



Emigrant Support Service



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

From the Chairman's Desk

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

Get in touch

Greetings,

The King is dead...long live the King!

It was his self-professed great admirer and fellow singer, Daniel O'Donnell, who christened Irish country music singer Big Tom McBride, 'the King'. This is an entirely appropriate moniker for a real legend of our time, who was the first person to be inducted into Ireland's Country Music Hall of Fame in 2016.

I doubt that even the late and great Elvis Presley himself could have come anywhere close to outshining the star quality of the Monaghan singer, particularly in the eyes of Big Tom's fans in rural Ireland and its population, no matter where they lived, whether in exile in London, Birmingham or Manchester, or at home in Castleblaney, Castlerea or Castlebar.

Big Tom and the Mainliners were on the road at home and abroad for 50 years bringing the 'oul sod' to the thousands of our emigrants in England where they danced the night away to his wonderful and relevant music including Four Country Roads, Gentle Mother, the Same Way You Came In, Ashes of Love, Old Log Cabin for Sale, the Sunset years of Life, I Love you Still.

According to Daniel O'Donnell, whether they danced "in the National, the Forum and the Galtymore, in all the dances around London, Manchester and Birmingham" this was "The King", Big Tom putting out his unique brand of country music and so bringing a wonderful piece of Ireland across the Irish sea to the delight of all present. He was most certainly a man of the people and a worthy recipient of all the praise heaped upon him since his sad passing at the age of 81 years last week.

His wife Rose predeceased Tom just a few months ago. Rose was in her early 70's and Tom was said to be truly broken hearted when she died.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anam.

May they both Rest in Peace.

So long for now,

Dr. Jerry Cowley
Chairman Safe Home



Housing Opportunity in Co. Mayo

A Housing Association in **Ballycastle** (North Mayo; approx. 26KM from Ballina) has two semi-detached 2 bedroom bungalows available. The Housing Association is located in small but active rural community. There is a caretaker and office staff onsite and the scheme is built around a day care facility offering access to meals 3 days a week. While the scheme is set in a rural location, it is only a 5 minute walk to the village of Ballycastle that offers the following services and amenities; tea-room, G.P, church, pub and post office. A bus service to Ballina runs 3 times a day.



Applicants must be aged 60yrs+ and capable of independent living. Preference will be given to people originally from Co. Mayo, however, Safe Home applicants from other counties will also be considered.

Maximum weekly rent is €75 + €5 service charge. Qualifying applicants who are registered and approved by Mayo County Council can apply for assistance with rent costs.

For additional information, please contact the Safe Home office

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Will my current benefits/entitlements transfer with me if I move to Ireland?

A. While Safe Home can give firm responses in some cases, in others, the situation is not so straightforward. In some situations, transferability may depend on a number of individual circumstances, including, the date the relevant payment was awarded, the nature of the payment (usually pertains to illness/disability benefits) and the number of contributions made during the recipient's working life.

As a general rule, anything where the benefit is of a contributory nature (that the recipient has paid into during their working lives), tends to transfer, while anything that is non-contributory and means tested, usually does not.

In all cases where the situation is not 'clear-cut', we advise people to contact the relevant benefit office in the country they are currently living to check out their individual situations.

Q. Will I have to pay to see a G.P in Ireland?

A. Yes, however, there are schemes in place that allow for free G.P visits for children under 6 years of age and people aged 70yrs+ (IF they are 'ordinarily resident' in the State). **Note!** You are considered ordinarily resident if you are living in Ireland and have lived here, or intend to live here, for at least one year.

For people who qualify for a Medical Card (either under E.U regulations or means testing) or those who qualify for the G.P visit only card, they will also receive access to free G.P visits.

Right to a basic bank account- EU Regulations

If you are living abroad within the EU and you wish to open a bank account in Ireland or another European Country banks **cannot refuse your application for a basic payment account** just because you don't live in the country where the bank is established. If you are legally resident in an EU country, you are entitled to open a "basic payment account".

Features of a basic account: A "basic payment account" is an account that covers standard transactions that you use in daily life, such as:

- making deposits
- withdrawing cash
- receiving and carrying out payments (for example direct debits and card purchases)

A basic account should also include a payment card that you can use to withdraw cash and make purchases - both online and in shops. Where available, the bank should include access to online banking services with your account. However, they do not always have to include an overdraft or credit facility.

