

From: Jacqui McCrum
Sent: 23 March 2020 18:55
To: Rónán Hession
Subject: FW: Joe.ie article

Rónán

I spoke to SG and you are correct his intention is that number 5 in the circular – Daily Allowance recipients do not receive the PUP

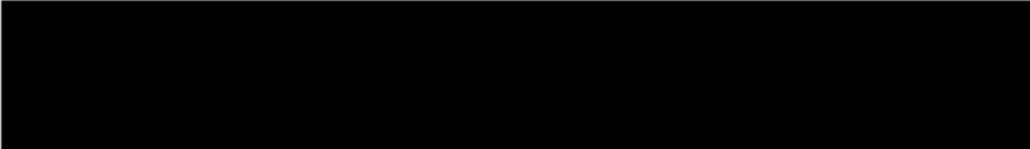
I suggested to him that we should contact the Dept of Justice to make them aware of our decision in this area and he agreed

Can you look after this ?

Thanks

Jacqui

Jacqui Mc Crum
Deputy Secretary General
Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
Goldsmith House
Pearse Street
Dublin 2
D02 YY17
IRELAND



the Regulation of

Lobbying Act 2015

From: Kevin Ingoldsby
Sent: 20 March 2020 18:31
To: Veronica Scanlan; Se Goulding; Niall Egan; Jackie Harrington; Des Henry; Mary Pracht; Jacqui McCrum; John McKeon
Cc: Grace Whittle; Alex Connolly
Subject: Joe.ie article

Hi all,

Please see below article for information.

Regards,

Kevin



Direct Provision jobless unable to claim Pandemic Unemployment Payment

"It's very clear that the virus doesn't discriminate, but the humans are. We need to fix this."

The Refugee Council of Ireland and Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland (MASI) have condemned the news that people living in Direct Provision who have lost their jobs due to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis will not be eligible for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment introduced recently.

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection describe the payment as "available to all employees and the self-employed who have lost employment due to a downturn in economic activity caused by the Covid-19 pandemic". However, the Refugee Council of Ireland told JOE today that those in Direct Provision cannot avail of the payment.

Speaking to JOE, Nick Henderson of the Refugee Council of Ireland explained that they "understand the reason people who have lost work because of Covid-19 and are living in Direct Provision are not entitled to this payment is because they are deemed to be in receipt of a social welfare payment: the Direct Provision daily expenses allowance".

"This is deeply disappointing, regardless of whether this is a technicality," Henderson said.

"This payment would provide some assistance to people and families as they adjust to unemployment. There is also an ethical point: we are all in this together and that this must mean these types of payments are available to all people that are affected by this ongoing crisis."

There are approximately 6,000 people living in Direct Provision in Ireland, and Evgeny Shtorn of MASI explained to JOE how preventing residents from availing of the payment will put lives at risk.

"Basically, people are losing the capacity to buy the basic hygiene products, which would be of a huge urgency in this situation," he said.

"These people have always been discriminated (against), with a very limited right to work and other things that are imposing them from protecting themselves and their loved ones, and now they are again segregated and put in the second category of people, which is absolutely unnecessary. Especially on the face of the crisis, which affects the health and I think it's just absolutely unacceptable."

MASI issued an open letter to Charlie Flanagan, Minister for Justice and Equality, on Wednesday of this week calling for immediate emergency measures to be put in place for people in Direct Provision to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Evgeny explained the reasoning behind the open letter, saying: "We submitted an open letter to the Minister asking for him to provide an immediate relocation for people from the vulnerable groups and the elderly, because if they wish to be protected and self-isolated, we need to do everything to be sure that they have this ability.

"It can be only beneficial for the health system, for people at risk, for everyone... And we cannot exclude anyone else who is at risk. Those who are homeless, in the homeless hubs, it all needs to be addressed as a general measure. It's very clear that the virus doesn't discriminate, but the humans are. We need to fix this."

Both The Refugee Council and MASI noted that they were still unsure whether or not people in Direct Provision had been deliberately excluded from the scheme or whether it was on oversight.

Evgeny Thorn says that, regardless, action needs to be taken on a variety of issues.

"People have to share canteens and showers," he said.

"The managers are not allowing them bring food to their bedrooms, so they are eating altogether in the common canteens, which is again putting them at an additional risk... If it's not articulated and addressed, we might have a very serious problem there. We need to be very quick in acting."

The Refugee Council have also indicated their intention to seek clarification from the Department.

"We will be raising this with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and requesting that the payment is available to people in Direct Provision, who were working and lost their job due to the COVID-19 crisis," said Nick Henderson.

JOE contacted the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection for comment, but had not received any reply by the time of publication