

Carer's Allowance or Carer's Benefit?



The names are similar, but the routes are different. Use this check to identify which payment to examine first.

Republic of Ireland only | Last reviewed: 18 July 2026

Quick comparison

Label	Allowance	Benefit
Best starting point	The carer is on a low income	The carer is leaving work or reducing hours and has enough PRSI
Payment type	Means-tested social assistance	PRSI-based social insurance payment
Minimum age	18	16
Work, study, training or voluntary activity	No more than 18.5 hours a week	No more than 18.5 hours a week
Duration	While all conditions continue to be met	Up to 104 weeks for each person receiving care
Current maximum personal rate	Under 66: EUR 270 a week. Age 66 and over: EUR 308 a week	One person: EUR 271 a week. Two or more: EUR 406.50 a week
Apply	MyWelfare or the current CR1 form	Current CARB1 form; apply at least six weeks before leaving work
Tax	May be liable to income tax from 1 January 2026	May be liable to income tax from 1 January 2026

Quick decision

- ☐ Recently employed or self-employed with enough PRSI? Check Carer's Benefit first.
- ☐ No qualifying PRSI record, or unsure? Check Carer's Allowance.
- ☐ From July 2026, the Carer's Allowance weekly income disregard is EUR 1,000 for a single person and EUR 2,000 for a couple. These are disregards, not simple gross-income limits.
- ☐ DSP's published July 2026 change states a net weekly earnings limit of up to EUR 1,000 for Carer's Benefit. Confirm the effective date and current limit before changing work arrangements.

Useful points

- ☐ Both schemes require the person to need full-time care and attention under Department rules.
- ☐ An employee may qualify for statutory Carer's Leave without qualifying for either payment.
- ☐ A person receiving another qualifying social welfare payment may be able to receive half-rate Carer's Allowance.
- ☐ People receiving Carer's Allowance or Carer's Benefit at the relevant date normally receive the annual Carer's Support Grant automatically.
- ☐ A person receiving either payment, at full or half rate, can register for a Carers GP Visit Card.
- ☐ Confirm eligibility with the Department before changing work or another payment.

Your next step

If the answer is not obvious, that is normal. Start with MyWelfare or contact the relevant carers section.

Sources checked 18 July 2026: [Department of Social Protection - Carer's Allowance](#) | [Department of Social Protection - Carer's Benefit](#)
| [Department of Social Protection - Budget 2026](#) | [Department of Social Protection - Taxable social welfare payments](#)

Republic of Ireland guidance only. This is general information, not medical, legal or financial advice. Schemes, rates and eligibility rules can change. Check the linked official source before applying or changing an existing arrangement.