

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

From [Department of Social Protection](#)

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Over 481,000 receive the Pandemic Unemployment Payment this week

€144.6 million paid out in PUP; Payments to be made to bank accounts tomorrow

7,149 currently receiving Enhanced Illness Benefit

Enhanced Illness Benefit is paid from Day One

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

Over 8,000 close their PUP claim to return to work

This week, the Department of Social Protection has issued weekly payments valued at €144.59 million to 481,331 people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP).

The number of people receiving a PUP payment this week represents an increase of 1,698 (0.35 per cent) on the 479,633 people paid 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 9 February.

Dublin is the county with the highest number of people who are receiving PUP this week at 149,534. It is followed by Cork with 49,195, and then Galway with 25,603.

Counties Cavan, Donegal, Limerick, Louth, Monaghan, Offaly and Westmeath have fewer numbers of people claiming PUP this week than last week; the numbers in Mayo remain the same this week as last week (13,150).

The sector with the highest number of people receiving PUP this week is Accommodation and Food Service activities (111,872). This is followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade (76,606) and Construction (62,902).

Construction is the sector that has seen the largest increase in the number of people receiving PUP this week, with an additional 368 people now receiving the payment compared to last week.

The Wholesale and Retail sector has seen the number of PUP recipients increase to 76,606, compared to 76,367 last week.

This is followed by the Manufacturing sector, which has seen the number of PUP recipients increased from 27,577 to 27,732.

Some 50% of those receiving PUP are on the maximum rate of €350 per 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 10,945 people closed their PUP claim, with 8,273 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 (2,132), followed by Cork (942) and Limerick (439).

The top three sectors from which employees closed their Pandemic Unemployment Payment to return to work are Construction (1,657), Wholesale and Retail Trade (1,554), and Manufacturing (1,003).

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

“The number of new claims for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment is continuing to level off again this week with fewer people applying for the payment.

“There are seven counties with less people on PUP this week than last week. It is also encouraging to see that over 8,000 more people have closed their PUP applications in the past seven days stating that they are doing so to return to work.

“The enormous sacrifices made by people are paying dividends. They are helping greatly to suppress the virus as well as helping to ease the intense pressure that our frontline workers are under as they work tirelessly to care for those infected by the virus.”

Minister Humphreys reminded people of other financial supports that are available from her department:

“I would like to remind people that there are additional social welfare supports available from my department should people need to access them.

“These supports which are means assessed include, for example, financial assistance with heating costs and rent supplement.”

The details of these supports which are available under the department’s Supplementary Welfare Allowance scheme can be viewed on the department’s website www.gov.ie/dsp or by contacting its Information Help Line 1890 800 024 between 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

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 Jobseeker's 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 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. We also undertake 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 7,149 people are currently in receipt of an Enhanced Illness Benefit payment, down from 7,520 last week. Full details are at Appendices 9, 10 and 11.

Minister Humphreys commented:

“The Enhanced Illness Benefit is available to people who are diagnosed by their medical doctor with the virus or who are required by their medical doctor to self-isolate. The rate of payment is €350 per week. Unlike the department’s general Illness Benefit, there are no waiting days attached to this payment, so it is paid from day one of illness or self-isolation.

“It is not necessary for a person with symptoms to leave their home to get a medical certificate from their doctor; all of the application process can be done online. The quickest and easiest way to apply is through www.MyWelfare.ie.”