

Easy Read Handbook on Budget 2023



Hard Words

This handbook has some hard words. The first time we write a hard word, the hard word is in **orange**.

We will explain what the hard word means.

What is a Budget?



Each October, the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform announce the Government's spending, tax and borrowing plans for the next year. This year it happened in September.

This is called the **Budget**.

The Budget covers all the Government's spending and taxes.

Where does the money come from?



Taxes and other revenues the Government receives are paid into one main fund called the "Exchequer".

How is the money spent?



Money raised by the Government is spent on delivering important public services, paying for social welfare, and building things like roads, public transport, hospitals, housing etc.

How will Budget 2023 affect me?



Below you will see how the budget might affect you and some of the changes that the budget has brought in.

Some of these changes will happen straight away but other changes will happen later.

If you have any questions, please contact your local Regional Advocacy Officer (details below) or e-mail advocacy@rehab.ie

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Main Budget Changes

Social Welfare



- There will be a once-off payment of €500 to people getting the Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension, Blind Pension and carers who qualify for the Carer's Support Grant. This is due to happen in November.
- The maximum amount of all weekly social welfare payments, like Jobseeker's Allowance, Disability Allowance, will increase by €12. This will happen in January 2023.
- People who get a weekly social welfare payment will get a once-off payment of an extra week's payment. This is also called a 'double week' (minimum payment €20). This will happen in October.
- There will be a once-off double Child Benefit payment. This is due to happen in November.
- There will be a once-off payment of €200 to people getting the Living Alone Increase. This is due to happen in November.
- There will be a once-off payment of €400 to people getting the Fuel Allowance. This is due to happen in November.
- Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) will increase by €20.50 from €309.50 to €330. This will happen in January.
- A Christmas Bonus of an extra week's payment will be paid in early December 2022 to people getting a long-term social welfare payment. This is another "double week" payment.

Employment



- People getting Disability Allowance and Blind Pension will be able to earn up to €165 from work without affecting their payment. This is an increase of €25 on the previous threshold of €140.

Help with energy costs



- Anyone who pays for their **electricity** will get €600 credit to help reduce electricity bills. The credit will be paid in 3 separate amounts of €200. The first payment will be made in November 2022. The second electricity credit will be made in January 2023. The third will be made in March 2023. This will be added straight into your electricity account, you don't have to do anything.

- People getting Fuel Allowance will get an extra once-off payment of €400 in November 2022, see 'Social welfare' above.

Social and affordable housing



- With extra funding more people will be able to get the **Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)** scheme and the **Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)** in 2023.

- **Housing Assistance Payment:** is a type of social housing support from all local County or City Councils.

If you qualify for social housing support your local County or City Council might use HAP to make payment for you to your landlord once a month. All you would need to do is make a payment, once a week, to your Council. The amount you would pay depends on how much money you earn.

- **Rental Accommodation Scheme:** is a type of social housing support from local County and City Councils.

RAS is very similar to HAP. Under RAS the Council pays the full rent to your landlord and you pay what you can afford to the Council. To qualify for RAS, though, you need to have been on Rent Supplement for 18 months.

Public transport fares



- Reduced fares of 20% on public transport will continue until the end of 2023.
- The 50% price reduction on the Young Adult Leap Card will continue until the end of 2023. The Young Adult Leap Card will be extended to 16, 17 and 18 year olds in third-level education.