



SEANAD ÉIREANN

**AN BILLE LEASA SHÓISIALAIGH (UIMH. 2), 2019
SOCIAL WELFARE (NO. 2) BILL 2019**

**LEASUITHE COISTE
COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS**

SEANAD ÉIREANN

AN BILLE LEASA SHÓISIALAIGH (UIMH. 2), 2019 —AN COISTE

SOCIAL WELFARE (NO. 2) BILL 2019 —COMMITTEE STAGE

Leasuithe Amendments

**Government amendments are denoted by an asterisk*

SECTION 4

1. In page 6, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“Amendment of section 24 of Principal Act

4. Section 24 of the Principal Act is amended—

- (a) in subsection (1) by the substitution of “260 contribution weeks” for “520 contribution weeks”, and
- (b) by the deletion of subsections (1A), (1B) and (1C).”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

SECTION 13

2. In page 10, after line 33, to insert the following:

“Amendment of section 242 of Principal Act

13. Section 242 of the Principal Act is amended—

- (a) in subsection (4)—
 - (i) by the substitution of following paragraph for paragraph (a):

“(a) his or her public services card,”
 - and
 - (ii) by the substitution of following paragraphs for paragraph (b):

“(b) a card that has been issued to the person by the Minister under section 264 and such other information or documentation as the Minister, an officer of the Minister or a payment service provider, as the case may be, may reasonably require for the purposes of authenticating the identity of that person,
 - (c) an Irish Passport and such other information or documentation as the Minister, an officer of the Minister or a payment service provider, as the case may be, may reasonably require for the

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purposes of authenticating the identity of that person, or

- (d) such information or documentation as the Minister, an officer of the Minister or a payment service provider, as the case may be, may reasonably require for the purposes of authenticating the identity of that person.”,

(b) in subsection (6)(b)—

(i) by the substitution of following subparagraph for subparagraph (ii):

“(ii) such other information or documentation as the Minister, an officer of the Minister or a payment service provider, as the case may be, may reasonably require for the purposes of authenticating the identity of the appointed person, or”,

and

(ii) by the insertion of the following new paragraph after paragraph (b):

“(c) such information or documentation as the Minister, an officer of the Minister or a payment service provider, as the case may be, may reasonably require for the purposes of authenticating the identity of the appointed person.”,

and

(c) by the substitution of following subsection for subsection (7):

“(7) Where a person fails to comply with subsection (4) or (6), payment of benefit may be withheld until such time as the identity of the person is authenticated. Possession or production of a Public Services Card shall not be a mandatory requirement for the payment of a benefit.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

SECTION 28

3. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“Report on financial impact of changes to hours Carers can work outside the home

28. The Minister shall prepare and produce a report on the impact of the increase in hours carers in receipt of Carer’s Allowance can work outside the home from 15 hours to 18.5 hours without a corresponding increase in the earnings disregard and that the report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Employment Affairs and Social Protection within 4 months of the enactment of this Act.”.

—*Senator Máire Devine.*

4. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“Review of the means test for Carer’s Allowance

28. The Minister shall carry out a review of the means test in place for Carer’s Allowance in

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consultation with key stakeholders, including Family Carers Ireland and that the report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Employment Affairs and Social Protection within 6 months of the enactment of this Act.”.

—*Senator Máire Devine.*

5. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“28. The Minister shall, within eight months of the passing of this Act, prepare and lay a report before the Houses of the Oireachtas examining potential improvements to voluntary access to Intreo and Local Employment Service (LES) employment, training and educational opportunities and supports for those not on the Live Register.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

6. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“28. The Minister shall, within six months of the passing of this Act, prepare and lay before the Houses of the Oireachtas a report on the provision of literacy supports including digital literacy for people in receipt of social welfare payments.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

7. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“28. The Minister shall, within six months of the enactment of this Act, prepare and lay a report before the Houses of the Oireachtas outlining potential actions in relation to social welfare supports and services in the context of the Climate Action Plan and “just transition” to include a consideration of—

- (a) fuel allowance,
- (b) policy and practice around Housing Assistance Payment and Rent Supplement, and
- (c) training for caseworkers and preparation of targeted social welfare education, training and employment services for those currently in sectors likely to experience downsizing as part of a just transition.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

8. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“28. The Minister shall, within eight months of the enactment of this act, prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas, containing a review and recommendations in respect of the entitlement of those who are *de facto* partners or cohabiting couples to widow’s, widower’s or surviving civil partner’s pension.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

9. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“Reasonable accommodation fund for people with disabilities

28. The Minister shall, within three months of the enactment of this Act, prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas, reviewing the operation of the Reasonable

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Accommodation Fund in respect of persons in receipt of disability payments; including recommendations on provisions and resourcing to ensure this fund is available year round and to all sectors and a consideration of options to which the potential benefits of pre-approval of access to this fund for individuals in receipt of disability payments who are seeking employment.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

10. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“**28.** The Minister shall, within three months of the enactment of this Act, prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas, reviewing and making recommendation in respect of access to social welfare services, supports and payments, including but not limited to jobseekers, disability and parental payments for those who are regarded as homeless; including those without a fixed address.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

11. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“**28.** The Minister shall, within eight months of the enactment of this Act, prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas, with recommendations to improve social welfare supports for carers, including a consideration of:

- (a) potential exclusion of carer payments in respect of qualification for the working family payment;
- (b) hours that a carer can work or study while qualifying for a carer’s payment; and
- (c) replacement and updating of the Mobility Allowance and Motorised Transport Grant.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

12. In page 17, between lines 18 and 19, to insert the following:

“**28.** The Minister shall, within three months of the enactment of this Act, prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas, to consider the potential extension of entitlement to Child Benefit to the children of parents currently in direct provision.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

NEW SECTION

13. In page 18, after line 18, to insert the following:

“**30.** For a period of six months following the enactment of this Act, the Minister shall provide an alternate means by which an individual can satisfy the Minister as to their identity without application for a public services card or having their information added to a single customer view dataset.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

14. In page 18, after line 18, to insert the following:

“**30.** Following the enactment of this Act and the expiry of the current contract for the production of the public services card, the Minister shall suspend any further

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development and roll-out of the Public Services Card, pending a review of relevant policies with the aim of satisfying the concerns outlined in the Data Protection Commission’s investigation report on the Public Services Card.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

15. In page 18, after line 18, to insert the following:

“30. The Minister shall, within three months of the enactment of this Act, ensure that no documents or information which have been collected for the purpose of identity authentication in the context of a SAFE 2 registration shall be retained, other than an applicant’s signature and photograph.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*