**INFORMATION NOTE ON POSSIBLE BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS**

As our members will be aware, most State schemes are complex and change from time to time. The following is a very rough outline of benefits to be aware of. The detailed information can be obtained from the relevant Government Department and/or the Government website ([www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)) and/or your local Citizens Information Centre /or their website [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie). Some benefits need to be applied for; some may be awarded automatically in certain circumstances. It is better to assume that an application is needed.

**Social Welfare Benefits**

Widow’s / Widower’s /Surviving Civil Partner Pension

If your spouse or civil partner dies, you may be entitled to a Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's Pension from the Department of Social Protection, based on either your contributions or the contributions of your late spouse or civil partner. The pension can be paid whether a person is working or retired. The pension is separate to any occupational retirement pension you receive in your own right. It is also separate to any occupational survivor’s pension you receive (eg if the deceased person was a member of the Civil Service Spouses and Childrens Scheme). However, if a person is in receipt of a State Pension (ie Old Age Pension), they cannot receive both a State Pension and a Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's Pension.

Free Travel Scheme

Apply when aged 66.

Household Benefits Package

Depending on personal circumstance, a person may qualify at age 66 (or younger). In general, everyone aged 70 or over can qualify, subject to only one package being claimed for each household. Applications can be made online or by mailing in a paper application.

**Other benefits**

Supplementary Pension

If a public servant who is in a co-ordinated pension scheme (usually indicated by paying PRSI at Class A1) retires before the age at which the State Pension is payable, he or she may qualify for a Supplementary Pension under their public service pension scheme. Any queries regarding this should be directed in the first instance to the Department or organisation from which the person is retiring.

Signing On

If a public servant (regardless of their Class PRSI) retires before the State Pension age (currently age 66), it may be necessary for them to register with their local Job Centre in order to preserve their benefits until they reach the State Pension age.

Medical card

The qualifying conditions for people aged over 70 are different to those for people under that age. It is worth checking out your eligibility.

GP card

Everyone over 70 living in Ireland can get a GP visit card.