



# Treatment Benefit

## What is Treatment Benefit?

Treatment Benefit is a scheme that may allow you to qualify for:

- Dental Benefit
- Optical Benefit
- Contact Lenses (on medical grounds)
- Hearing Aids.

### Dental Benefit

Dental Benefit covers dental examination and diagnosis.

**Note:**

**You may receive Dental Benefit for examinations carried out in other European Union (EU) member states. Contact Treatment Benefit Section before you travel for an application form and details of the amounts the Department will pay.**

### Optical Benefit

Optical Benefit covers an eye examination only\*.

\*The Department does not pay towards the cost of an eye examination for visual display units (VDU), such as computers or for driving licences.

**Note:**

**You may receive Optical Benefit for eye examinations carried out in other EU member states. Contact Treatment Benefit Section before you travel for an application form and details of the amounts the Department will pay.**

### Contact Lenses

If you need contact lenses on medical grounds, the Department will pay up to half the cost, subject to a fixed maximum contribution, provided you have a doctor's recommendation.

**Note:**

**You may receive benefit for contact lenses bought in other EU member states, provided the lenses are needed on medical grounds. Contact Treatment Benefit Section before you travel for an application form and details of the amounts the Department will pay.**

### Hearing Aids

The Department will pay up to half the cost of a hearing aid or repairs to a hearing aid, subject to a fixed maximum contribution of €500 for one aid and €1,000 if you need two aids.

Before you buy your hearing aid you should make sure that you know the amount that you will need to pay on top of your grant.

This grant can be paid to a person who has the necessary PRSI contributions or to their adult dependant.

You can find a list of hearing services companies on our website [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). You can use your hearing aid grant if you qualify when buying hearing aids from them.

**Note:**

**You may receive benefit for hearing aid(s) supplied in other EU member states. Contact Treatment Benefit Section before you travel for an application form and details of the amounts the Department will pay.**

## How do I qualify?

To qualify for Treatment Benefit you must satisfy the PRSI conditions. Only PRSI at Classes **A**, **E**, **H** and **P** count.

If you are:	You must have at least:
<b>Under Age 21</b>	<b>39 paid PRSI contributions since first starting work.</b>
<b>Aged 21 to 24</b>	<b>39 paid PRSI contributions since first starting work, and either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>39 paid or credited PRSI contributions* in the relevant tax year on which your claim is based, or</b></li> <li>• <b>26 paid PRSI contributions in both the relevant tax year and the tax year immediately before the relevant tax year.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Aged 25 to 65</b>	<b>260 paid PRSI contributions since first starting work, and either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>39 paid or credited PRSI contributions* in the relevant tax year on which your claim is based, or</b></li> <li>• <b>26 paid PRSI contributions in both the relevant tax year and the tax year immediately before the relevant tax year.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Aged 66 or over</b>	<b>See across page.</b>

\*At least 13 of these weeks must be **paid** contributions. However, if you do not have 13 paid contributions in the relevant tax year, you may use the following years instead:

- either of the two previous tax years, **or**
- any tax year after the relevant tax year.

The 13 weeks paid contributions does not apply if you:

- reached age 66 before 6 July 1992,
- are aged 55 or over and receiving 'unemployment credits',
- are getting any of the following Social Welfare payments:
  - Invalidity Pension,
  - Carer's Allowance,
  - Carer's Benefit,
  - State Pension (Transition),
  - Illness Benefit (for 12 months or more),

- a combination of Jobseeker's Benefit and Jobseeker's Allowance (for 12 months or more),
  - long-term Jobseeker's Allowance, or
  - Pre-Retirement Allowance,
- are on a Community Employment Scheme, Back to Work Scheme, Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme or Community Employment Development Programme.

For Claims Made In:	The Relevant Tax Year Is:
2016	→ 2014
2017	→ 2015
2018	→ 2016

### Note:

**If you satisfy the PRSI conditions when you reach age 60, you will remain qualified for life.**

Aged 66 or over, the PRSI contribution requirements vary according to when you reached age 66.

