



Information for Parents, Guardians and Care Givers of Children with Autism


- Benefits, Allowances and Grants





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Steps Post Diagnosis

Once your child has been diagnosed with ASD and you have had a chance to absorb the diagnosis there are a number of steps and government departments to contact.

Below is a brief overview on the initial steps.

Step 1

The first step after your child's diagnosis is to contact the relevant schools, either pre-school or primary which ever is most relevant. Waiting lists can often be long so it is important to add your child's name early. A list of appropriate places are available from your SENO. This list can be found at: <https://ncse.ie/seno-contact-list>

If your child is preschool age you will be able to apply for Home Tuition please see page 4 for further informationC

Step 2

Incapacity Tax credits can be applied for online and is a reasonable, straight forward step. See page 20 for further information on the process. Make sure your tax affairs are in order.

Step 3

The next step a parent, guardian or carer could take would be the application for Domiciliary Care Allowance. For further information, please see page 7.

Step 5

If you wish to check you can apply for any of the allowance offered by Department of Social Protection, please go to page 9 for further information.

Step 6

If you received your diagnosis from the HSE make contact with office manager to check where your child is on the list.

This is a guide to follow and some steps may come before others.

And finally, navigating the education and social welfare system can be a daunting task. So take the time to build up a support network around your family. Snowflakes Autism Support is there to help and support your family on this journey.

Department of Education

Home Tuition Grant

The home tuition grant was originally designed to provide a teacher in the home of a child who, because of disability or illness, was unable to attend school. Children with autism can avail of the grant if no school or pre-school placement can be found for the child. It is the parent(s) responsibility to search and apply for pre-school places. The current allocation is 10 hours from age 2.5 until age 3 and then 20 hours per week from age 3 onwards.

The Department of Education allocates a grant for several hours based on the child's age. The parents must find a tutor before applying for Home Tuition. The Department pays the tutor directly, but the parents must ensure all the correct paperwork is in place. All tutors providing tuition in the Home Tuition Scheme must be registered with the Teaching Council of Ireland and must be Garda-vetted. This is strictly enforced.

July Provision

Children with autism are entitled to July Provision. This can be delivered in two ways:

- > School-based: Schools can decide on a yearly basis to offer some or no school-based July Provision. If the school offers a full four weeks, then the length of school day and transport arrangements should be the same as the standard school arrangement. If the school is offering July provision, home-based tuition is not an option. In the case of primary school students, the Department of Education consider Home Tuition to be an extension of the school year.
- > Home-based: If your child is not yet at school or if the school is not offering July Provision you can apply to the Department of Education for July Provision, i.e. to hire a home tutor as in the Home Tuition scheme (see above). Application forms are usually available in May on www.education.ie

If you are already in the Home Tuition scheme, then the year just continues into July and the allocation remains at 20 hours per week.

The Department of Education stipulate how the hours should be used see www.julyprovision.com for more information. Home Tuition forms must be completed by a parent, tutor, school principal (where appropriate) and approval by a SENO (Special Education Needs Officer).

Useful Websites:

www.julyprovision.com

www.educationposts.ie

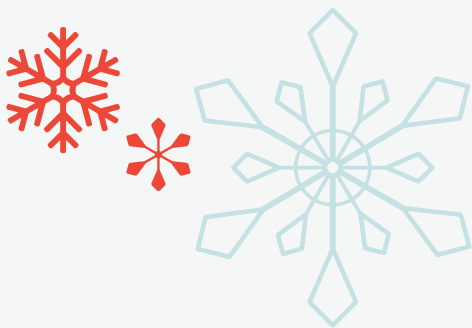
www.rollercoaster.ie

Facebook pages:

ABAireland

Home Tutors for those with Autism Spectrum Disorder Ireland





Assistive Technology Grant

The Assistive Technology Scheme provides funding to schools towards the purchase of equipment for pupils who have been assessed as having a special educational need that requires specialist equipment to access the curriculum. Grant-aid is pupil-specific and based on the pupil's needs, as determined by the associated professional. There is no upper limit.

