

## How to apply?

### 1. Get an application form

They are available at your local health office or community welfare office, at Cairde.

You can also find it online at [www.medicalcard.ie](http://www.medicalcard.ie)

### 2. Fill out all the application form:

You can fill it out on [www.medicalcard.ie](http://www.medicalcard.ie) and then print it out to speed up the application process.

If you are getting social welfare you must bring the application to the Social Welfare Local Office to be stamped.

If you are working you must include information about your wages (a copy of a P60 form, a recent wage slip, a social welfare payment receipt, or a Tax Assess-

### 3. Bring the form to a GP you wish to visit.

If the doctor agrees to have you as a patient, he/she will sign the form.

If 3 doctors will not take you as a patient, call the HSE and they will give you a temporary GP

### 4. Send the application and copies of all the documents to your local health office.

If you send it by the Registered Post HSE will send you a text message with your Reference Number.

## Waiting and Decision

- You will get a decision anywhere from few weeks to a few months after you send it in.
- When you receive the Reference Number you can check the status of your application on [www.medicalcard.ie](http://www.medicalcard.ie).
- If you apply online - [www.medicalcard.ie](http://www.medicalcard.ie)—you will get the decision quicker.
- When you get a letter stating that you are entitled to free or subsidized medical care, you can already bring it with you to a hospital/GP.
- Finally, HSE will send you the actual plastic medical card.

## What to do if I am not given a medical card/GP visit card?

Ask your local Medical Card section to **review** your application. Draw attention to any change in circumstances since you made your original application. You can also **appeal** in The Appeals Office. Cairde can help you with reviews and appeals.

#### Related subjects:

- Drug payment scheme
- Long-term illness scheme
- Tax Relief
- European Health Insurance Card

#### Health Information and Advocacy Centre

HIAC provides relevant, accurate and culturally appropriate health information to individuals and groups of ethnic minority communities in accessing and using health services.

19 Belvedere Place,  
Dublin 1  
Tel: 01 8552111  
Fax: 01 8558920  
[www.cairde.ie](http://www.cairde.ie)  
[www.healthfacts.ie](http://www.healthfacts.ie)

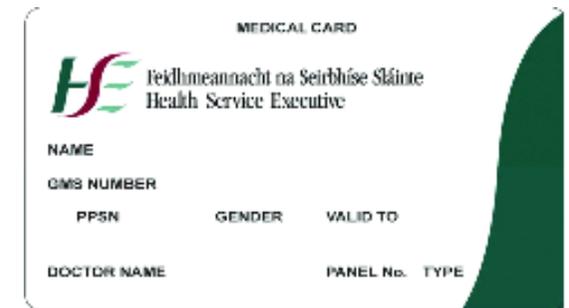
Mon., Tues., Thu, Fri. 10am 5pm  
Weds. 2-5pm



## MEDICAL CARD

A Medical Card and a GP visit card allows you and your family to get certain health services free of charge if you cannot afford to pay for your health care. A medical card normally covers you—the card holder, your spouse and children under 16 or children who are full-time students aged 16-25 and financially dependent on you.

Medical Card and a GP visit card are given by the Health Service Executive (HSE).



## What does a medical card cover?

- Visits to your General Practitioner (family doctor)
- Services and treatment in public hospitals
- Prescription medicines: any of the approved prescribed medicines or aids (50 cent per item—not more than €10 per family per month)
- Maternity services
- Some dental, eye, or ear services
- And other select personal and social services

## Am I entitled to get a Medical Card?

Everyone who is **ordinarily resident** in Ireland can apply for a medical card.

*Ordinarily resident - someone who has lived or intends to live in Ireland for one year or more and who has legal status in the country (refugees, people seeking asylum, leave to remain, migrant workers, students, and non-EU members and EU citizens).*

In order for the HSE to approve you a card, you will have to pass a **means test**. A means test is a way of checking how much money you and your spouse or partner has to spend each week .

The HSE will check your income and how much money you spend on your rent or mortgage, loans, travel costs for work or school and childcare costs.

They also look at the general **health** of you and your family. For example if you need to see a doctor a lot or receive medicine everyday.

*If the HSE decides you are below the income limit, you will be given a medical card.*

### GP visit card

If you are above the limit but below the second limit, you will be given a GP visit card.

A GP only visit card allows you to visit you doctor for free and also covers in-patient and out-patient public hospital services, but sometimes there are some other hospital charges that you have to pay.

**You must provide proper proof of all information.**

*Even if your income is above the means guidelines, you can still get a medical card.*

## The weekly income limits

Category	Medical Card		GP Visit Card	
	Aged under 66	Aged 66-69	Aged under 66	Aged 66-69
Single person living alone	€184	€201.50	€276	€302
Single person living with family	€164	€173.50	€246	€260
Married couple/lone-parent with dependent children	€266.50	€298	€400	€447
Allowance for each of first 2 children aged under 16	€38	€38	€57	€57
Allowance for 3rd and each subsequent child under 16	€41	€41	€61.50	€61.50
Allowance for each of first 2 children aged over 16 (with no income)	€39	€39	€58.50	€58.50
Allowance for 3rd and each subsequent child over 16 (no income)	€42.50	€42.50	€64	€64

*Outgoing expenses are very important in medical card decisions. Make sure you include proof of childcare, rent / mortgage, and travel to work costs.*

## Where can I use my medical card?

Your medical card can only be used in Ireland.

*If you are going to another EU or EEA member state for a temporary stay you should apply for a **European Health Insurance Card** which is known as EHIC. The EHIC entitles Irish residents to access health services in any EU country and in Switzerland, Iceland and Norway, if they become ill or injured while on a temporary stay in that country.*

## What happens to my medical card if I move to another area in Ireland?

HSE is divided to different administrative areas. For example, if you live in Tallaght and then decide to move to Blanchardstown, **you must re-apply** for a new medical card with a new doctor's acceptance form.

The existing medical card remains valid for three months. To avail of services during those three months, you should make arrangements with the Local Health Office in the new area.

## What to do when medical card expires?

Some medical cards are issued for a limited period, normally for one year. The expiry date is shown on the card.

In general, the HSE will send you a new form to fill, to see if you are still entitled to a card. Once it is approved, you will get a new medical card.

You will not be asked to find a new doctor.