If you reached age 66:	You must have at least:
<b>before 1 October 1987</b>	<b>156 paid PRSI contributions since first starting work and 26 paid or credited PRSI contributions in either of the 2 relevant tax years on which your claim is based.</b>
<b>between 1 October 1987 and 6 July 1992</b>	<b>208 paid PRSI contributions since first starting work and 39 paid or credited PRSI contributions in either of the 2 relevant tax years on which your claim is based.</b>
<b>between 6 July 1992 and 28 May 2006</b>	<b>260 paid PRSI contributions since first starting work, and 39 paid or credited* PRSI contributions in either of the two relevant tax years on which your claim is based.</b>
<b>If you reach age 66 on or after 29 May 2006</b>	<b>260 paid PRSI contributions since first starting work, and either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>39 paid or credited PRSI contributions* in either of the two relevant tax years on which your claim is based, or</b></li> <li>• <b>26 paid PRSI contributions in both the relevant tax year and the tax year immediately before the relevant tax year.</b></li> </ul>

### Note

**If you satisfy the PRSI conditions when you reach 66 years of age, you will remain qualified for life.**

## Does social insurance outside Ireland count?

### Treatment Benefit and EC Regulations

If you do not qualify for Treatment Benefit on your Irish social insurance record, but you worked and made social contributions within the European Economic Area (EEA) you may use your social insurance record in that country to help you qualify, provided you have paid at least one PRSI contribution at **Class A, E, H or P** since you returned to Ireland.

#### Countries covered are:

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus South)
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- the Netherlands
- the United Kingdom (Bilateral Agreement for the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man)

### EU Member States

The following are the **EU Member States**, other than the Republic of Ireland where you can be treated and receive payment under the Treatment Benefit scheme:

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus South)
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- the Netherlands
- the United Kingdom

#### Note

**You should contact Treatment Benefit Section before you travel for an application form and details of the amounts the Department will pay.**

## Am I entitled to Treatment Benefit on my spouse's, civil partner's or cohabitant's social insurance record?

You can get Treatment Benefit on your spouse's, civil partner's or cohabitant's PRSI record provided they satisfy the qualifying contribution conditions and you are dependent on your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant.

You are considered dependent on your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant if you:

- have a gross income of €100 or less per week,
- earn more than €100 per week and were dependent on your spouse or partner before entering or resuming insurable employment at **Class A, E, H or P**,
- are **not** getting a social welfare payment (except Disablement Pension, Supplementary Welfare Allowance, Carer's Benefit or Child Benefit),
- are getting Carer's Allowance or the State Pension (Non-Contributory) in your own right and were dependent on your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant immediately prior to getting the Allowance or Pension.

## Can I qualify for Treatment Benefit as a widow, widower or surviving civil partner?

If you were entitled to Treatment Benefit on your spouse's, civil partner's or cohabitant's insurance record at the time of their death, you will continue to be entitled for as long as you remain widowed.

If you are working, you may qualify for Treatment Benefit on your own PRSI contribution record provided you satisfy the PRSI qualifying conditions

Issued by:  
Information Services  
Department of Social Protection  
Social Welfare Services  
College Road  
Sligo

For more information:

- Log on to [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).
- Telephone: (071) 919 3302  
LoCall: 1890 66 22 44  
If you are calling from outside the Republic of Ireland please call + 353 71 91 93302.
- Drop in to your local Citizens Information Centre, your local Intreo Centre or your local Social Welfare Office.

## How do I apply for Treatment Benefit?

You must apply to the Department for approval by completing the appropriate application form(s).

Type of treatment:	Application form:	Available form:
• Dental Benefit	• applicant D1 • qualified adult D2	Dental Surgery only
• Optical Benefit	• applicant O1 • qualified adult O2	Opticians or Treatment Benefit Section
• Hearing aids or contact lenses*	• applicant MA1 • qualified adult MA2	Suppliers or Treatment Benefit Section

\* On medical grounds

If you wish to avail of treatment in another EU member state, please contact Treatment Benefit Section before you travel for an application form and details of the amounts the Department will pay.

## Where can I get more information?

For more information on the Treatment Benefit Scheme, contact your local Intreo Centre or your local Social Welfare Office or:

### Treatment Benefit Section

Department of Social Protection  
Social Welfare Services  
St. Oliver Plunkett Road  
Letterkenny  
Co. Donegal

Telephone: (074) 91 64480

LoCall: 1890 400 400

If calling from outside the Republic of Ireland please call + 353 74 9164480

### Note

The rates charged for using 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary among different service providers.

This leaflet is intended as a guide only and is not a legal interpretation.