How to Apply

Applications for equipment are considered on the basis of the following criteria:

- > The application must be supported by a professional recommendation which outlines that assistive technology is necessary or essential for the pupil to access the curriculum. This includes illustrating how the equipment will be used. An assessment indicating that equipment would be beneficial, desirable or useful will not be sufficient since this could be true in the case of any pupil.
- > Evidence must be supplied that the child will require the recommended equipment throughout the school day and that existing equipment in the school is insufficient to meet the child's needs without unduly depriving other children of access to the equipment.
- > The application meets the Department's criteria for this support.
- > Application forms and guidelines are available from the National Council for Special Education: [ncse.ie/for-schools](https://www.ncse.ie/for-schools)



Department of Social Protection

Domiciliary Care Allowance

Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) is a monthly payment for a child aged under 16 with a severe disability, who requires ongoing care and attention, substantially over and above the care and attention usually required by a child of the same age. It is not means tested.

The guidelines state that the payment is not based on the type of disability but on the resulting physical or mental impairment which means that the child requires substantially more care and attention than another child of the same age.

To qualify, the child must have a severe disability that is likely to last for at least 1 year and:

- > Be aged under 16
- > Live at home with the person claiming the allowance for 5 or more days a week
- > Meet the medical criteria
- > Be ordinarily resident in the State

In addition, the person claiming the allowance for the child must:

- > Provide for the care of the child
- > Be habitually resident in the State

Medical criteria

The legislation states that to qualify for Domiciliary Care Allowance a child must have “a severe disability requiring continual or continuous care and attention substantially in excess of the care and attention normally required by a child of the same age”.

This means that eligibility for Domiciliary Care Allowance is not based on the type of impairment or disease, but on the resulting lack of function of body or mind which means the child needs extra care and attention. This care and attention must be required to allow the child to deal with the activities of daily living. The child must be likely

to require this level of care and attention for at least 12 months. The Department's Medical Assessor looks at all the following before giving an opinion on whether your child meets the medical criteria:

- > The history of the case
- > All medical reports received (your GP fills out a medical report and you should include reports from any relevant specialists)
- > Your description of the care and attention required by your child (The form allows you to state what extra care your child needs under a number of headings.)
- > It may also be useful to include a sample daily diary and family impact statement

Rates

The Domiciliary Care Allowance rate is €309.50 per month (July 2019).

How to apply

To apply, fill in a Domiciliary Care Allowance form:

www.welfare.ie/en/pdf/domcare1.pdf

You can also get an application form by texting "FORM DCA" followed by your name and address to 51909 (standard text rates apply) or by dropping into your Intreo centre or social welfare local office or local Citizens Information Service.

Note: If your child has a Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) or a diagnosis /reports where you feel that the care needs while substantial have not perhaps been conveyed as clearly as possible you are advised to have the medical professional/specialist dealing with your child complete an additional medical form called DomCare3 which can be found at: **www.welfare.ie/en/pdf/DomCare3.pdf**

(Please note that completion of this form is optional since medical professionals may have already provided a comprehensive report on your child's medical condition and care needs. However, if you do not have

a recent report from your child's treating medical professional, the DomCare3 form can provide useful additional information.)

The completed form will detail your child's conditions, any specific care needs your child might have because of their disability and will help the Department's medical assessor to form an opinion on eligibility. Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) refers to a group of disorders characterised by delays in the development of socialisation and communication skills. Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder and Rett's Syndrome are generally referred to under this category.

Reviews and appeals

If your application is refused, you may submit additional information and ask for the decision to be reviewed. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this review or wish to appeal directly without a review, you can appeal to the independent Social Welfare Appeals Office. Available at: www.welfare.ie

DCA can be granted for a set period and is subject to habitual review.

