



# SECTION FOUR:

Other Supports

# Disabled Person's Parking Card

Disabled Person's Parking Permits or Cards (also known as European Parking Cards or Disabled Parking Badge) are available to people living in Ireland with certain disabilities and those who are registered blind, whether they are drivers or passengers. The parking card can be used by a disabled person in any vehicle in which he or she is travelling. This means that a disabled person who is being driven at different times by different people can bring the parking card with himself or herself and display it in the appropriate vehicle. The parking card is valid for 2 years from date of issue. Generally, the card is not issued to anyone under 5 years of age.

The parking card scheme for disabled drivers and passengers applies to public car parking areas only. However, the scheme also enables private car parks, supermarkets, etc. to more effectively monitor parking in areas that they have designated for people with disabilities. If you have a parking card, the disabled parking spaces provided by local authorities are free of charge. Under local by-laws, each local authority has the discretion to set time limits for parking in these spaces. Some local authorities apply no time limit, while others state that you must abide by the time limits displayed for the area.

Contact your local authority for further information about time limits in your area. Some private car parks may charge for use of a disabled parking space, but this will vary depending on the operator. You can read more about parking facilities for people with disabilities in Ireland [here](#).

The parking card scheme is administered by the Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland (DDAI) and the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA).



## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- ✓ You will automatically qualify for a parking card if you hold a Primary Medical Certificate (exempting you from payment of VAT, motor tax and Vehicle Registration Tax). However, you must still formally apply for the parking card.

Local Health Offices of the Health Service Executive (HSE) process applications for a Primary Medical Certificate. If the HSE refuses your application for a Primary Medical Certificate, you may appeal the refusal to the Disabled Drivers Medical

Board of Appeal, National Rehabilitation Hospital, Rochestown Avenue, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

## Parking offences and disabled spaces

It is an offence to park a vehicle in a disabled parking space unless you have a current, valid Disabled Parking Card. If you illegally park in a disabled parking space, you will incur a fixed charge parking fine. Both traffic wardens and members of An Garda Síochána have the power to request and inspect a parking card to ensure it is not being misused.

### Rates

A parking card costs €35.

Illegally parking in a disabled parking space will result in an €150 fine, rising to €225 if unpaid within 28 days.



## APPLICATION PROCESS:

To request a parking card application form from the Disabled Drivers Association, you can email [parkingcard@ddai.ie](mailto:parkingcard@ddai.ie).

Alternatively, you can apply online on the website of the Irish Wheelchair Association or email [maats@iwa.ie](mailto:maats@iwa.ie).

Decision makers within the issuing authorities will determine if you are eligible based on the information provided.

## Primary Medical Certificate

To obtain a Primary Medical Certificate, you must first obtain an application form from your Local Health Office. You must complete the application form and return it to the Senior Medical Officer of the Local Health Office. The Senior Medical Officer then appoints a HSE doctor to visit your home and carry out an assessment of the level of your disability. If you satisfy the requirements, you are then granted a Primary Medical Certificate by the HSE.

## Replacing a lost parking card

Applications to have lost/misplaced cards replaced should be made directly

to either the Disabled Drivers Association or the Irish Wheelchair Association (whichever organisation issued the card).

### Renewing a parking card

The parking card must be renewed every 2 years. You will be sent a renewal form several weeks before your parking card is due to expire. Therefore, if you change address, you should tell the organisation that issued the card.

If you have had any corrective surgery or treatment that may have altered the level of your mobility, you should report it in the mobility section of the renewal form.

### Further information

Information on how to apply for, replace or renew a parking card is available from your local Family Carers Ireland Support Centre or on the websites of the Disabled Drivers Association and the Irish Wheelchair Association.

#### Disabled Drivers Association

Parking Card Section  
Ballindine  
Claremorris  
Mayo  
Ireland

**Tel:** (094) 936 4054

#### Irish Wheelchair Association

National Mobility Centre  
Ballinagappa Road  
Clane  
Kildare  
Ireland

**Tel:** +353 (0)45 893094/5

## Mobility Allowance

Mobility Allowance was a means tested monthly payment payable by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to people who are aged 16 and over and under 66 and who have a disability and are unable to walk or use public transport and who would benefit from a change in surroundings (for example, by financing the occasional taxi journey).

