

Information on the Parliamentary Standard Allowance and End of Year Statement 2020

Summary

The End of Year Statement is a record of the total Parliamentary Standard Allowance (PSA) paid to Members. The period being reported on is –

Dáil	Seanad
8 February to 31 December 2020	30 March (or 27 June for nominated Senators) to 31 December 2020

The dates above are the election dates for each House.

The PSA is an annual allowance paid monthly to Members and is made up of two separate allowances, Travel and Accommodation (TAA) and Public Representation Allowance (PRA). TAA is paid to TDs and Senators only while PRA is paid to TDs, Senators and Ministers. The PSA provides that at the end of each relevant period (normally, a calendar year) Members certify the amount they spent.

The statements detail the final reconciled payments to Members at applicable rates for the period that they were a TD, Senator or Minister within that relevant period.

Travel and Accommodation Allowance

The Travel and Accommodation Allowance (TAA) is based on the distance to Leinster House from the Member's normal place of residence. In a non-election year, payment is verified by attendance in Leinster House for 120 days annually. Members must repay 1% of the allowance for each day less than the required number. Members may also voluntarily repay any amount of TAA.

The required amounts of attendance for the relevant period for both Houses are as follows:

Member Category	Required Attendances	From	To
TD (including Leas Ceann Comhairle)	108	8 February	31 December
Elected Senator (including Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach)	91	30 March	31 December
Nominated Senator	62	27 June	31 December
Minister Prior to Formation of Government	61	28 June	31 December
Minister following Formation of Government (having been a TD)	46	8 February	26 June

Minister of State following Formation of Government (having been a TD)	47	8 February	30 June
Minister following Formation of Government (having been a Senator)	29	30 March	26 June

Members received prorated amounts of TAA, based on their election or nomination date.

In this period, **66** Members did not achieve their full attendance. Refunds of **€105,674.13** have been received from Members who did not achieve their full attendance. A total of **€8,857.82** was repaid under the Travel and Accommodation Allowance on a voluntary basis by **5** Members. The Total Travel and Accommodation Allowance refund was **€114,531.95**.

In this period, **16** Members opted to waive some or all of their Travel and Accommodation Allowance.

Public Representation Allowance

The Public Representation Allowance (PRA) covers expenses such as office and other associated costs as specified in the Regulations. In the relevant period of 2020, Members nominated to be paid either the prorated maximum vouched allowance or a lower amount, also fully vouched.

Members receiving this allowance must repay any unexpended amounts. Members who incurred less expenditure than the allowance they received repay the unspent balance.

Members who chose to be paid an amount less than the maximum of this allowance, but had a higher expenditure, may seek an additional payment to cover the extra expenditure. The total of the additional amount and the initial payment cannot exceed the maximum of the allowance.

House	Relevant Period
Dáil	8 February 2020 to 31 December 2020
Seanad	30 March 2020 (or 27 June 2020 for nominated Senators) to 31 December 2020

72 Members repaid amounts to the Houses of the Oireachtas Service totaling **€260,496.86**.

No Member claimed additional funds in 2020.

In this period, **7** Members opted to waive some or all of their Public Representation Allowance.

All Members who were paid any amount of PRA are eligible for audit. The audit process of the 2020 PRA will be conducted by independent auditors. Members are responsible for retaining all receipts and vouchers for a period of five years for inspection under audit. At least 10% of Members may be audited each year. Members are selected for audit, on a random basis, by an independent auditor.

The independent audit for the payments of PRA in 2019 should commence in Q4 2020. The draft audit report should be ready for presentation to the Management Board and Audit Committee and thereafter the revised PRA Guidelines to the Commission in late 2020 or early 2021.

Additional Information

The Oireachtas (Allowances and Facilities) Regulations, 2010 (SI 84 of 2010) and the Oireachtas (Allowances and Facilities) Regulations, 2013 (SI 149 of 2013) set out the provisions of the Parliamentary Standard Allowance (PSA). The applicable amounts were amended in the Oireachtas (Allowances and Facilities) Regulations, 2013 (SI 149 of 2013)

The Parliamentary Standard Allowance has two elements:

1. Travel and Accommodation Allowance (TAA)
2. Public Representation Allowance (PRA)

Both Allowances are paid together in a single monthly sum, in arrears. The expenses system is such that the annual PSA is paid monthly, and adjustments are made at the end of the financial year. Such adjustments are necessary due to a range of generic reasons such as;

- Recording attendance for less than the required number of days for the full payment of the TAA and repaying the 1% paid as required under the Regulations,
- Certifying expenditure of a lower amount than was received in expenses for travel and accommodation
- Choosing an amount of PRA at the start of the year and certifying less than that amount in expenses where expenses are lower than the allowance received.

The TAA covers the costs of travel to and from Leinster House, accommodation where applicable and, for TDs, travel. The Allowance is based on twelve bands depending on the distance to Leinster House from the Members normal place of residence by the shortest practicable route. It also includes a fixed accommodation allowance. This Allowance does not apply to Ministers or Ministers of State. Members are paid the same amount, at the band rate applicable to a TD or Senator for the period they were a TD or Senator. Changes to the band are made where Members notify the Service of a change in distance from Leinster House or waive any particular amounts of the allowance.

Payment of this Allowance is verified by attendance at Leinster House and these records are published on the website on a monthly basis. Members must attend a minimum of 120 days annually to receive full payment of the TAA (i.e. 80% of a maximum of 150 days). Members who did not reach this number of attendances have to repay 1% of the amount of the allowance paid for each day below the required number of 120 days. In election years, prorated amounts apply.

The PRA is payable to all TDs, Ministers and Senators at rates applicable to each office. Members may have opted for either the maximum of the allowance or a lower amount. Members were paid the same amount for the period they held office at the relevant rates.

At the end of each period, Members must certify that the amounts they received were applied in respect of expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as a Member.