Carer's support grant

The Carer's Support Grant is an annual payment made to carers by the Department of Social Protection. Carers can use the grant in whatever way they wish. You can use the grant to pay for respite care if you wish, but you do not have to do so. Information on respite care facilities available at: www.citizensinformation.ie

In June of each year (usually on the first Thursday of the month), the Department of Social Protection pays the grant automatically to carers getting Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance from the Department (it can also be paid to certain other carers – see the department's website for details). Only one Carer's Support Grant can be paid for each person getting care.



Currently set at €1700 euro per annum

Further details can be found here: www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/respite.aspx

Please note the difference between Carer's Allowance and Carers Benefit - you may be eligible for Carer's Benefit (not means-tested) but not for Carers Allowance (means-tested).

Carer's Allowance (means-tested)

If you are providing care to more than one person you may be entitled to an additional 50% of the maximum rate of Carer's Allowance each week.

If you qualify for Carer's Allowance, you may also qualify for free household benefits (if you are living with the person you are caring for):

www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Household-Benefits.aspx

(e.g. Free Electricity/Natural Gas/Bottled Gas Refill Allowance, Free Television License, and Free Telephone Rental Allowance) and a Free Travel Pass.

For more details, see: www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/ca.aspx

Carer's benefit (not means-tested)

Carer's Benefit is a payment made to insured people who leave the workforce to care for a person(s) in need of full-time care and attention.

You can get Carer's Benefit for a total period of 104 weeks for each person being cared for. This may be claimed as a single continuous period or in any number of separate periods up to a total of 104 weeks. However, if you claim Carer's Benefit for less than six consecutive weeks in any given period you must wait for a further six weeks before you can claim Carer's Benefit to care for the same person again.

You will be awarded "credits" automatically for the period you are getting Carer's Benefit. Credits are awarded at the same rate as your last paid contribution. These credits help protect your future entitlement to social welfare benefits and pensions. Family Carers claiming Carer's Benefit can work up to 15 hours per week and still claim their allowance as long as their weekly earnings do not exceed €332.50 net.

For more information, see: www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/carb.aspx

Carer's leave

Your right to carer's leave from employment complements the Carer's Benefit Scheme. Carer's Leave allows you to leave your employment temporarily for up to 104 weeks to provide full-time care for people in need of full-time care and attention. The leave is unpaid but people who take Carer's Leave must have their jobs kept open for the duration of the leave. You do not have to be eligible for Carer's Benefit to get Carer's Leave.

For more information on who is eligible and where and how to apply, see: www.citizensinformation.ie





Free Travel

Everyone aged 66 and over, legally resident and living permanently in the State, is entitled to the Free Travel Scheme. Some people under 66 also qualify, e.g. those in receipt of the Carer's Allowance. If you qualify for free travel, you are issued with a card that you must carry with you when using public transport. In some cases, a Free Travel Companion Card is available which allows a person to travel with the holder (if they are unable to travel alone). Free Travel Cards are non-transferable and can only be used by the named person.

Free travel is available on all state public transport (bus, rail and Dublin's LUAS service) with some exceptions. Free travel is also available on a limited number of services operated by private bus transport companies.

For more information on free travel, see:

www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/204_Free-Travel.aspx

Disability Allowance

Disability Allowance (DA) is a weekly allowance paid to people with a disability. You can get Disability Allowance from 16 years of age. If you are in education when you turn 16, you can continue to attend school.

If you qualify for Disability Allowance you may also get extra social welfare benefits with your payment and other supplementary welfare payments.

To qualify for Disability Allowance you must:

- > Have an injury, disease or physical or mental disability that has continued, or may be expected to continue, for at least one year

- > As a result of this disability be substantially restricted in undertaking work that would otherwise be suitable for a person of your age, experience and qualifications
- > Be aged between 16 and 66. When you reach 66 years of age you no longer qualify for DA, but you are assessed for a state pension
- > Satisfy a means test (of the disabled person, not the parents)
- > Satisfy the habitual residence condition

Please note that the current processing times for Disability Allowance are quite long. There is no automatic transfer between the Domiciliary Care Allowance and the Disability Allowance. It is advisable to apply well in advance of your child's 16th birthday.

