

Income, Support and Finance

Disability Allowance

The Disability Allowance is a weekly payment to a person with a specified disability. The person must have an injury, disease, physical or mental disability that has continued or is expected to continue for at least 1 year. As a result, the person is **substantially restricted in undertaking work**.

The person must be aged between 16 and 66 years and normally resident in the state and the Disability Allowance is means tested.

The medical section in the form for disability allowance (part 10 of form) asks you to give information about your medical condition or disability and how it affects your **daily life** and **ability to work**. Some people find that it does not accurately describe intellectual or cognitive issues. These are difficulties you may have with thinking, learning, understanding, or remembering things.

Cognitive problems or intellectual disability may affect your ability to carry out the following daily activities¹:

Learning simple or complex tasks

Starting or completing tasks - difficulties planning, organising, problem solving, prioritising, or switching tasks.

Coping with small changes to your routine - to the extent that day to day life is made significantly more difficult

Getting about - getting to a place which is familiar or unfamiliar and with or without support.

Coping with social engagement - due to difficulty relating to others, causing significant distress

Making yourself understood - through speaking, writing, typing or other means normally used.

Awareness of danger - staying safe doing everyday tasks, do you need someone to stay with you to stay safe?

Can you carry out daily activities safely, to an acceptable standard, as often as you need to and in a reasonable length of time?

Include Extra Information

If you want to fully describe your difficulties with daily tasks and how this affects your ability to work, it can be useful to include further information on an additional sheet of paper. Extra information such as recent reports, treatment plans, individual education or care plans from your occupational therapist, social worker, specialist nurse, teacher, carer, support worker or personal assistant can also be included with your application.

Medical Report by your Doctor

Your own doctor is asked to provide a medical report (part 12 of form). If there are lots of doctors at the surgery you attend ask the doctor who knows you best or understands your case best. Ask your doctor to enclose copies of any recent reports from specialists and recent medical test results. You can also enclose your current prescription list and a copy of relevant personal medical records such as an epilepsy seizure diary.

The Disability Allowance Application Form

The application form (DA1) is available on request from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) or local Citizens Information Centre, or online at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/df6811-disability-allowance/> .

They will also assist you to fill out the form. The Disability Allowance application form is long and detailed. Allow time to read the form carefully, complete each section and gather the additional information you may want to include with your application form. If you have had help filling out the form check the answers then sign and date the form. It can be useful for your own records to keep a copy of the completed application form.

Make Work Pay for You

Changes introduced in 2017 mean it is now easier for people with disabilities to feel secure to explore work options and maintain key benefits when working. If your main income support is Disability Allowance and you can start work, you can earn up to €120 a week and keep your full payment. If you earn between €120 and €350 from your job only half of this will be taken into account when the Department assess your Disability Allowance payment. If you have to leave your new job within the first 12 months you may contact the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and they will re-instate your full social welfare payment by Wednesday of the following week. See

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/4c7204-make-work-pay/>

If you decide to take up work, you get to keep your free travel pass for as long as you qualify for Disability Allowance. If you take up work but no longer qualify for Disability allowance you can keep your Free Travel Pass for 5 years. If you take up any form of work, you can keep your medical card for 3 years. From the 1st December 2018, the medical card earnings disregard for persons in receipt of Disability Allowance will be significantly increased, from €120 to €427 per week and will apply to the assessment process for both single persons and to family assessments. See

<https://health.gov.ie/blog/press-release/new-medical-card-measures-to-remove-barriers-to-work-for-people-with-disabilities-over-250-increase-in-earnings-disregard/>

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection also have a 'benefit of work' estimator where you can enter your details (anonymously) and it will show you how income from employment may affect your disability or illness payment. See

<https://services.mywelfare.ie/en/topics/health-disability-illness/benefit-of-work-estimator/>

Useful Contacts

www.welfare.ie Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

www.citizensinformation.ie Citizens Information Services