In 2013, the Department of Health announced that the Mobility Allowance scheme and the Motorised Transport Grant was closed to new applicants. An alternative scheme is being devised to replace it. This alternative scheme will be called the Transport Support Scheme. In the meantime, the HSE continues to make monthly payments to people who were getting the Mobility Allowance at the time that the scheme closed.

## School transport for children with special needs

The Department of Education and Skills provides school transport services for children with special educational needs. Bus Éireann (the State public transport operator) operates the school transport service on behalf of the department. The school transport service may not be available in all areas. Where the transport cannot be provided, you may be eligible for a Special Transport Grant to help with the cost of making private transport arrangements.



### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- ✓ The School Transport Scheme applies to children with a special educational needs recognised by the Department of Education and Skills. The child must be attending the nearest recognised mainstream school or special class/special school or a unit resourced to meet their special educational needs.

If your application has been refused, you are entitled to appeal the decision. You can appeal to the School Transport Appeals Board using the School Transport Appeal Form (pdf). Appeals can be made in the following cases:

- If the department is not in a position to provide a transport service due to excessive cost
- Where the maximum level of grant offered does not cover the assessed cost of the journey involved.

### Escort provision

Applications can be made to the department by the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) to employ an escort to accompany a child, if the child's care and safety needs require that support.

### Special class arrangements

Transport services for children with special needs are only provided for the period of enrolment in a special class. If the child returns to mainstream classes, special transport arrangements will not be provided.

Eligible children who are enrolled in an autism class/unit attached to a mainstream school and who subsequently mainstream in that school will retain their transport eligibility for the duration of their primary education in

this school. However, a new application must be made if they transfer to a new school.

## Rates

Eligible children are exempt from school transport charges.

A Special Transport Grant towards the cost of private transport arrangements may be provided at the discretion of the Department in certain situations.

Special Transport Grant rates are as follows:

Kilometers (km)	Rate per km
Up to 6437	39.12 cent
Over 6437	21.22 cent



## APPLICATION PROCESS:

You should apply to the school principal who will contact the school's **Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO)** in relation to applying for special transport. If the SENO is satisfied that your child is enrolled in the nearest suitable school and that school transport is required, a recommendation will be sent to the School Transport Section of the Department of Education and Skills.

Applications for Special Transport Grant may also be forwarded to the School Transport Section through the SENO, prior to the child's enrolment in school. If grant aid is sanctioned, applications for payment of the grant should include a completed Statement of Attendance form. Applications may be made at the end of the school year by the parent or guardian of the child to the School Transport Section.

## Department of Education and Skills

School Transport Section  
Portlaoise Road  
Tullamore  
Offaly  
Ireland

**Tel:** (057) 932 5466/7

# Seniors Alert Scheme

The scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and administered by Pobal. Pobal is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that manages programmes on behalf of a number of Government departments and the E.U. The Seniors Alert Scheme (SAS) encourages community support for vulnerable older people by providing personal monitored alarms.

## Purpose:

To enable older persons to live securely in their homes with confidence, independence and peace of mind by providing them with a free personal monitored alarm.

## Criteria:

- ✓ Aged 65 years or older
- ✓ Of limited means or resources
- ✓ Living alone or living with another person who meets the eligibility criteria, living alone for significant periods of time during the day, or is a carer to someone else in their household
- ✓ Resides within the geographical area of the relevant registered organisation
- ✓ Able to benefit from the equipment supplied
- ✓ Prepare to maintain contact with the registered organisation

## Cost:

It is free. You will get the equipment with one year's monitoring free. The equipment is funded through the Department of Rural and Community Development.

After year one you will be asked to pay a monitoring fee for the alarm, which is approximately €60-€90 per year.