For more information on the disability allowance, see:
www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/da.aspx

One-parent Family Payment (OFP)

One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) is a payment for men and women under 66 who are bringing children up without the support of a partner. To get this payment you must meet certain conditions and you must satisfy a means test.

OFP is a taxable source of income. A back to work family dividend is available for lone parents and long-term jobseeker families with children who find or return to work.

To get a One-Parent Family Payment you must have at least one child below 7 years of age.

Exceptions to the age limits:

- > **Domiciliary Care Allowance** - If you are getting Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) for a child, you qualify for OFP on behalf of that child if you meet the other conditions. This means that you

can apply for or continue to claim OFP until the child reaches 16 or DCA stops. You will also get an increase for a Qualified Child for any other children in the family until they reach 18 (or 22 if in full-time education) while DCA (and OFP) is in payment.

- > Carer's Allowance - If you are currently in receipt of OFP and are providing full-time care and attention for one of your children or for an adult (such as a parent or a sibling), you can keep your OFP and also claim half-rate Carer's Allowance, provided that your youngest child is aged under 16 years. This means that you can claim both OFP and a half-rate Carer's Allowance (CA) until your youngest child turns 16, for as long as you continue to meet the conditions for both schemes. You will also get an increase for a Qualified Child (IQC) for any other children in the family until they reach 18 (or 22 if in full-time education) while CA and OFP are in payment.

For more information, see:

www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/278_One-Parent-Family-Payment.aspx
www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare

SEAI Warmer Homes Scheme

This nationwide scheme delivers free energy efficiency improvements to the homes of people who are in receipt of certain welfare payments, such as DCA, Carer's Allowance etc.

Check your eligibility at: www.seai.ie/grants/home-energy-grants



HSE (Health Service Executive)

Long-term Illness Scheme

People with a diagnosis, which includes intellectual disability, may claim for drugs required for the condition. It is also useful for special equipment, e.g. if your Occupational Therapist recommends a special chair to help with posture, you might be able to purchase the chair from the long-term illness budget if your child has a long term illness card.

The Long-Term Illness Scheme is not means-tested and is separate from the Medical Card Scheme and the GP Visit Card Scheme.

Details at: www.hse.ie/services/long-term-illness-scheme

Home support

Check with the disability services of the HSE in your area to discover what home support services are available.

If you are caring for a person with a disability you can find out more about being a carer and the supports available here:

www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/3/carerssupport/

A Family Carer is described as someone who is providing an ongoing significant level of care to a person who needs care in the home due to illness or disability or frailty. The care that family and other carers provide involves looking after the needs of people with a wide range of dependencies across all age groups.

General information can be found here:

www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/

Respite

Respite care may involve providing alternative family or institutional care for a person with a disability to enable the carer to take a short break, a holiday or a rest. It can cover very short-term respite, for

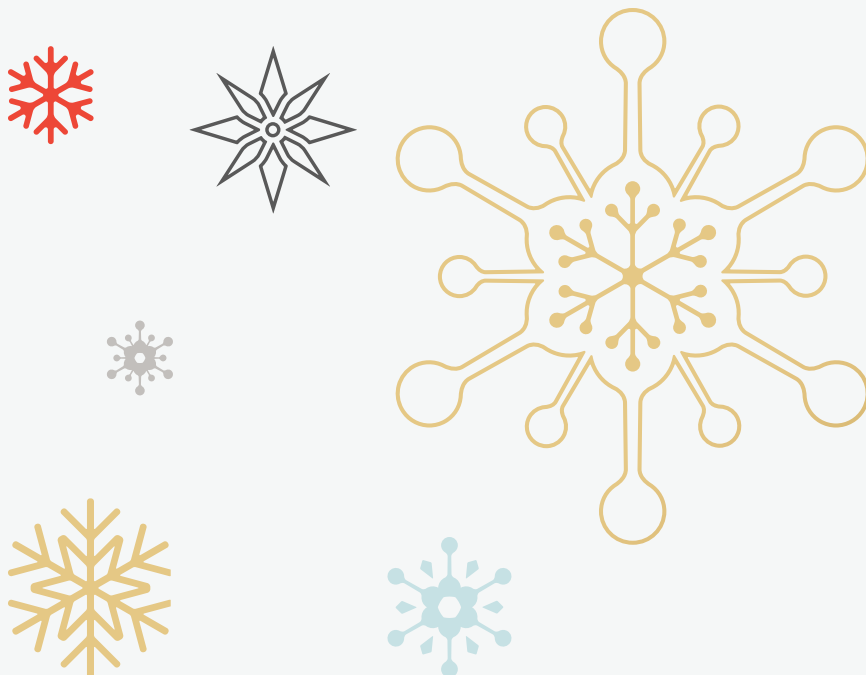
example, a carer for an evening, or a much longer arrangement for a holiday. Schemes of respite care are sometimes called 'Breakaway' or 'Friendship' schemes.

