bonus will be paid in early December 2019 to 1.2m people**

## Christmas Bonus to be paid to 1.2 million people this year

### €279 million to be paid to long-term welfare recipients in December 2019

A 100% Christmas Bonus will be paid in December 2019 to recipients of a long-term Social Welfare payment (minimum €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, Carer's Benefit, Partial Capacity Benefit, Disablement Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance and Guardians' payments.
- One-Parent Family Payment, Jobseeker's Transition Payment, Deserted Wife's Benefit and Allowance and Farm Assist.
- Community Employment, Rural Social Scheme, TÚS and Job Initiative.
- Long-term Jobseeker's Allowance, Supplementary Welfare Allowance, Back to Work Enterprise Allowance, Back to Education Allowance and Daily Expenses Allowance (formerly Direct Provision Allowance).

### Improvements in Weekly Payments – from week beginning 6 January 2020

- €5 increase in the Living Alone Allowance from €9 to €14 per week paid to pensioners and people with disabilities who are living alone – over 200,000 to benefit.
- €3 increase for qualified child dependants aged 12 and over in all weekly payments.
- €2 increase for qualified child dependants up to age 12 in all weekly payments.
- Jobseekers aged 25 years to receive full rate of Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Jobseekers under age 25 if living independently and in receipt of State supports (e.g. Rent Supplement, RAS, HAP) to receive the full rate of Jobseeker's Allowance.

### Families and Children

- Hot School Meals scheme to be extended from September 2020 to 35,000 additional schoolchildren.
- €3 increase for qualified child dependants aged 12 and over in all weekly payments.
- €2 increase for qualified child dependants up to age 12 in all weekly payments.
- Working Family Payment thresholds increase by €10 per week for families with 1, 2 or 3 children. Some 55,000 families are expected to benefit, at a cost of €19 million from January 2020.
- Earnings disregard for working lone parents receiving One-Parent Family Payment or Jobseeker's Transition Payment to increase by €15 to €165 per week from January 2020 - 16,900 families to benefit.

## Improvements for Pensioners

- €5 increase in the Living Alone Allowance from €9 to €14 per week paid to people age 66 and over who are living alone.
- Eligibility for the Household Benefits package to be broadened for people under 70 that will allow for another adult to reside in the household.
- Weekly Fuel Allowance to increase by €2 to €24.50 per week from January 2020 – over 370,000 households to benefit.

## Supporting Carers and People with Disabilities

- The number of hours that carers can work or study outside the home is being increased from 15 to 18 ½ per week with effect from January 2020. Over 1,200 carers are expected to benefit at a cost of €11.6 million.
- €3 increase for qualified child dependants aged 12 and over in all weekly payments.
- €2 increase for qualified child dependants up to age 12 in all weekly payments.
- Fuel Allowance will increase by €2 to €24.50 per week from January 2020 - over 370,000 households to benefit.
- Carer's Support Grant of €1,700 per year to continue to be paid in 2020 - over 126,000 carers to benefit.
- €5 increase in the Living Alone Allowance from €9 to €14 per week for people with disabilities who are living alone – over 40,000 to benefit.
- Blind Welfare Allowance will be exempt from the means assessment for Social Welfare schemes.
- Eligibility for the Household Benefits package to be broadened for people under 70 that will allow for another adult to reside in the household.

## Other Measures

- Additional funding of €2 million for the nationwide Community Employment scheme will be made available for training purposes in 2020. The scheme supports voluntary organisations to provide local services for their communities.
- €2.5 million is being provided in 2020 for specific activation and training supports for groups most distant from the labour market.
- The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection is to examine international best practice in relation to maintenance payments by liable relatives on how Ireland can achieve better outcomes in a proactive manner for families.
- The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection is to commission a research project that will examine funeral poverty in Ireland and the wider economic impact of bereavement.

For more information check [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie) and [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie). Telephone the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection on 071 919 3302 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.



