



Emigrant Support Service

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

Get in touch



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From the Chairman's Desk

Greetings,

Summer weather is upon us here in St. Brendan's Village as we bask in glorious sunshine and we once again welcome our visitors who flock to our scenic area and beaches. It's been a busy time here besides for the past few weeks due to two particular matters of seismic significance.

A two-to-one "yes" vote in the Irish state abortion referendum this week was a resounding endorsement of the government's plan to delete article 40.3.3 from Bunreacht na hEireann. The way is now clear for enabling legislation to be brought in to force, which could happen by next autumn. This vote was an exact reversal of the previous referendum in the early 80's which brought in the 8th Amendment to the Irish constitution which protected the unborn. In fact, nationally 66.4% voted "yes", while 33.6% voted "no", with only one constituency out of 40 rejecting repeal, namely Donegal. Because of the strong "yes" vote it is generally felt that no major opposition will exist to bringing in this legislation allowing for the termination of pregnancy in particular situations. How this country has changed!

The other big happening was the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came from the EU and consolidated 28 regulations on data protection in to just one. It is about protecting EU citizen's data no matter where in the world it is held. Those who hold such data could be subject to fines of 4% of global revenue or 20 million euro, whichever is the greater amount, for breaches of data protection, thus ensuring everyone concerned regarded this matter seriously and took the appropriate steps to become compliant before it came in to law on 25th May 2018. You can read all about the steps Safe Home have taken in this regard later in this newsletter.

Finally, spare a thought for "poor" Michael Rotondo, who is aged 30 years and whose parents got a court order to evict him last week from the family home in upstate New York. He had continued to sponge on them, refusing to go, despite their repeated requests for him to leave and find a job. This will surely strike a chord with a great many Irish parents who continue to host their children in the family home in similar circumstances, many of whom, I'm sure, would be tempted to take similar action.

So long for now,

Dr Jerry Cowley - Chairman

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a new piece of data protection regulation that became law across the EU on the 25th May 2018. GDPR replaces all existing data protection regulations.

By contacting Safe Home Ireland for information or to apply for housing, people are entering into a contract with us to provide a service. Under GDPR, this gives us lawful grounds and consent to process your data in order to fulfil that contract.

Meeting the main principles of GDPR - Safe Home Ireland's commitment to you:

- We will process any data provided by you in a transparent and secure manner.
- We will ensure that we have a specific purpose to collect your data (e.g. processing a Housing Application for Safe Home Ireland)
- We will ensure that your data is only kept for as long as needed to fulfil the purpose for which it was gathered
- Where your data is held on computers, we will ensure that those computers and networks are safe and secure
- Where your data is in paper format, we will ensure that it is stored as safe and securely as a computer record

GDPR and Safe Home clients – Your Questions Answered

Can I withdraw or withhold my consent? Yes, you can, but this is likely to affect the level of service that Safe Home Ireland can offer you, e.g. housing options are likely to be limited in situations where you do not consent to having your information being shared with relevant housing providers. We will not share your information with anyone else without your consent, unless required to do so by law.

What is personal and sensitive data? Personal data is data which can be used to identify you. This may include your name, date of birth, address, telephone number, gender, etc. **Sensitive data** is information related to any of the following: racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, health, sexuality or sex life, offences and/or convictions.

Where will you store my data? The record of your case will be stored in a secure password protected electronic case management/database system accessed only by staff members of Safe Home Ireland. Your information may also be stored in a paper file held securely (in locked filing cabinets in a premises with alarm protection) and only accessed by relevant Safe Home Ireland staff members. **Note!** We will only store the information as long as required either by law, regulation or whilst you are still actively engaging with our housing, advice or support services.

What is a Data Controller? A Data Controller is responsible for your data and who must make sure that your data is processed according to the law. In your case, Safe Home Ireland is your Data Controller.

Can I access a copy of data that is held about me? Yes, this can be done at any time via a Subject Access Request (SAR), please contact the Safe Home Ireland office (details on page 1) for more information. **Notes!** A Subject Access Request will be processed within 30 days. There is no fee/charge involved in a SAR.



Telephone Support Allowance (TSA) – Ireland

A new payment, the Telephone Support Allowance (TSA), was announced in Budget 2018. This will come into effect the week commencing 4th June 2018.

