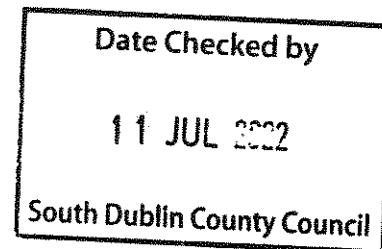




An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Social Protection

Case Number: REPS-2022-29967

Ms Miriam Reilly
Meetings Administrator
Corporate Services Department
South Dublin County Council
County Hall
Tallaght
Dublin 24 D24 YNN5
Ref: M12/0522



7th July 2022

Dear Ms Reilly,

I refer to your correspondence to Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D, in relation to Artists with Disabilities and the Basic Income for the Arts pilot scheme on behalf of South Dublin County Council.

This pilot scheme comes under the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. It is important to stress that a payment under the pilot is not a social protection or income support payment. Rather it is a payment in recognition of the valuable contribution of the arts community and an incentive to encourage people to remain employed in the arts rather than seeking employment elsewhere.

The Department provides a range of income supports for people unable to work due to illness or disability. The primary social assistance schemes in this space are the Disability Allowance and Blind Pension - these are means tested payments, which are also subject to a medical assessment and habitual residency requirement. As at the end of May some 157,000 persons were in receipt of these payments, this includes some 14,700 persons in receipt of these payments while in employment/self-employment.



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Social welfare legislation provides that for social assistance schemes, all income and assets belonging to a claimant, and his or her spouse/partner where applicable, are assessable for means testing purposes. The purpose of the means test is to ensure that resources are directed to those with the greatest need for income supports by the State.

However, both the Disability Allowance and Blind Pension have also been structured to support recipients to avail of opportunities to pursue employment, be that self-employment or insurable employment. When an individual commences employment, they can avail of an income disregard of €140 per week. In addition, 50% of earnings between €140 and €375, are also disregarded for the purpose of the means test.

Income from the pilot scheme is treated as income from self-employment, and as a result the disregards above will apply. My department has created a web page on Gov.ie which details the 'Interaction of the Basic Income for the Arts Pilot Scheme with DSP payments'. This page will be updated as required.

Yours sincerely,

PP Brodley Remrick

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