Respite care or temporary care may be based in the community or in an institution. In practice, respite care is provided to a varying degree at a number of locations around the country - in some cases by your Health Service Executive (HSE) Area, and in others by local or national voluntary organisations.

Apply to the Disability Services Manager in your Local Health Office and/or to a voluntary organisation that caters for people with the relevant disability.

List of local health offices:

www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/lho/



Revenue: Tax allowances and credits

When dealing with the Revenue Office it is advised to do whatever you can online via the MyAccount service. Revenue has heavily developed their online services and many requests can be completed online with limited input unlike the old format of long and complicated forms.

See: www.ros.ie/myaccount-web/home.html

Incapacitated Child Tax Credit

You can claim Incapacitated Child Tax Credit if you have a child who is permanently incapacitated, either physically or mentally and unable to support themselves, revenue consider an ASD diagnosis as incapacitated with a signature from a professional. If you have more than one child who is permanently incapacitated, you may claim a credit for each child. This tax credit is currently worth €3,300 per tax year. It can be backdated for up to 4 years and from diagnoses. It is advisable to supply all medical reports available to you to support your application.

See: www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions

Home Carer Tax Credit

You can claim the Home Carer Tax Credit if you are married or in a civil partnership, and you care for one or more dependent persons. You can only claim one credit, regardless of the number of people you care for.

See: www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions



Allowance for Employing a Carer for an Incapacitated Person

You may claim tax relief on the cost of employing a person to take care of yourself, your family member, spouse or civil partner who is totally incapacitated due to physical or mental disability.

See: www.revenue.ie/en/life-events-and-personal-circumstances

Refund of VAT, including for Housing Adaptations

If you live in Ireland and you have a disability, you may apply for a refund of Value-Added Tax (VAT) on certain special aids and appliances that you need, as a result of the disability. In some cases, people who pay for aids and appliances that are for the exclusive use of a person with a disability, can also claim the VAT refund. People with both physical and mental disabilities can avail of these refunds. This applies also to adaptation and installation work being carried out to make a home more suitable for an older person or for a person with a disability.

See: www.citizensinformation.ie/en/money_and_tax/tax

Local Property Tax Relief

Property purchased, built or adapted to make it suitable for occupation by a permanently and totally incapacitated individual as their sole or main residence are exempted from Local Property Tax (LPT). In the case of adaptations to a property, the exemption will only apply where the cost of the adaptations exceeds 25% of the market value of the property before it is adapted. The exemption ends if the property is sold and the incapacitated individual no longer occupies it as his or her sole or main residence. (Note that there is also a relief from LPT on properties that have been adapted for occupation by a disabled person. They can qualify for a reduction in the market value of the property for LPT purposes. This relief only applies where the adaptation work

increases the market value of the property.)

For guidelines on local property tax relief for disabled/incapacitated individuals, see Revenue: www.revenue.ie/en/property

Health/medical Expenses Relief

You can claim relief on the cost of health expenses (your own, those of a family member or any individual's), if you paid for them (anything covered by an insurance policy cannot be claimed). The claim can be back-dated 4 years.

