

Update on Payments Awarded for Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment and Enhanced Illness Benefit

From [Department of Social Protection](#)

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473,400 receive the Pandemic Unemployment Payment this week, a decrease of 4,252 on last week

€141.88 million in PUP weekly payments to be paid into bank accounts tomorrow

A further €12.49 million in PUP arrears payments to be paid to 38,600 people

Overall bill for the PUP passes €6 billion

3,999 currently in receipt of Enhanced Illness Benefit

Quickest and easiest way to apply for PUP, Enhanced Illness Benefit and Jobseekers is online at www.MyWelfare.ie

This week, the Department of Social Protection has issued weekly payments valued at €141.88 million to 473,413 people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP).

The number of people receiving a PUP payment this week has decreased by 4,252 compared to last week.

These figures are in addition to the 188,543 people who were on the Live Register at the end of January.

All Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payments issued will be in recipients' bank accounts or at their post office tomorrow, Tuesday, 23 February.

Tomorrow will also see PUP arrears, totalling €12.49 million, being paid to approximately 38,600 people. This brings the total amount being paid out this week to €154.37 million and the overall amount since the introduction of the PUP last March to over €6 billion.

Dublin is the county with the highest number of people who are receiving PUP this week at 148,028. It is followed by Cork (48,101) and Galway (25,304).

All sectors with the exception of Electrical/Gas/Water supply sector have fewer people receiving PUP this week than last week, reflecting the number of people who have closed their claims in recent weeks to return to work. The sector with the highest number of people receiving PUP this week is Accommodation and Food Service activities (110,697), followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade (75,196) and Construction (61,077).

Construction is the sector that has seen the largest decrease in the number of people receiving PUP this week, with 1,120 fewer people receiving the payment compared to last week. The Wholesale and Retail sector has seen the number of PUP recipients decrease from 75,927 last week to 75,196 this week. This is followed by the Manufacturing sector, which has seen the number of PUP recipients decrease from 27,212 last week to 26,618 this week.

Some 50% of those receiving PUP are receiving the maximum rate of €350 this week.

People returning to work

The past seven days saw people from every county close their PUP claims as they were returning to work.

Overall, some 10,941 people closed their PUP claims, with 9,862 of these stating that they were doing so because they are returning to work.

Dublin had the greatest number of people closing their claims to return to work (2,378), followed by Cork (1,060) and Wexford (619).

The top three sectors with the largest number of employees closing their Pandemic Unemployment Payment to return to work are Construction (2,369), Wholesale and Retail Trade (1,461), and Manufacturing (1,388).

The Department continues to remind workers who are returning to work that they **must close their claim for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) 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.

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.

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

“For the second time in two weeks, we have seen the number of people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment decrease. We have also seen decreases in the number of PUP recipients across every county which is to be welcomed.

“We have now paid over €6 billion through the PUP since the introduction of this emergency support last March.

“To put this into context, during the space of 11 months, the Department has paid almost three times more in PUP than it did in Jobseeker’s payments for all of last year.

“This demonstrates the Government’s commitment to supporting workers and indeed businesses during this difficult time for our country.

“As we move forward, the Government will not be found wanting in supporting our citizens as we continue to do all we can to suppress this virus.

Minister Humphreys also reminded people that financial assistance continues to be made available from her Department for people who need it.

“I would like to remind people that there are financial supports, which are means assessed, available to people should they need to access them.

“For example, assistance with heating costs is available in situations where an individual or a family has a particular financial need.

“I have also extended the protocol between Tusla and my Department until the end of the year for Rent Supplement to be made available to victims of domestic violence. My Department’s officials will put these arrangements in place for any individual or family on referral from Tusla or a Tusla funded service provider.”

The details of these supports are available under the Department’s Supplementary Welfare Allowance scheme and can be viewed on the Department’s website www.gov.ie/dsp or by contacting its Income Support Helpline at 1890 800 024 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Arrears of PUP being paid this week

This week in addition to the normal weekly PUP payments, the Department of Social Protection is paying arrears of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment valued at €12.49 million to approximately 38,600 people.

The payments will be paid directly through the Post Office or into the nominated bank accounts of these individuals tomorrow, 23rd February.

The arrears payment being paid to current recipients of PUP, will be paid as a separate payment into their account tomorrow.

For customers who chose to collect their PUP payment at their Post Office, their arrears payment will also be available to be collected there. This is particularly important for any person who may be due arrears and who has returned to work.

The quickest way for a person wishing to check the details of their arrears payments is via www.MyWelfare.ie .

Any person with a verified MyWelfare account can check the status of any arrears payment on their MyWelfare account.

The vast majority of arrears cases (more than 280,000) were paid last December.

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.

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 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 Jobseeker's 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.

Control Measures

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

Subsequently, 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.

Covid-19 Enhanced Illness Benefit Payment

Today, some 3,999 people are in receipt of an Enhanced Illness Benefit payment, compared with 4,707 last week. It is paid from day one of a person's illness or self-isolation and the rate of payment is €350 per week. The quickest and easiest way to apply is through www.MyWelfare.ie. Full details are at Appendices 9, 10 and 11.