Maximum weekly rate (from week beginning 6 Jan 2020)	Personal Rate		Increase for a Qualified Adult		Increase for a Qualified Child			
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019 Under 12	2020 Under 12	2019 Age 12 + over	2020 Age 12 + over
<b>Social Insurance Payments</b>								
State Pension (Contributory)	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
- Personal Rate - Under Age 80	248.30	248.30	34.00	34.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Personal Rate - Aged 80 and over	258.30	258.30	34.00	34.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Increase for Qualified Adult - Under 66			165.40	165.40				
- Increase for Qualified Adult - 66 and over			222.50	222.50				
<b>Widow's / Widower's / Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory) Pension / Deserted Wife's Benefit</b>								
- Under Age 66	208.50	208.50	34.00	34.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	248.30	248.30	34.00	34.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Aged 80 and over	258.30	258.30	34.00	34.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Invalidity Pension</b>	208.50	208.50	148.90	148.90	34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Carer's Benefit / Constant Attendance Allowance</b>	220.00	220.00	34.00	34.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Disablement Benefit</b>	234.00	234.00	34.00	34.00	36.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Jobseeker's / Illness / Health &amp; Safety / Injury Benefit</b>	203.00	203.00	134.70	134.70	34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Maternity / Paternity / Adoptive / Parental Benefit</b>	245.00	245.00						
<b>Death Benefit - Under 66</b>	233.50	233.50			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Aged 66 and under Age 80	252.70	252.70			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Aged 80 and over	262.70	262.70			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Maximum weekly rate (from week beginning 6 January 2020)</b>								
<b>Social Assistance Payments</b>								
State Pension (Non-Contributory)	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
- Aged 66 and under 80	237.00	237.00			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Aged 80 and over	247.00	247.00			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Increase for Qualified Adult - Under 66			156.60	156.60				
<b>Carer's Allowance - Under 66</b>	219.00	219.00			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Aged 66 and over	257.00	257.00			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Disability Allowance / Blind Pension</b>	203.00	203.00	134.70	134.70	34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Widow's / Widower's / Surviving Civil Partner's (Non-Contributory) Pension</b>	203.00	203.00						
<b>One-Parent Family Payment / Deserted Wife's Allowance</b>	203.00	203.00			34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Farm Assist</b>	203.00	203.00	134.70	134.70	34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
<b>Jobseeker's Allowance - Aged 26 or over Aged 25</b>	203.00	203.00	134.70	134.70	34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Under 25 living independently with State support	112.70	203.00	112.70	134.70		36.00		40.00
- Under 25 not living independently	112.70	112.70	112.70	112.70				
<b>Supplementary Welfare Allowance</b>	201.00	201.00	134.70	134.70	34.00	36.00	37.00	40.00
- Aged 25	157.80	201.00	134.70	134.70		36.00		40.00
- Under 25 living independently with State support	112.70	201.00	112.70	134.70		36.00		40.00
- Under 25 not living independently	112.70	112.70	112.70	112.70				

Working Family Payment Thresholds		
Family Size	2019 Income Limit	2020 Income Limit
1 Child	€521	€531
2 Children	€622	€632
3 Children	€723	€733
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
<b>Living Alone Allowance</b>		
	2019	2020
Weekly Rate	€9.00	€14.00

**Child Benefit**

2019 Rate	2020 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			
	2019 weekly	2020 weekly	
Guardian's Payment (Contributory)	€186.00	€186.00	
Guardian's Payment (Non-Contributory)	€186.00	€186.00	
Fuel Allowance (Fuel Season in 2020 is 28 weeks)	€22.50	€24.50	
Domiciliary Care Allowance	€309.50 monthly	€309.50 monthly	
Carer's Support Grant	€1,700.00 annually	€1,700.00 annually	
Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance - each qualified child aged 4-11	€150.00 annually	€150.00 annually	
Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance - each qualified child aged 12 and over	€275.00	€275.00	
Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner Grant	2019 once-off payment €6,000	2020 once-off payment €6,000	