



An Bille um Fhoréigean Baile (Scéim Saorthaistil), 2025
Domestic Violence (Free Travel Scheme) Bill 2025

Mar a tionscnaíodh

As initiated



AN BILLE UM FHORÉIGEAN BAILE (SCÉIM SAORTHAISTIL), 2025
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (FREE TRAVEL SCHEME) BILL 2025

Mar a tionscnaíodh

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ACT REFERRED TO

Local Government Act 2001 (No. 37)



AN BILLE UM FHORÉIGEAN BAILE (SCÉIM SAORTHAISTIL), 2025
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (FREE TRAVEL SCHEME) BILL 2025

Bill

entitled

An Act to establish a free travel scheme for victims fleeing domestic violence; and to provide for related matters. 5

Be it enacted by the Oireachtas as follows:

Duty to establish and operate free travel scheme for victims fleeing domestic violence

1. (1) The Minister for Social Protection shall establish and operate a scheme which provides free travel to victims of domestic violence who— 10
- (a) are fleeing, or have recently fled, domestic violence, and
 - (b) are in need of a travel pass—
 - (i) in order to flee domestic violence, or
 - (ii) in the period immediately after fleeing domestic violence.
- (2) The scheme shall provide— 15
- (a) for a card or pass issued under the scheme to be valid for 3 months beginning with the day on which it is issued (subject to extension in exceptional circumstances by up to a further 3 months),
 - (b) for free travel on the same transport services and at the same times as under the Free Travel Scheme, 20
 - (c) for assessments of whether a person qualifies for free travel under the scheme (and assessments of whether exceptional circumstances justify extending the validity of a pass or card issued under the scheme) to be carried out by bodies or organisations approved for this purpose by the Minister for Social Protection after having consulted Cuan, 25
 - (d) for such assessments, so far as is possible, to rely upon or be conducted at the same time as any other assessment conducted by one of the approved bodies or organisations for the purpose of determining whether a person is a victim of domestic violence and the person's needs,
 - (e) for the Department of Social Protection to issue a card or pass under the scheme as soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving an assessment from an approved body or organisation assessing a person as qualifying for free travel 30

under the scheme, unless the Department has reason to suspect fraud or misuse,

- (f) for a card or pass issued under the scheme to be available in the same forms available under the Free Travel Scheme,
- (g) for a card or pass issued under the scheme to be indistinguishable from a card or pass issued under the Free Travel Scheme (and for it not to otherwise identify the reason it was issued), 5
- (h) for information about the scheme to be in plain language and published in Irish, English and the 10 other most commonly spoken languages in Ireland.

(3) In this section—

“Cuan” means An Ghníomhaireacht um Fhoréigean Baile, Gnéasach agus Inscnebhunaithe; 10

“Free Travel Scheme” means the Free Travel Scheme operated by the Department of Social Protection;

“victim of domestic violence” includes a dependant of a victim of domestic violence (including any adult cared for by a victim of domestic violence). 15

Annual report on operation of scheme

2. (1) The Minister for Social Protection shall publish a report, and lay it before each House of the Oireachtas, after the end of each year that the scheme established under *section 1* is operational.

(2) A report under *subsection (1)* shall include— 20

- (a) the number of cards or passes issued under the scheme in the scheme year to which the report relates (including the number issued to persons residing in each administrative area),
- (b) a summary of feedback on the scheme received by the Department of Social Protection from approved bodies and organisations, operators of transport services and victims of domestic violence during the scheme year to which the report relates, and 25
- (c) the Minister for Social Protection’s assessment of the effectiveness of the scheme and the action (if any) that the Minister intends to take to make the scheme more effective. 30

(3) In this section—

“administrative area” has the meaning given to it by section 2 of the Local Government Act 2001;

“approved bodies and organisations” means bodies and organisations approved as referred to in *section 1(2)(c)*; 35

“victim of domestic violence” has the same meaning as in *section 1*.

Short title and commencement

3. (1) This Act may be cited as the Domestic Violence (Free Travel Scheme) Act 2025.

(2) This Act comes into operation on the date of its passing.

An Bille um Fhoréigean Baile (Scéim
Saorthaistil), 2025

BILLE

(mar a tionscnaíodh)

dá ngairtear

Acht do bhunú scéim saorthaistil le haghaidh
íospartaigh atá ag teitheadh ó fhoréigean baile;
agus do dhéanamh socrú i dtaobh nithe
gaolmhara.

*Na Seanadóirí Patricia Stephenson, Laura Harmon,
Nessa Cosgrove agus Maolcholm Ó Nuadain a thug
isteach,*

14 Deireadh Fómhair, 2025

Domestic Violence (Free Travel Scheme)
Bill 2025

BILL

(as initiated)

entitled

An Act to establish a free travel scheme for victims
fleeing domestic violence; and to provide for
related matters.

*Introduced by Senators Patricia Stephenson, Laura
Harmon, Nessa Cosgrove and Malcolm Noonan,*

14th October, 2025

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