

# **Update on payments awarded for COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment and Enhanced Illness Benefit - 15 June**

From [Department of Social Protection](#)

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**Just over 267,000 people receive the Pandemic Unemployment Payment this week, a decrease of almost 18,000 on last week**

**€78.9 million in PUP weekly payments to be paid into bank accounts this week**

**Over €8 billion paid out in PUP to date**

**Almost 24,000 close their PUP claim to return to work**

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

**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](http://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 €78.9 million to 267,371 people in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP).

This represents a decrease of 17,894 people compared to last week.

To date, including this week's payments, the department has paid out over €8 billion in PUP.

The 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, 15 June.

Dublin is the county with the highest number of people who are receiving PUP this week at 93,036. It is followed by Cork (25,242) and Galway (14,683).

The sector with the highest number of people receiving PUP this week is Accommodation and Food Service activities (77,380), followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade (39,192) and Administrative and Support Service Activities (26,289).

The sector, which has seen the largest decrease in the number of people receiving PUP this week is Accommodation and Food Service activities with 7,407 fewer people receiving the payment compared to last week. This is followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade with 2,503 fewer people receiving the payment compared to 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 on Monday 14 June, as they have returned to work, will receive their final PUP payment on Tuesday 22 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:**

“This week, we have seen another fall in the number of people receiving the Pandemic Unemployment Payment as we continue to make progress in reopening our economy and suppressing the virus.

“In fact, there are now over 214,000 fewer people being supported by the PUP compared to the second week of February.

“Over the past seven days alone, almost 24,000 people closed their PUP claims in order to return to work.

“Therefore, we are expecting further falls in the overall PUP numbers in the weeks ahead.

**The Minister added:**

“I would like to acknowledge the huge efforts being made by employers as they reopen, many through reconfiguring their business to accommodate their customers and staff and ensuring safety is paramount at all times.

“I would ask people to support their local economy, as well as the likes of our hotels, B&Bs and other businesses in our hospitality sector.

“Day in and day out, we are continuing to make significant progress in relation to our vaccination programme.

“Let's keep our guard up, continue to work from home where possible and continue to maintain social distancing guidelines.

“Due to the efforts that people are making, we have real ground for optimism in relation to the summer months ahead.”

## **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 17,875 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 (11,919), Wholesale and Retail Trade (2,255), and Construction (1,943).

The easiest way to close a claim for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment is online via [www.MyWelfare.ie](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.MyWelfare.ie).

## **COVID-19 Enhanced Illness Benefit Payment**

Today, some 872 people are in receipt of an Enhanced Illness Benefit payment, compared with 892 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](http://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.