Under certain conditions it may cover some Speech & Language (SLT), Psychology and Occupational Therapy (OT). These therapies can often be referred to by some insurance companies as 'alternative therapies'.

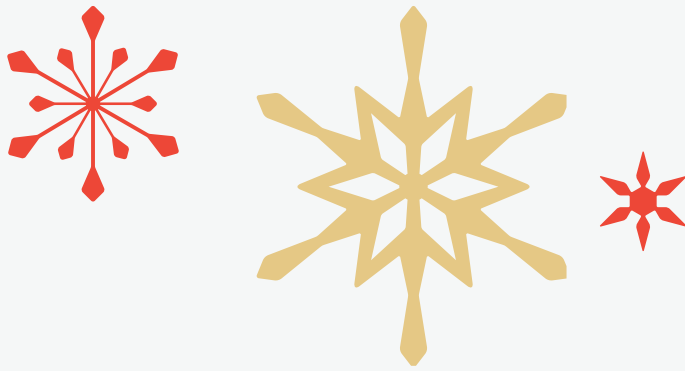
You can claim tax relief online using Revenue's myAccount service. You can also access the myAccount service on mobile and tablet devices using Revenue's RevApp.

You can only claim for medical expenses if you have receipts to prove your claim. Revenue's myAccount service includes a receipts tracker service which allows you to store your receipt details online. If you don't use this service, you must keep your medical receipts for six years because Revenue may investigate your claim.

A medical form MED2 (pdf) is a receipt to prove your dental expenses. Your dentist will normally have a supply of MED 2 forms and should complete it for you.

See: www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions





Tax Relief for Drivers and Passengers with Disabilities

The Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers Scheme provides a range of tax reliefs linked to the purchase and use of specially constructed or adapted vehicles by drivers and passengers with a disability. The rules of the scheme are set out in the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Regulations 1994 (SI 353/1994) as amended. Under the scheme, you can claim:

- > Remission or repayment of vehicle registration tax (VRT)
- > Repayment of value-added tax (VAT) on the purchase of a vehicle
- > Repayment of VAT on the cost of adapting a vehicle

If you qualify for the scheme, you may get some additional exemptions and benefits including:

- > An exemption from motor tax on the vehicle. Contact your Motor Tax Office to apply for this
- > An exemption from toll road fees
- > The Fuel Grant.



Deeds of Covenant

A deed of covenant is a legally binding agreement that is written down and agreed between 2 people stating that one person agrees to pay the other an agreed amount of money without receiving any benefit in return.

Some relatives or friends create a Deed of Covenant, to ensure a financial gift can be made to the individual with a disability.

However, tax relief can be claimed on covenants made in favour of permanently incapacitated minor children by people other than their parents. The exact tax saving depends on the amount of tax paid by the person making the payment (the Covenantor) and on the amount of the income of the person receiving the payment (the Covenantee).

You can agree to pay any amount of money under the deed, but it is important to remember that the deed must be properly drawn up, signed, witnessed, sealed and delivered to the individual receiving the payments.

Tax relief on covenants is only available where the covenants are being made to particular groups. These groups consist of permanently incapacitated minors, permanently incapacitated adults, and people over 65 years of age. (A minor is a child under 18 years of age who is not married). Parents of incapacitated minor children cannot claim tax relief on covenants in favour of their own permanently incapacitated minor child.

In order for the Deed of Covenant to be tax effective, the deed must be capable of lasting more than 6 years. It is recommended by Revenue therefore that the period of the covenant be for 7 years.

For more information, see:

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/money_and_tax/tax

www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions



Notes

Notes

Snowflakes Autism Support

Holywell Community Centre,
Holywell, Swords, Co. Dublin

353 1 524 1544

info@snowflakes.ie

www.snowflakes.ie

Charity Number: CHY20282

Registered in Ireland: No.9828733P

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Snowflakes Benefits Information Booklet FM0024 Rev A