Those eligible to receive this payment, which is worth €2.50 a week (equivalent to €130 annually), will be receiving a letter from the Department before 4th June to confirm that they qualify for it. TSA will be paid automatically to all eligible customers. There is no application form and no need to contact the Department to apply.

Who is eligible? TSA will be paid to customers of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection who are in receipt of one of the qualifying payments listed below **and** both the Living Alone Allowance **and** the Fuel Allowance.

Qualifying Schemes

- State Pension (Contributory and Non-Contributory)
- Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's Contributory Pension
- Invalidity Pension
- Disability Allowance
- Blind Pension
- Disablement Pension (Incapacity Supplement)
- Deserted Wife's Benefit
- Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's Contributory Pension under the Occupational Injuries Scheme.

The first TSA payments will commence the week of 4th June 2018 and will be issued on the same payment day as the primary payment (see listing above). The TSA will be paid as an additional sum on top of the relevant primary payment.

The TSA is not means tested but will only be paid to those who qualify for Fuel Allowance and Living Alone Allowance. Anyone who is no longer eligible for these allowances will no longer receive the TSA.

If you are in receipt of a UK Winter Fuel Payment but not the Irish Fuel Allowance, you will not qualify for the TSA.

For more information, please contact the Department of Social Protection section that pays your main pension or benefit. E.G. for Pension Schemes, **Tel:** (00353) 71 915 7100

For Disability/Invalidity schemes, **Tel:** (00353) 43 334 0000

Travelling to Ireland with cash – Custom Controls

Ireland has no restriction on the amount of cash you can carry in or out of the country, or a requirement to declare it, when travelling within the EU. However, under Criminal Justice Legislation if you are carrying up to €6,348.69 in cash, a customs officer may seize and detain the cash. The officer must have reasonable grounds for believing the cash represents the proceeds of crime or is intended for use in criminal conduct.

If you are coming to Ireland from a country outside the EU with €10,000 or more in cash you must present a completed declaration form C&E 1889 to the Customs at the airport or seaport when you are entering Ireland. If you fail to submit a correct form your cash may be detained by the Customs and you could be subject to penalties.

Exceptional Needs Payments (ENP) Ireland

Exceptional Needs Payments are paid under the Irish Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme. An ENP is a single payment to help meet essential, **once-off**, exceptional expenditure, which a person could not reasonably be expected to meet out of their weekly income or savings. Unlike most other means tested welfare payments, applicants do not have to meet the habitual residence condition to qualify.

You may be eligible for an Exceptional Needs Payment, if:

- You are living in the State
- You satisfy a means test

You won't normally be eligible, if you:

- have access to alternative resources, including capital, to meet the need
- are in full-time work (30 hours or more per week)
- are in full-time education
- are involved in a trade dispute or on strike. However, you may apply for an ENP for your dependent adult or dependent child.

Means testing: In a means test, the welfare officer examines all your sources of income. For some welfare schemes a certain amount of income or income from particular sources is not taken into account and these are often referred to as income disregards. However, in the means test for an ENP, **ALL** capital/property (except your home) is taken into account and assessed as means.

Some examples of what an ENP may cover;

- The cost of essential items (bedding, cooking utensils etc.) for someone setting up a home for the first time (this may be relevant to people on low income, who have returned or moved to Ireland)
- Help with funeral costs; you may be eligible for an ENP to help you with the cost of a funeral if your income is low. Where possible, applications for assistance with funeral costs should be before the funeral takes place. However, failing this, you should apply as soon as possible afterwards.
- Help with fuel bills; you may get help with the cost of your electricity or natural gas bill but only in exceptional circumstances.
- Costs of travelling to visit family members in hospital or prison.

Rates: The amount of ENP that may be granted will depend on a means test and the type of assistance applied for. Each case is decided on its merits by the welfare officer.

Where to apply: Apply directly to a **Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP)** representative (formerly known as the Community Welfare Officer). Details of clinics are available via the local Welfare/Intreo office.

To apply for an Exceptional Needs Payment you will need:

- PPS numbers for all parties included in the application (e.g. spouse/civil partner/children).
- Evidence of any savings, income or social welfare assistance you are getting.



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An Boinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade