



Emigrant Support Service



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

September 2018 – Issue 204

CONTACT US:

Safe Home Ireland
St Brendan's Village
Mulranny, Westport
Co. Mayo, Ireland.

Tel: 098 36036
(from Ireland)

00 353 98 36036 (UK)

011 353 98 36036
(USA/Canada)

0011 353 98 35036
(Australia)

Website:

www.safehomeireland.com

Email:

info@safehomeireland.com



Safe Home office hours:

Monday–Thursday:

9am–5pm

Friday: 9am–4pm

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

Get in touch

From the Chairman's Desk

Greetings,

Let the show begin!

The race to the Aras is on, now that all the candidates have declared themselves, including sitting president Michael D. Higgins. Those who needed to do so have got the "go ahead" from four County Councils, and one candidate got the required 20 Oireachtas members (Sinn Féin). Public entertainment is guaranteed for all as the evenings draw shorter and temperatures begin to drop and we move closer to Friday 26th October 2018 which is polling day for the Irish presidential election.

The debate on presidential expenses is the opening gambit.

Unfortunately, Irish emigrants abroad are not eligible to vote in the presidential election and they won't be able to vote either on the referendum on blasphemy which will be held on the same day. The inauguration for the next presidential term will take place at noon on 11th November 2018.

Already Polling Agency RED C have put sitting president Michael D. Higgins streets ahead at 67%, with Monaghan businessman Sean Gallagher (of Dragon's Den fame) running second on 15% (he was second to Michael D. in 2011). The Sinn Féin candidate and MEP, Liadh Ní Riada is at 7%. Another Dragon's Den celebrity, Kildare businessman Gavin Duffy, is on 6%, with Pieta House Founder and Taoiseach senator appointee Joan Freeman on 3%.

The remaining candidate, Derry businessman Peter Casey who, (wait for it) also appeared on Dragon's Den, is on 1%. Of course it's early days yet, but it's still 'all to do' as the other candidates will have a formidable task to beat off the challenge of one of the most popular still living individuals in modern Irish times.

Sitting president Michael D. (Safe Home Patron) has done a powerful job and has been on a first name basis with the entire Irish population for many's a decade now, and likely to continue to impress. Only time will tell the final story.

So long for now,

Dr Jerry Cowley - Chairman



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An tAon tSeirbhís Eagraíochta agus Trádh
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Carer's Allowance in Ireland

Carer's Allowance is a payment to people on low incomes who are looking after a person who needs support because of age, disability or illness (including mental health issues).

To be entitled to Carer's Allowance you must:

- Be living with, or in a position to provide full-time care and attention to a person in need of care who does not normally live in an institution, *see below
- **Be habitually resident in the State****
- Not live in a hospital, convalescent home or other similar institution.
- Be at least 18 years old and

Not be engaged in employment, self-employment, training or education courses outside the home for more than 15 hours a week. During your absence, adequate care for the person requiring full-time care and attention must be arranged.

Note*

You may continue to be regarded as providing full-time care and attention if you or the person being cared for is undergoing medical or other treatment in a hospital or other institution, for a period not longer than 13 weeks.

Note**

For applicants who are returning/moving to Ireland, meeting habitual residency requirements will be relevant. In summary, to be considered habitually resident in the State, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have (a) severed all ties abroad and (b) show that they have sufficient ties to /in Ireland, as well as demonstrating an intention to remain here.

The person you are caring for must be:

Over the age of 16 and so incapacitated as to require full-time care and attention. The person receiving care is regarded as requiring full-time care and attention where: He or she is so incapacitated as to require continuous supervision in order to avoid danger to him or herself, or continual supervision and frequent assistance throughout the day in connection with normal bodily functions, and he/ she is so incapacitated as to be likely to require full-time care and attention for a period of at least 12 months OR aged under 16 and getting a Domiciliary Care Allowance.

Carers Allowance – current weekly payment rates (€)	
Carer	Maximum Rate
Aged under 66, caring for 1 person	€214
Aged under 66, caring for 2 or more	€321
Aged 66 or over and caring for 1 person	€252
Aged 66+, caring for 2 people	€378

Secondary Benefits/Entitlements for Carers:

If you qualify for Carer's Allowance you may also qualify for:

- The Household Benefits Package (assistance with electricity/gas bills, free tv licence), IF you are living with the person you are caring for)
- A Free Travel Pass.
- If you get Carer's Benefit or Carer's Allowance, at full or half-rate, you are eligible for a GP visit card, regardless of income/whether or not you have a Medical Card

For more information, contact; The Carer's Allowance Section, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Government Buildings. **Tel:** + 353 43 334 0000

Email: carers@welfare.ie

Frequently Asked Questions – Transfer of pensions to an Irish Credit Union Account

Q. I don't have a bank account in Ireland but I do have a Credit Union account. Is it possible to have pensions from abroad paid into the Credit Union?

