

Short Guide to Residential Support Services Maintenance and Accommodation Contributions (long-stay contributions) for our service users

Contributions apply from 1 January 2017

What is a Residential Support Services Maintenance and Accommodation Contribution (long stay contribution)?

A long-stay contribution is an affordable contribution towards your maintenance and accommodation costs in certain HSE, or HSE-funded, residential settings applying from 1 January 2017.

The long-stay contributions system sets affordable maximum contribution rates in non-nursing settings where accommodation is provided or where upkeep costs (for example, food and utility bills) are funded by or on behalf of the HSE.

What settings do long-stay contributions apply to?

The settings where long-stay contributions apply include:

- residential accommodation in the mental health or disability sectors, and, to a lesser extent,
- convalescent homes, hospitals (while not receiving acute care) and nursing homes (including older people's units but **excluding** nursing home services supported under the Fair Deal Scheme).

I have a medical card. Do I have to make a long stay contribution?

Yes. Long-stay contributions apply to people with or without a medical card.

Your contribution **does not** go towards the care you require.

Who does the long-stay contribution not apply to?

You do not have to make a long-stay contribution if you are receiving acute in-patient care or long term residential care services supported by the Nursing Homes Support Scheme (Fair Deal).

You do not have to make a long-stay contribution for a day when you do not stay in the accommodation.

What does your contribution go towards?

Your contribution goes towards your **maintenance and accommodation** costs. **It might cover costs such as those for:**

- your room or a room you share;
- cooking facilities,
- heat, light or waste disposal;
- groceries or meals depending on your needs.

What factors are considered when deciding my contribution?

The amount you must contribute will vary based on three factors:

1. **Your income** – including any payments you receive from the Department of Social Protection.
2. **Your essential outgoings (expenses)** – making sure that what you contribute will be within your means and takes account of your and your dependants' needs.
3. **Where you live** – Category A, B or C accommodation.

- **Category A** accommodation (24 hour medical or nursing care).
- **Category B** accommodation (weekly medical or nursing care on a less than 24 hour basis).
- **Category C** accommodation (all other accommodation such as independent living settings).

How will I know what I have to contribute?

Your service provider will help you figure out how much you have to contribute based on your weekly income and outgoings. You will have an individual **assessment** to make sure

that the amount you have to contribute is correct. If you wish to be considered for a waiver (reduction or setting aside of your standard contribution), you will need to provide details of:

- relevant income (such as disability allowance, pension, salary, and so on), and
- essential outgoings (such as mortgage payments or other essential expenses).

After your assessment, your service provider will write to tell you what you must contribute and how you can pay the contribution. Your service provider will support you in this process. You should contact them if your circumstances change.

How can I afford the contribution? If my only income is from the Disability Allowance, how much will I have to contribute?

To make sure that your contribution is affordable, the maximum you can be required to contribute each week (from 29th March 2019) is:

- **€179** – if you are in Category A accommodation (24 hour medical or nursing care) and your weekly income is €223 or more;
- **€134** – if you are in Category B accommodation (weekly medical or nursing care on a less than 24 hour basis) and your weekly income is €209 or more; or
- **€74** – if you are in Category C accommodation (all other accommodation such as independent living) and your income is €203 or more.

If your income is lower, the contribution you must pay will also be lower.

If your **only** income is the Disability Allowance of €203 a week (rate from 29th March 2019), the **most** you will contribute each week is **€159** (in Category A accommodation), **€124** (Category B) or **€74.00** (Category C).

If you have essential expenses which you must meet and would find it difficult to afford the standard contribution rate for your income, you may ask your service provider to have some or all of your **contribution waived (reduced or set aside)**.

Will I have any money left each week for my own use?

Yes, you will always be able to keep some money from your **weekly** income for your personal use. **You will be able to keep at least:**

- **€44** – if you live in Category A accommodation;
- **€79** – if you live in Category B accommodation; or
- **€129** – if you live in Category C accommodation.

What can I do if I am unhappy with the amount I have to contribute?

If you are unhappy with the level of your contribution, you can:

- ask for the decision to be **corrected** if a mistake has been made in your assessment;
- ask for a the decision to be **updated** if your circumstances have changed;
- **appeal** in writing to the HSE National Appeals Office, An Clochar, Ballyshannon Health Campus, College Street, Ballyshannon, Co Donegal F94 TPX4; or
- **write** to the Office of the Ombudsman if you are still unhappy – Office of the Ombudsman, 18 Lr Leeson St, Dublin 2, D02 HE97.

29th March 2019

For further details, see:

- www.hse.ie/longstaycontributions, or
- phone: HSE Information Line: **1850 24 1850** – open **8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 5.00pm on Saturday**