## APPLICATION PROCESS:



Simply contact your local **Family Carers Ireland Support Centre** operating the scheme and they will apply on your behalf by sending you out an application form.

## Better Energy Homes Scheme

The Better Energy Homes scheme gives grants to homeowners to improve energy efficiency in their homes. Landlords and owners of more than one property can also apply for a grant under the scheme. If you have previously availed of a grant under the scheme, you can reapply to get additional work done. The Better Energy Homes scheme is administered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).



## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

You can get a grant or the following energy-saving and renewable solutions:

- ✓ Attic insulation
- ✓ Wall insulation - including cavity wall, internal dry lining and external insulation
- ✓ Heating controls upgrade
- ✓ Solar thermal solutions
- ✓ Heat pump systems
- ✓ A Building Energy Rating (BER) after the energy-saving work is carried out (you must get this BER to qualify for the grant)

See the **Application Guide (pdf)** for technical specifications, as well as information on insurance, contracts, inspections, grant limits and how to apply. Your contractor(s) must carry out the works in accordance with the SEAI. **See detailed information about the Better Energy Homes scheme here.**



## How to qualify

You must have grant approval before you buy materials or start any grant-funded work. If you have already started work, you will not be eligible for a grant. Once approved, you have 6 months to get the works done and claim the grant.

### To qualify for a grant, you must:

- ✓ Be the owner of a dwelling built before 2006 for insulation and heating control systems
- ✓ Be the owner of a dwelling built before 2011 for heat pump and solar thermal grants
- ✓ Use a contractor from **SEAI's registered list**
- ✓ Use newly fitted materials and products
- ✓ Have work done that complies with the required standards
- ✓ Have a BER carried out after the works are done
- ✓ Use a **BER assessor from SEAI's National Register**

### You may not get a grant if:

- The measures do not comply with the required standards
- The relevant measure (the work on your home) was already incentivised under another grant programme

## How to find out if your home would benefit from energy-saving work

You can get a Building Energy Rating (BER) done in advance of any works. A BER assessor will energy rate your home and provide you with an advisory report which will help identify areas that could be improved to increase the energy efficiency of your home.

## Planning permission

In general, you do not need planning permission for most works carried out under this scheme, though you may require it for external wall insulation. This depends on whether the insulation will affect the external appearance of the building or whether the building is a protected structure. Contact your local authority to check if you need planning permission.

## Choosing a contractor

Before choosing a contractor from the registered list, the SEAI recommends that you:

- Ask friends, family and neighbours who have done building work recently for advice and recommendations on contractors
- Get a number of quotes and compare the offers
- Request and check the contractor's references
- Formalise the relationship with your chosen contractor by drawing up a contract detailing the required works, prices, timescales, payment terms and warranties.

## Getting the work done safely

Under the regulations governing safety, health and welfare at work, homeowners must ensure that construction work on their home is carried out by competent people.

## Rates

Grants are paid after the work is completed and you have paid your contractor.

Applications received from specific offshore islands are eligible for 50% additional grant support.

If the cost of the work (including VAT) is less than the maximum grant amount, you will get a grant for the actual cost of the work.

## Bonuses

A bonus of €300 is payable when you have completed 3 qualifying measures and a further €100 is payable on completion of a 4th measure. The full grant history of your home is taken into account when calculating whether a bonus is due. A BER does not count as a measure when calculating entitlement to a bonus.



## APPLICATION PROCESS:

You can apply online or by post. If applying by post, you should contact the SEAI to get an application form, or download the application form, and send it back to SEAI – see 'Where to apply' below. You need the MPRN number from your

electricity bill and the name of your SEAI-registered contractor.

Online applications get an immediate response. Postal applications should get a response within 5 working days.

SEAI publishes a detailed guide to help with your application.

Better Energy Homes Scheme  
**Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland**  
P.O. Box 119  
Caherciveen  
Kerry  
Ireland

**Tel:** 01 808 2100

**Email:** [info@betterenergyhomes.ie](mailto:info@betterenergyhomes.ie)