

An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Covid-19: Social Security Supports - Employers & Employees

Dr. Dermot P. Coates 18th March 2020

Background

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, is a new virus that is circulating worldwide.

This presentation is intended to update you on forthcoming changes and signpost you to further information on the supports that the D/EASP offer for employers and jobseekers via its network of Intreo Centres.

These include the following:

i.COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Support ii.Employer COVID-19 Refund Scheme iii.Illness Benefit iv.Short-time Work Support (STWS) Scheme v.Supplementary Welfare Allowance



Ways to Access Our Services and Supports

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, you do not need to go to an Intreo Centre to make a claim.

Instead you can make a claim in the following ways:

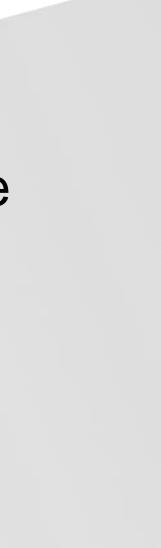
1.An application form for the new Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment can be downloaded from our website www.gov.ie/jobseekers and returned to FREEPOST PO BOX 12896 Dublin 1;

2.You can apply for Jobseekers support through our online portal <u>www.MyWelfare.ie</u>, (you will need a Public Services Card); or

3. Phone us on 1890-800-024 or 01-2481398 and we will send you the relevant application form for the new payment.







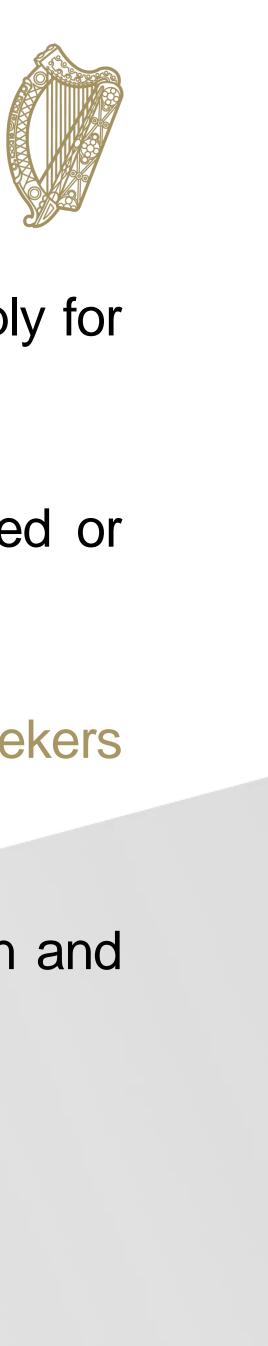
COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Support

the new COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment.

employees) for a 6-week period.

payment (and receive any additional entitlements backdated).

returning to us by Freepost.



- If you have lost work due to a downturn in economic activity caused by COVID-19 you can apply for
- This new payment quickly delivers income support to the unemployed (be they self-employed or

- It is designed to provide income security for a period during which you can apply for a full Jobseekers
- You can apply for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment by filling in the one page application and

Employer COVID-19 Refund Scheme

Where possible, we are encouraging employers to retain employees, in order to keep them close to the labour market.

To facilitate this the Department is setting up a temporary refund scheme for employers, which will pay them the €203 per week for each worker who would otherwise have been laid off because a business has to cease trading due to HSE advice on 'social distancing'.

The Office of the Revenue Commissioners has come forward and offered to implement the Refund system on the department's behalf.

This will mean that workers retain their link with employers and there is no need for them to personally submit a jobseeker's claim.



Employer COVID-19 Refund Scheme (cont'd.)

The new COVID Employer Refund Scheme has been designed to use existing infrastructure and processes and can be put in place immediately.

The Scheme allows employers to make a payment equivalent to the COVID-19 Unemployment Payment (of $\in 203$) to workers who are temporarily laid off <u>and</u> are receiving no other wages payment from the employer.

When an employer submit payroll returns to Revenue via their payroll provider, Revenue will refund the employer the €203.

In order to ensure workers who have child and adult dependents receive their full entitlements, these individuals will be asked to apply for Jobseeker's Benefit via the online portal www.mywelfare.ie.

A detailed set of FAQ's has already been made available.



Employer COVID-19 Refund Scheme (cont'd.)

Eligible Employees:

- Have been temporarily laid off and therefore are eligible for Covid-19 Ι.
- Are between 18-66 years old; 11.
- iii. Were included on a payroll submission made by the employers from 1st February 2020 to 15th March 2020;
- iv. Have not ceased the employee with Revenue; and
- Are receiving no other wage payment from their employers. V.

Anyone who is paid a wage from the business and is on PAYE can be included





Employer COVID-19 Refund Scheme (cont'd.)

Eligible Employers:

- Are registered on ROS Ι.
- Registered for the new Covid Employer Refund scheme Н.
- iii. Are up to date with their payroll returns.





Illness Benefit

Allowance will be changed to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus

and are medically required to self-isolate, you can get income support.

be introduced to Dáil Eireann today.

Illness Benefit will also be available to self-employed persons.



- The Government has announced that the rules for Illness Benefit and Supplementary Welfare
- The changes mean that if you are diagnosed with COVID-19, or are suspected of having COVID-19
- Legislation is required to implement these changes and emergency legislation is being prepared & will

Illness Benefit (cont'd.)

The proposed changes are:

- any subsequent weeks.
- ii. from work with a COVID-19 diagnosis.
- entitled to a refund of any arrears due from this date when the legislation is in place.
- required to self-isolate or diagnosed with COVID-19.

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You will not have to wait 6 days before you can apply for Illness Benefit. This means Illness Benefit can cover the first week of a COVID-19 diagnosis (or medically-required self-isolation) and

The personal rate of Illness Benefit will increase from €203 to €305 per week for up to 2 weeks if you are medically required to self-isolate, or for the duration of your medically-certified absence

iii. The new enhanced Illness Benefit rate will be effective from 9 March 2020 and workers will be iv. The normal social insurance requirements for Illness Benefit will be waived if you are medically







What is the STWS?

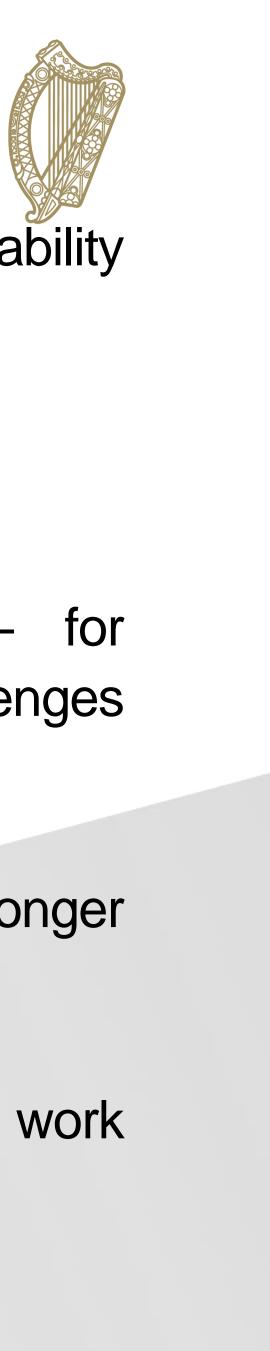
The Short-time Work Support (STWS) Scheme is a package of measures designed to provide stability to both employees and employers during a period of temporary difficulties

For employees:

i.Short-time Work Support is an income support payment – a form of Jobseekers Benefit – for employees who have been temporarily placed on a shorter working week, due to business challenges affecting their employment.

ii. The payment is made in respect of the employee's regular salary for the days that they are no longer working.

iii.For example, where an employee's working week has been reduced from a standard five-day work pattern to a standard three-day work pattern, they can receive STWS for the other two days.



What is the STWS? (cont'd.)

For employers:

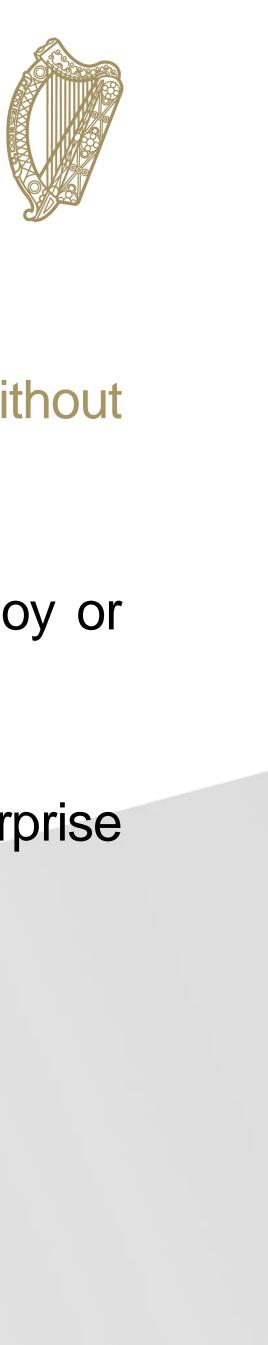
resorting to permanent layoffs.

retrain employees once the business situation improves.

Ireland, Local Enterprise offices, etc.)

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i.Short-time Work Support is intended to help employers during periods of temporary difficulty, without

- i. It helps employers retain skilled labour, in a reduced capacity, avoiding the need to re-employ or
- iii.Additional supports are also provided by the State enterprise agencies (i.e. IDA Ireland, Enterprise

STWS: Eligibility

Workplace consultation:

i.In line with accepted industrial relation norms, it is expected that employers will consult with employees and any staff representative bodies regarding plans to introduce reduced working arrangements.

Who can qualify?

i.Full-time employees who have been placed on a reduced weekly work pattern can apply for the support.

ii.Employees must work 3 days per week or less to qualify, having previously been employed on a full time basis.





Supplementary Welfare Allowance

Supplementary Welfare Allowance is a weekly allowance paid to people who do not have enough income to meet their needs and those of their families.

The means test for Supplementary Welfare Allowance will be removed if you are medically required to self-isolate or are diagnosed with COVID-19.

Supplementary Welfare Allowance will also be available to self-employed persons.