Important Notes!

- This right as outlined above does not apply to other types of bank account, such as savings accounts.
- In some EU countries, you may be refused a basic bank account if you already have a similar account with another bank in the same country.
- If you are applying for a basic payment account outside the country where you live, banks in some EU countries may also want you to prove a genuine interest for doing so – for example if you live in one country but work in another.
- Banks can refuse you a basic payment account if you do not comply with EU rules on money laundering and terrorist financing.
- If you are living abroad and have opened a non-resident account (online or while holidaying here in the past) with an Irish bank, it should be relatively straightforward to change this to a resident account if you move here in the future.

Both AIB and Bank of Ireland now have dedicated sections on their websites that provide additional information and guidance to anyone considering moving/returning to Ireland. Ulster Bank has a section relating to opening current accounts for those living outside of Ireland but within the EU. For additional information, check out the relevant banking websites directly.

Examples of documentation required to open a non-resident account

- 1.** Certified Photo Identification, that must include any one of the following;

Current valid passport **or** current valid Driver's Licence **or** current valid EU National Identity Card.

Note! In all cases, the photo and expiry date must be clearly visible.

- 2.** Certified proof of current address, that must include any two of the following;

Correspondence from a Utility Company (telephone, mobile, gas, electricity, heating, oil, waste collection)

Correspondence from a Regulated Financial Institution operating in your country of residence (Insurance / Assurance Co., Bank, Building Society, Credit Card Co.)

Correspondence from a Government Department / Body.

Note! Correspondence provided must be issued to you at your home address within the past 6 months.

For further information on opening bank accounts in Ireland and details of ALL banks operating within the Irish market, including comparisons on the financial packages available, please contact; **The**

Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, Bloom House, Railway Street, Dublin 1, D01 C576. **Tel** +353 (1) 402 5500 **Web:** www.ccpe.ie

Driving in Ireland

Tips on having a no claims history from abroad taken into account in Ireland.

Some Insurance companies will now accept a 'claims free' history and driving experience while abroad. Outlined below are some useful tips that may assist people in gathering the relevant paperwork BEFORE they move. In order to benefit from a no claims record earned abroad, however, the person seeking insurance cover here has to produce "verifiable documentation" - that is a No Claims Bonus Statement and/or a letter of driving experience in respect of the relevant country.

Irish Insurance Companies advise that before leaving a country of temporary residence to return to Ireland where driving insurance would be sought, a person should obtain documents that must "have been issued by your insurer (not a broker or reinsurer); be on official company headed paper; be issued in your name, as the policyholder; be in English (this is a requirement and will not be acceptable for use if not available); show the number of claims-free years driving allowed to the policyholder; show details of any claims (date of accidents, amounts paid and claims status i.e. if outstanding/settled); and show when the policy was cancelled/expired and the expiry date".

The National Drivers Licence Service (NDLS) have now confirmed that a Public Service Card (PSC) is **not mandatory** to make an application or renew a license but have stated that "a PSC will simplify the application process". However, please note that the Public Service Card **is required** when sitting a Theory Test. This will affect people returning or moving from non-EU /non recognised States who will have to re-sit their driving test (after 1 year). Find out more via: www.ndls.ie

Drivers holding a full licence obtained abroad, which is not exchangeable for an Irish licence, must go through the full driver learning process, which includes the driver theory test, a mandatory 12 Essential Driver Training (EDT) lessons, and the driving test. **This situation still stands despite a proposal announced some months ago to reduce the number of required lessons in these cases from 12 to 6 lessons.**

The Road Safety Authority recently confirmed the following "there is no implementation date agreed as yet for the reduction of EDT lessons for returned emigrants. When the implementation date has been agreed this information will be available on our website and will be advertised in the media". Find out more via: www.rsa.ie or **Email:** info@rsa.ie

Feedback on our Services & Strategic Review Process

Safe Home Ireland will be undertaking a feedback and strategic review of our services over the next while. We will be asking all stakeholders (staff, board members, clients, agencies, funders) to help us with this. We will be sending out some feedback forms over the coming weeks and we would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete and return to us. Your input will help us to develop the services and supports that we offer. Please contact the Safe Home office for additional information. A feedback option is also available via our website at:

<http://www.safehomeireland.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Feedback-Form.pdf>

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



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