A. Yes, payments can be received from countries in the SEPA Zone only. There are 33 countries within the SEPA Zone, including the 28 EU member states and five other territories.

The 28 EU States are:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Other Territories:

Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway and Switzerland

Note! Payments can only be made and received in euro.

Q. Can I make a payment (Credit Transfer) from the UK to a Credit Union account?

A. Yes, it is possible to make a payment from the UK to a Credit Union account. The important point for the member to remember is that the payment type must be a 'SEPA Credit Transfer' not an 'International Payment'.

The member must stipulate that the payment to be made must be a 'SEPA Credit Transfer'. The UK bank will convert the sterling debit on the UK account from sterling to euro and send the payment out as a 'SEPA Credit Transfer'. The payment will be received into the member account in euro.

Some important summary notes!

- International Pensions Services in the UK (DWP) will transfer State Pensions into Irish Credit Union accounts.
- Check with your pension provider in the country where you currently reside to confirm your individual situation.
- It is not possible to receive electronic funds transfers into post office (An Post) accounts in Ireland

Brexit Negotiations – Deal or no Deal!

Brexit negotiations between the UK and the European Union are still on-going, ahead of Britain's scheduled departure from the EU (29th March 2019).

Negotiations are somewhat fragile at the moment so it is timely that the British Government recently released a clarification paper for British and Irish citizens. The purpose of the document was to provide clarity on how/if the long-standing arrangements via the Common Travel Area (CTA) may be impacted if the event of a 'no deal Brexit'. The CTA was established in 1923 to guarantee freedom of movement between the UK and the newly-independent Irish State.

The guidance document provide will provide some level of comfort to British and Irish citizens in a number of key areas. For example, it states: "If you are an Irish citizen you would continue to have the right to enter and remain in the UK, as now. You are not required to do anything to protect your status. In addition, you would continue to enjoy the reciprocal rights associated with the CTA in the same way that British citizens in Ireland would if there is no deal. These rights include the right to work, study and vote, access to social welfare benefits and health services."

It continues to say that "domestic legislation and agreements would be updated" if necessary to ensure that the CTA rights "continue to have a clear legal basis".

A reminder that a **special edition of RTÉ's *Late Late Show* is due to be aired from London on Friday 12th of October.** It will mark the impact Irish people have had in Britain and also cover a whole range of other relevant areas. Watch out for it, it should prove interesting watching!

Public Hospital Charges – Ireland

Everyone living in Ireland and certain visitors to Ireland are entitled to a range of health services either free of charge or at reduced cost. If you need to attend a public hospital or stay overnight in hospital as a public patient, you may be liable for Hospital Charges.

Note! Medical card holders and certain other groups do not have to pay hospital charges.

There are several types of hospital charges, which include:

Out-patient charges, Accident and Emergency(A+E) Department charges and Daily in-patient charges

Out-patient and Emergency Department (A+E) Charges

If you attend the out-patient's department or emergency department (A+E) of a public hospital without being referred by your GP or family doctor, you may be charged a standard fee. **There is no charge if you are referred by your GP.** You must show the referral letter from your GP when you attend the out-patient's department or emergency department (A+E). The A+E charge is currently €100.

This charge is not applicable if you are in one of the following groups:

- Medical card holders
- People admitted to hospital after attending the emergency department (you will then be subject to in-patient/day service charges)
- Children, in respect of the following diseases and disabilities: "mental handicap, mental illness, phenylketonuria, cystic fibrosis, spina bifida, hydrocephalus, haemophilia and cerebral palsy"
- People who are entitled to hospital services because of EU Regulations

Notes! In select cases where people have difficulty paying, the Health Service Executive (HSE) may provide the service free of charge.

Return visits in relation to the same illness or accident will not be subject to any additional charge.

If you are referred by your GP to out-patients for specialist assessment by a Consultant or his or her team for diagnostic assessments such as x-rays, laboratory tests or physiotherapy, there is no charge if you attend as a public patient. If you wish to attend a consultant as a private patient, you will be required to pay the appropriate private fee.

Daily In-patient charges in public hospitals

If you stay overnight as a public patient in a public hospital, you are an in-patient. Currently in-patients are charged a standard fee of €80 per night, up to a maximum of €800 in one year.

If you are admitted to the hospital and under the care of a consultant and not required to stay overnight, you may still have to pay day service charges.

In-patient or day service charges do not apply to the following groups:

- Medical card holders
- People receiving treatment for prescribed infectious diseases
- People who are subject to "long stay" charges
- People who are entitled to hospital services because of EU Regulations

Note! In cases of excessive financial hardship, the HSE may provide the service free of charge.