



Emigrant Support Service

March 2018 – Issue 199



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

From the Chairman's Desk

On the 7th of March, Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon T.D., published a new Report on ***Addressing Challenges Faced by Returning Irish Emigrants.***

This independent report prepared by Indecon was commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade with the goal of identifying solutions to disproportionate or unnecessary administrative burdens affecting Irish emigrants wishing to return to live in Ireland.

Following Indecon's independent research with returned emigrants themselves, its consultations with Government Departments and Agencies and analysis undertaken, the Report identifies 30 targeted recommendations which are split across nine key areas; Information provision, Housing, Motor Driving, Employment, Finance, Banking and Pensions, Health and Childcare, Immigration and Welfare, Education related, Entrepreneurial related.

Speaking at the launch of the Report, Minister of State Cannon said;

"I am pleased to be able to publish this independent report which contains new research profiling the welcome return of Irish emigrants, examining the challenges they have faced on returning home; and importantly, making recommendations to address those challenges.

A clear whole-of-Government approach will be taken to implementing this report. Departments will report back to Government before the Summer with an update on progress made or actions taken in implementing recommendations contained in the report."

In line with other Irish welfare agencies working with our emigrant community abroad and returning Irish emigrants, Safe Home Ireland made a number of submissions for inclusion in this report. We are therefore heartened to note that Minister Cannon has given some very real timescales for review of the recommendations that the report sets out. A co-ordinated approach, working with a whole range of inter-departmental agencies is key to seeing progress on all of the issues raised.

We will look forward to reporting on the developments and up-dates over the coming months.

The full Indecon Report is available via: <https://www.dfa.ie/global-irish/returning-to-ireland/report-on-returning-irish-emigrants>

Best wishes for now and Happy Easter to one & all,

Dr. Jerry Cowley – Chairman

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Safe Home office hours:

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**Thinking of returning or
moving to Ireland?**

Get in touch

Housing Opportunities in Mayo and Sligo

Mulranny Day Centre Housing (St. Brendan's Village) has two one-bedroom properties available. This housing scheme is set on the same site as a nursing home which gives access to additional services and amenities. The maximum weekly rent is €79



Banada Tourlestrane Housing Association, Co. Sligo (close to Charlestown, Co. Mayo) has a two-bedroom property available. Maximum weekly rent is €73. There is a 'no pets' policy in operation in this scheme



Notes! While priority will be given to applicants originally from the counties in question, both schemes will also consider Safe Home applicants from other counties. However, those who are not registered on the relevant Council (Mayo County Council/Sligo County Council) housing list, will not qualify for any assistance with rent costs.

For additional information, please contact the Safe Home office

Accessing 1890/1850/0818 Phone Numbers

The 1890 'LoCall' telephone numbers are used by many Irish Business and indeed, Government services here, as a cheaper way for their customers to make telephone enquiries. However, the 1890 prefix numbers are really only cheaper if calls are being made from a fixed telephone line that has a specific package in place that allows for these calls. If calling from a mobile phone, they prove to be a lot more expensive! 1890 pre-fixed telephone numbers **cannot** be accessed if calling from outside of Ireland. Sometimes the alternative fixed line telephone contact numbers are not overly visible/advertised. Other numbers that can cause similar difficulties are the 1850 and 0818 prefix numbers.

Anyone experiencing difficulties can log on to the following website to find the fixed line alternatives:
<http://www.saynoto1890.com>

Irish Social Welfare Rates of Payment

Most social welfare increases announced in Budget 2018, came into effect at the end of March
Please see below for an outline of current rates.

Social Insurance Payments:	€	€
State Pension (Contributory)	Personal Rate	Qualified Adult
Under 80 years	243.30	162.10*
Aged 80 and over	253.30	218.00**
Widows/Widower (Contributory) Pension		
Under 66 years	203.50	
Aged 66 and under 80	243.30	
Aged 80 and over	253.30	
Invalidity Pension	203.50	145.30*
Carer's Benefit	215.00	
Injury/Jobseeker's Benefit	198.00	131.40
Child Benefit (monthly)	140.00***	

Note! The above are the rates of Social Insurance Payments = Where the applicant has been in paid insurable employment and paid relevant contributions via Pay Related Social Insurances (PRSI)

Rates for Social Assistance (means tested) Payments

Note! Where the applicant has either (a) not paid enough contributions or (b) has not paid any

State Pension (Non -Contributory)	Personal Rate	Qualified Adult
Aged 66 and under 80	232.00	153.30*
Aged over 80 years	242.00	
Blind Pension	198.00	131.40
Widow's/Widower's Pension	198.00	
Carer's Allowance		
Under 66 years	214.00	
Aged 66 and over	252.00	
Disability Allowance	198.00	131.40
Supplementary Welfare Allowance ****	196.00 (26yrs+)	131.40
Jobseekers Allowance ****	198.00	131.40

Fuel Allowance: €22.50 per week – paid for 27 weeks (Oct –April) each year.

Carers Respite Care Grant: Once off annual grant (paid June each year) **€1700**

Living Alone Allowance: €9 per week

Notes: * = Under 66 years

** = 66 years or over

*** Rate for 1 child is €140, increased rates apply, depending on number of children.

**** Job Seekers and Supplementary Welfare Allowance weekly rates: Reduced rates apply for claimants aged 18-24 and those aged 25 years

Holiday in Ireland

The Kerry Emigrant Support Group (KES) and the London Irish Centre are offering older Irish people the chance to take part in an all-expenses paid trip to Ballybunion, Co. Kerry from 9th to 16th June. Transport will be via coach and ferry from Camden Square in London and participants will be required to share a room. There is a full itinerary of outings for the holiday and people are also encouraged/aided to see their family for a short time if they would like to, if/where feasible.

To qualify for the trip, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Born in Ireland or an Irish Citizen
- Over the age of 55
- Have not visited Ireland or been on a previous KES Kerry Trip in the last 3 years
- Low to moderate support needs and/or financially unable to make a trip to Ireland alone

The closing date for receipt for completed applications is **Tuesday 10th April 2018.**

Important Note! Applications received after that date cannot be considered

For more information, please contact: Margaret Kiely 0207 916 2222 (press option 1 for Welfare) or Email: margaretkiely@londonirishcentre.org

Living /working abroad? – Here are conditions for renewing your Irish Driver's Licence

In order to be entitled to apply for an Irish driving licence, including the renewal or replacement of same, a person must be normally resident in Ireland. It is considered that the country of normal residence of a person is the place where they usually live, for at least 185 days in each calendar year, because of personal and work ties. **However, you can apply to renew your licence from abroad if you meet certain conditions**, including showing that you have personal ties in Ireland and you are;

Working on a fixed term contract abroad OR Studying abroad

You will be required to provide documentary evidence i.e. **if working**, an original letter from your employer, on headed paper with signature and contact number of employer, stating the start date and expected duration of your fixed term contract abroad.

If studying, original correspondence from the college/university you are attending confirming the title and duration of the course.

More information: If you are living abroad and fit into any of the above categories, you can contact the Road Safety Authority via **Email: lqueries@rsa.ie** for details on how you can renew or replace your licence.

Notes!

- Travelling or holidaying abroad (even extended holidays!) does **not** comply for this option- on your return you must present in person at an NDLS office.
- Drivers can apply to renew their licence up to three months before it expires. However, they do not have to do so, an Irish Driver's licence can be renewed **anytime with 10 years of its expiry date.**

Safe Home Ireland is supported by the Emigrant Support Programme via:



AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA AGUS TRÁDÁLA NA HÉIREANN
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OF IRELAND