



SEANAD ÉIREANN

**AN BILLE LEASA SHÓISIALAIGH, 2021
SOCIAL WELFARE BILL 2021**

**LEASUITHE COISTE
COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS**

SEANAD ÉIREANN

AN BILLE LEASA SHÓISIALAIGH, 2021 —AN COISTE

SOCIAL WELFARE BILL 2021 —COMMITTEE STAGE

Leasuithe Amendments

**Government amendments are denoted by an asterisk*

SECTION 8

1. In page 6, between lines 31 and 32, to insert the following:

“Report on Parent’s Benefit for one-parent families

8. The Minister shall, within nine months of the passing of this Act, prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas on the potential extension of entitlement for the full duration of Parent’s Benefit for one-parent families, to include a consideration of the public duty on equality and human rights and the rights of the child.”.

—Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.

SECTION 9

2. In page 7, between lines 6 and 7, to insert the following:

“Report on extending availability of full Parent’s Benefit to lone parents

9. The Minister shall prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas on extending the availability of the full duration of Parent’s Benefit to lone parents to examine the effect that enabling all children to equally avail of the full duration of this Benefit would have and that the report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection within nine months of the passing of this Act.”.

—Senators Lynn Boylan, Paul Gavan, Niall Ó Donnghaile, Fintan Warfield.

SECTION 10

3. In page 7, between lines 12 and 13, to insert the following:

“Report on Parental Bereavement Leave and Benefit

10. The Minister shall prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas on the introduction of Parental Bereavement Leave and Benefit for parents who lose a child under the age of 18 and explore the establishment of a statutory entitlement to two weeks leave and benefit paid at the same rate as Parent’s Benefit and that the report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection within six months of

[SECTION 10]

the passing of this Act.”.

—*Senators Lynn Boylan, Paul Gavan, Niall Ó Donnghaile, Fintan Warfield.*

SECTION 14

4. In page 8, between lines 15 and 16, to insert the following:

“Report on the means-testing for Blind Pension and Disability Allowance

14. The Minister shall prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas on the means-testing eligibility requirement for Blind Pension and Disability Allowance and the impact that income threshold limitations have on access to these schemes and that the report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection within nine months of the passing of this Act.”.

—*Senators Lynn Boylan, Paul Gavan, Niall Ó Donnghaile, Fintan Warfield.*

SECTION 16

5. In page 9, between lines 21 and 22, to insert the following:

“Report on rates based on Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL)

16. The Minister shall carry out a review on introducing social welfare rates which are benchmarked to the Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL) to study the effect that adequacy of social welfare rates could have on addressing poverty levels and that the report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection ahead of Budget 2023.”.

—*Senators Lynn Boylan, Paul Gavan, Niall Ó Donnghaile, Fintan Warfield.*

SECTION 24

6. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“Report on the current criteria for Widow’s, Widower’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Pension

24. The Minister shall review the current criteria in order to qualify for a Widow’s, Widower’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Pension, including the Non-Contributory and Contributory payments, specifically the marriage requirement and explore removing this clause to acknowledge long term partnerships and dependent children and that the report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection within nine months of the passing of this Act.”.

—*Senators Lynn Boylan, Paul Gavan, Niall Ó Donnghaile, Fintan Warfield.*

7. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“Report on employment services available to those in receipt of social welfare payments

24. The Minister shall prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas on employment services which are available to individuals in receipt of social welfare payments and who are seeking employment. The report will set out the provision of a

[SECTION 24]

model of client centred employment services available to those who are in receipt of the social welfare payments listed in this Act. The report shall be presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection within six months of the passing of this Act.”.

—*Senators Lynn Boylan, Paul Gavan, Niall Ó Donnghaile, Fintan Warfield.*

8. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“PART 3

REPORTS

Report on pension inequality

24. The Minister shall, within six months of the passing of this Act, lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas to include:

- (a) an analysis of the impacts of previous changes to contributory requirements for the State Contributory Pension in terms of the numbers of persons within each band and the comparative financial impact on each gender;
- (b) a gender analysis of the potential impacts of introduction of a Total Contributory Approach, including a consideration of the comparative impacts of—
 - (i) a 30 year contributory requirement, and
 - (ii) a 40 year contributory requirement;
- (c) an estimate of the proportion of persons of each gender likely to be on a reduced rate rather than a full rate contributory pension under of—
 - (i) a 30 year contributory requirement, and
 - (ii) a 40 year contributory requirement;
- (d) a comparison of the likely estimated annual public expenditure on a contributory pension based on—
 - (i) a 30 year contributory requirement, and
 - (ii) a 40 year contributory requirement;
- (e) an estimation of the likely estimated annual cost of a universal pension;
- (f) proposals for how an additional €2 billion per annum might most effectively be deployed to address issues of gender inequality within the pension system; and
- (g) policy options to address the specific gendered pension inequality experienced by women born before 1946.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

[SECTION 24]

9. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“PART 3

REPORTS

Report on one-parent family payment

24. The Minister shall, within six months of the passing of this Act, lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas providing an assessment of how the income disregard in respect of the one-parent family payment intersects with the rising cost of living, with due regard to the Vincentian minimum essential standard of living.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

10. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“PART 3

REPORTS

Review of storage of data

24. The Minister shall, within six months of the passing of this Act, lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas reviewing, in light of the Data Protection Commissioner report in the Public Service Card—

- (a) the storage and security arrangements in respect of personal data provided by individuals in respect of the Public Service Card, including such measures as may be currently in place or planned in respect of the single customer view data set, access to and use of that data set and the separate and secure storage of special categories of personal data including biometric data, and
- (b) an outline of the Department’s plans in relation to the deletion of inappropriately obtained or held data.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

11. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“PART 3

REPORTS

Report on continued equal quality of access to public employment services

24. The Minister shall prepare and lay a report before both Houses of the Oireachtas on ensuring continued access, on a self-referral basis, to public employment services as they

[SECTION 24]

currently do, regardless of provider or changes to the structure or model employment services and notwithstanding eligibility to other Departmental schemes.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

12. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“PART 3

REPORTS

Report on bogus self-employment

24. The Minister shall, within six months of the passing of this Act—

- (a) conduct a review to identify cases which may, over the last twenty years, have been affected by test case decisions in relation to the determination of their employee status, and
- (b) set out proposals for how persons affected by such test cases might be given a right to a new appeal in respect of the determination received.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

13. In page 16, after line 31, to insert the following:

“Report on cost of disability

24. Within six months of the passing of this Act, the Minister shall publish a report outlining proposed actions in response to the findings of the INDECON report on the cost of disability and proposed timelines in respect of such actions.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*

NEW SECTION

14. In page 17, after line 6, to insert the following:

“PART 4

REQUESTS FOR TENDER IN RESPECT OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Moratorium on tendering

25. Requests for tenders in respect of Public and Regional Employment Services shall not be made until a review has been conducted outlining—

- (a) the contribution made by local employment services to communities across Ireland,
- (b) the arrangements which have pertained to date between the Department and the Local Employment Services in respect of the provision of services, and

[NEW SECTION]

- (c) the options and flexibilities within EU procurement directives in respect of the continued provision of services by Local Employment Services.”.

—*Senator Alice-Mary Higgins.*