

Update on payments awarded for COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment and Enhanced Illness Benefit - 22 June 2021

From [Department of Social Protection](#)

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Just over 244,000 people receive the Pandemic Unemployment Payment this week, a decrease of over 23,000 on last week

Number of PUP recipients falls below 250,000 and is now at lowest level since October 2020

Greatest decrease is in Accommodation and Food Service activities sector with over 12,705 fewer than last week

€72 million in PUP weekly payments to be paid into bank accounts this week

€1,000 Enterprise Support Grant available for self-employed people who close their PUP payment

Artists and Musicians can earn €960 over 8 weeks for one off gigs and retain PUP

As restrictions are eased, people returning to work should close their claim on their first day back in work by logging on to www.MyWelfare.ie

Public reminded about Scam Phone Calls and Scam Texts from callers claiming to be from the Department of Social Protection

This week, the Department of Social Protection has issued weekly payments valued at €72 million to 244,197 people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP). In addition, approx. €1 million is being paid in PUP arrears this week.

The number of recipients represents a decrease of 23,174 people compared to last week.

Looking at the age cohort as set out in Appendix 3, the greatest decrease this week was in the under 25 age category with 58,441 receiving PUP compared with 67,278 last week.

The PUP figures published today are in addition to the 171,699 people who were on the Live Register at the end of May.

All COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payments have been paid into recipients' bank accounts or at their Post Office today, Tuesday 22 June.

Dublin is the county with the highest number of people who are receiving PUP this week at 87,416. It is followed by Cork (22,532) and Galway (13,218).

The sector with the highest number of people receiving PUP this week is Accommodation and Food Service activities (64,675), followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade (36,763) and Administrative and Support Service Activities (25,365).

The sector which has seen the largest decrease in the number of people receiving PUP this week is Accommodation and Food Service activities with 12,705 fewer people receiving the payment compared to last week. This is followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade with 2,429 fewer people receiving the payment compared to last week. The number of people in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector receiving PUP is 7,979 compared with 9,264 last week.

The payment week for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment runs from Friday to Thursday and payments are paid on the following Tuesday. Individuals who have closed their PUP by Monday 21 June, as they have returned to work, will receive their final PUP payment on Tuesday 29 June.

PUP will remain open to new entrants up to 30 June 2021.

From 1 July 2021, PUP will be closed to new applications and individuals who lose their employment from 1 July should apply for a jobseeker's payment or another welfare payment.

Speaking today on the latest PUP figures, Minister for Social Protection Heather Humphreys said:

“More and more people are returning to work and the numbers relying on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment continues to fall week by week.

“Today, just over 244,000 people will receive a Pandemic Unemployment Payment. This is the first time this year the number of people in receipt of the PUP has fallen below the 250,000 mark and it represents the lowest number recorded since October 2020.

“This clearly demonstrates that Ireland is reopening its economy successfully and I want to pay tribute to both workers and employers for the role they are playing.

“It is very encouraging to see businesses reopen and employees returning to work, in particular in the accommodation and food services sector.

“As the economy continues to reopen in July, I am confident we will see the overall PUP numbers continue to fall in the weeks to come as more and more people return to their jobs or take up new employment opportunities.”

People returning to work

The department continues to remind workers who are returning to work that they must close their claim for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment on the actual date that they start back at work, in order to ensure that their claim is processed correctly and to avoid incurring an overpayment that the department will take steps to recover.

As PUP is paid weekly in arrears 16,657 of these people are receiving a final payment this week and are still counted in the numbers in payment for this week.

The sectors with the largest number of employees closing their Pandemic Unemployment Payment claims to return to work are Accommodation and Food Service activities sector (7,839), Wholesale and Retail Trade (2,187), and Construction (1,733).

The easiest way to close a claim for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment is online via www.MyWelfare.ie. Any worker returning to work with an enquiry about closing their claim can contact the department's dedicated Income Support Helpline at 1890 800 024 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Control Measures

The department conducts a series of pre and post payment checks on all PUP claims which include continuing eligibility checks. Subject to these checks being cleared the department then processes payments based on the clients' self-declaration.

The department runs post payment checks that includes verifying data against Revenue records, examining cases where the same Bank account is used multiple times, examining cases where an employer or members of the public report concerns, and the use of data analytics to identify and check claims. It also undertakes employer inspections.

This work is undertaken by the department's Special Investigation Unit, which includes over 20 Gardaí on secondment to the department.

As the industry reopens the department's inspectors will be conducting control reviews and matching records against employer payroll data from the Revenue Commissioners to help ensure people close their claim as they return to work. To avoid incurring an overpayment people returning to work should close their claim and can do so easily at www.MyWelfare.ie.

Self-employed people and PUP

Self-employed people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) who are looking to maintain their business can earn up to €960 over an eight-week period, while retaining their full PUP entitlement.

There is no formal application process and a self-employed person simply needs to inform the department if they earn over €960 in any eight-week period.

The €1,000 Enterprise Support Grant will remain in place for the rest of the year for self-employed people who close their PUP payment. Those who claimed the grant in 2020

but who found themselves back on PUP in 2021, will be able to access the grant for a second time.

MyWelfare.ie – PPSN application service

The easiest and quickest way to apply for many social welfare payments, including the Pandemic Unemployment Payment, Enhanced Illness Benefit and Jobseekers' payments is online at www.MyWelfare.ie. This is a platform which is safe, secure and accessible anytime, anywhere and on all devices. People have the option of applying for Maternity Benefit, Paternity Benefit, Child Benefit, PRSI refunds and Jobseekers' payments as well as requesting a statement or a record of social insurance contributions from the department.

The application service to apply for a PPS Number is available at www.MyWelfare.ie for people **living in Ireland** who are at least 18 years of age and need a PPS Number to avail of social welfare benefits, public services and information in Ireland. To apply for a PPS Number online, a person will need to have a basic [MyGovID](http://www.MyGovID.ie) account.

In the interests of the public health advice and observing social distancing people are asked, if possible, not to attend their local Intreo Centre. Instead, they should avail of the online services available through www.MyWelfare.ie.

COVID-19 Enhanced Illness Benefit Payment

Today, some 963 people are in receipt of an Enhanced Illness Benefit payment, compared with 872 last week.

Employees or self-employed people who contract the virus or who are medically certified by their doctor to self-isolate are advised to apply for Enhanced Illness Benefit. Unlike the standard Illness Benefit, the Enhanced Illness Benefit is paid from the first day of illness. The quickest and easiest way to apply for Enhanced Illness Benefit is through www.MyWelfare.ie.

Full details on Enhanced Illness Benefit including sector and county breakdown as well as age profile are at Appendices 9, 10 and 11.

Scam Phone Calls and Scam Texts

Customers and members of the public are reminded about scam phone calls and text messages they may receive from individuals claiming to be an official of the department. These calls and texts display a range of numbers, including some which may appear to be from the department's phone numbers. The department would like to remind all its customers that it will never seek personal information from customers via text message and will never ask a customer for their bank details over the phone.

Any person who receives such a call or text is asked not to disclose any information and to report it to the Gardaí immediately.