

Temporary Appendix to the National Assessment Guidelines for Medical Card and GP Visit Cards to apply during the Covid-19 Pandemic

This document provides details in relation to the processes that the National Medical Card Unit will follow when assessing eligibility for Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

This document should be read in conjunction with the National Assessment Guidelines for Medical Card and GP Visit Cards <https://www2.hse.ie/file-library/medical-cards/medical-cards-national-assessment-guidelines.pdf>

What is the quickest way to get a Medical Card or GP Visit Card?

The quickest way to get a Medical Card or GP visit card is to apply online at www.mymedicalcard.ie

At times during the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, the National Medical Card Unit may have fewer staff available than usual to assess Medical Card or GP Visit Card applications. This could be due to illness or because it is supporting other Covid-19 related work.

If you apply for a Medical Card or GP Visit Card online you will assist us in processing your application in as timely a fashion as possible and you will also enable us to continue to support other Covid-19 responses.

How will the National Medical Card Unit assess my Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment in my Medical Card or GP Visit Card application?

The Covid-19 Pandemic unemployment payment is a payment in place for the duration of the Covid-19 crisis. The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection regards the payment as equivalent to employment income.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/be74d3-covid-19-pandemic-unemployment-payment/>

The National Medical Card Unit will regard the COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment as employment income in your means test. You should include the payment in the jobseekers allowance income box.

The National Medical Card Unit can check payments awarded by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. You do not need to provide any documentation in your application in relation to your Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment.

How will the National Medical Card Unit assess my Covid-19 Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme during my Medical Card or GP Visit Card application?

The Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme is available to certain employers to keep employees on the payroll throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The subsidy will be paid directly to employers and not employees.

Employees supported under the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme will continue to receive a payslip from their employer. This will include details of the amounts they are being paid. This income will be means assessed in your medical card application. Please provide a copy of your last payslip by selecting wages in the income section.

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/corporate/communications/covid19/temporary-covid-19-wage-subsidy-scheme.aspx>

How will Childcare expenses be assessed?

Childcare expenses currently being paid will be allowed in your assessment. Please provide evidence such as a bank statement confirming the last three payments.

I recently applied and did not qualify for a Medical Card or GP Visit Card. My circumstances have changed since that application. Can I apply again for a Medical Card or GP Visit Card?

Eligibility assessments are carried out at a point in time and all eligibility decisions are made after consideration of your circumstances at that point in time.

If your circumstances have changed and you believe you may now be eligible for a Medical Card or GP Visit Card you should submit a new application.

The National Medical Card Unit will assess your eligibility on the basis of your changed circumstances. The best way to apply is online at www.mymedicalcard.ie

My Medical Card or GP Visit Card will reach its expiry date in the near future. What will happen to my Medical Card or GP Visit Card during the Covid-19 Pandemic?

The HSE has decided it will extend eligibility automatically for **up to** one year for existing cards which fall due to expire during the Covid-19 pandemic.

You do not need to write to or contact the National Medical Card Unit. We will send you a letter of confirmation with your extended Medical Card or GP Visit Card.

Medical cards or GP Visit Cards extended in these circumstances will be re-assessed when the Covid-19 pandemic is over. The National Medical Card Unit will write to the holders of these cards when we are about to commence those assessments (after the Covid-19 pandemic is over).

I am in receipt of an illness benefit or maternity leave payment from The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

The application form and online process requests that an applicant must provide evidence from employers to verify if they are also in receipt of a wage payment.

Some employers are temporarily closed and unavailable due to the Covid-19 crisis. During the Covid-19 crisis, the National Medical Card Unit will not require evidence from employers when an applicant confirms that their employer is temporarily closed and unavailable due to Covid-19.

The National Medical Card Unit reserves the right to undertake any reasonable verification process if concerns arise in relation to any such confirmation.

You or your child are attending school or third level college, the application process is requesting a school or college stamp.

Due to school and college closures, the provision of a school or college stamp will not be required for the duration of such closures during the Covid-19 crisis.

My income is above the qualifying financial threshold but I have additional costs related to medical and other health needs. I would like those costs considered. Do I require a medical report to have those costs assessed on medical or discretionary grounds?

If you apply for a discretionary card, medical officers will assess your application to see whether they think you should have Medical Card or GP Visit Card.

A medical report is required to complete the assessment and to enable the medical officers to have all the information they require to make the necessary recommendation for a discretionary card.

The application form requests that I ask my Doctor to sign to accept me on to their panel. My Doctor is unavailable because of the Covid-19 crisis. What should I do?

If you apply online through www.mymedicalcard.ie our online functionality will contact the Doctor electronically and request the Doctors acceptance.

If you wish to apply manually and have had a Medical or GP Visit card within the last six months please note on the form that you are happy to be placed on the same Doctor's panel as your previous eligibility.

If you wish to be placed on a different Doctor's panel but cannot contact that doctor please apply online through www.mymedicalcard.ie. Our online functionality will contact that Doctor electronically and request the Doctors acceptance.

If you have not had a Medical Card or GP Visit Card in the last six months please apply online through www.mymedicalcard.ie. Our online functionality will contact the GP electronically and request GP acceptance.