

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

From [Department of Social Protection](#)

Published on 5 January 2021

Last updated on 5 January 2021

335,600 receive the Pandemic Unemployment Payment this week

Over €99 million paid out in PUP to cover this week

Approximately 23,000 payments made between 24th Dec and 30th Dec to people who became unemployed in the week before Christmas

Over €5 Billion in total now paid out in PUP since March 2020

Quickest and easiest way to apply for PUP is online - www.MyWelfare.ie

This week, the Department of Social Protection has issued weekly payments valued at €99.06 million to 335,599 people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP).

The number of people receiving a PUP payment this week represents an increase of 57,928 on the 277,671 people paid on Tuesday, 22nd December.

The sector with the highest number of people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment is Accommodation and Food Service Activities (97,798) followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade (46,853) and Other Sectors e.g. hairdressing and beauty salons (30,221).

These figures are in addition to the 194,058 people who were reported on the Live Register as of the end of November.

All Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payments issued will be in recipients' bank accounts or at their post office today, Tuesday, 5th January.

In the period from 18th December to 24th December, the Department processed some 23,000 PUP applications for workers who were laid off between those dates. Those eligible received their first payment over the Christmas period.

Anyone who has been made unemployed between Christmas Day and New Year's Eve and who is eligible for PUP will receive their payment today.

Speaking today, Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys said:

“It has been a really difficult Christmas period for people who lost their employment due to the move to Level 5 restrictions.

“As anticipated we have seen a significant increase in the number of people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment since 22nd December.

“Every county has seen the number of people applying for PUP increase over the past two weeks and, similarly, there has been an increase in every sector applying for the payment over this period.

“My Department officials worked right throughout the Christmas period in order to ensure people who applied for PUP were paid as soon as possible. Between 18th December and Christmas Eve, some 23,000 payments were processed and put into payment. People who lost their job between Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve will receive their first payment today.

“PUP remains open to anyone who is eligible. The quickest and easiest way to apply is via www.mywelfare.ie.”

Minister Humphreys continued:

“The Pandemic Unemployment Payment has proven to be an important financial lifeline for hundreds of thousands of workers since its introduction in March. To date, over €5 billion has been paid out in order to support workers and their families throughout this pandemic.

“As we move into January and with a difficult period ahead, I would plead with everyone to make every effort possible to suppress the virus.

“By staying home as much as possible, adhering to social distancing, washing our hands and limiting our contacts, we are lessening the spread of the virus and easing the pressure on our frontline workers.

“It is within our gift to get the Covid figures down. We have done it before and I know we have it in us to do it again.”

Self-employed people and PUP

Self-employed people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) who are looking to maintain their business can now 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 – New PPSN application service

The easiest and quickest way to apply for many social welfare payments, including the Pandemic Unemployment Payment, 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.

A new application service to apply for a PPS number is now 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](#) 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 employer or members of the public report concerns, use of data analytics to identify and check claims. We also undertake employer inspections.

This work is undertaken by the Department's Special Investigation Unit, which, for the past six years, includes over 20 Gardaí on secondment to the Department.

Covid-19 Enhanced Illness Benefit Payment

Since March, a cumulative total of 98,009 people under the age of 66 have been medically certified for receipt of the Covid-19 Enhanced Illness Benefit.

Today, some 1,661 people are currently in receipt of an Enhanced Illness Benefit payment. Full details are at Appendices 9, 10 and 11. It is expected that these numbers will increase substantially in the coming days and weeks as the number of people contracting the virus soars.