

Welcome message from our CEO

Welcome to our June Newsletter and another busy month for the Safe Home team.

As part of our outreach work, we regularly travel abroad, primarily to the UK, and this month our two Outreach and Advocacy Officers, Karen and Noreen travelled to London. They carried out home visits to some of our housing applicants. They also visited a number of Irish Welfare Centres, including the [Irish Elderly Advice Network](#), [BIAS Brent](#), [Irish Community Services](#), and [Ashford Place](#) to meet with staff and people who are thinking about returning to Ireland. The staff in the Centres do trojan work connecting and supporting our diaspora and we want to thank them for their generosity and warm welcome for us too.

We continued to connect with colleagues in the US and Canada this month. On 29th May we held a virtual Information Session with the Social Services committee of [Coalition of Immigration Centers](#) (CIIC), US and to outline the work of Safe Home Ireland and general information on 'moving/returning to Ireland'. We also did a Podcast on Moving to Ireland with Tadhg O'Connor, Alberta, Canada, on his '[Tadhg Talks](#)' Podcast series. This was a general conversation on all that is involved in making the move.

Our Chairperson, Nova Fariss, presented to the Interdepartmental Committee on Irish Aboard, chaired by the Minister with Responsibility for International Development and Diaspora Affairs, [Neale Richmond TD](#). We were pleased to highlight some key areas of our current work, including our work supporting and responding to challenges for undocumented Irish in the US and to provide an update on the campaign for Irish/US licence exchange reciprocity. We were pleased to meet so many members from other departments as well as colleagues from the Returning to Ireland Forum, [Crosscare Irish Diaspora Support Project](#), [Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas](#), and [Citizens Information](#)

This month I travelled to Brussels, with one of our Outreach Officers, Karen, for an intensive few days of meetings as part of a European Project that we are partners in. ERMiNe, European Network and Migration Network, focuses specifically on 'returning diaspora' and members are from amazing NGO's in Latvia, Spain, Italy, Germany, Poland and UK and Ireland (ourselves and Crosscare Irish Diaspora Support Project). We also met with and had presentations from a broad range of networks on work across the EU. As part of our work in Brussels, we were also pleased to meet with Denis Buckley and Mary Joe Mullarkey of the Irish in Europe Association, who do amazing work promoting the arts and culture in Brussels. Finally, we visited the [Embassy of Ireland Belgium](#) and met with James O'Brien, Consular Officer, and David Aşgin Walsh, Deputy Head of Mission. It was a great opportunity to talk about Safe Home Ireland's work and to hear about the great work being carried out by the Consular Service supporting our diaspora across Belgium

Finally, we were honoured to be invited by President Michael D. Higgins, to attend one of the final Garden Parties of his Presidency at Áras an Uachtaráin. Members of our Board, Friends of Safe Home Ireland the Returned Emigrants Network attended, and they all had a 'once in a lifetime' experience. Additionally, one of our staff members, Johnny B. Broderick, who is also a poet, was invited as a guest of honour to sit with the President. He wrote a beautiful poem titled '[Music To My Ears](#)' in tribute to President Higgins. The poem, read by Christy Moore and directed by Gavin Murphy, perfectly captures the qualities and attributes of our President both in Ireland and globally.

contact

Office:

098 36036 (from Ireland)

+ 353 98 36036 (from abroad)

Mobile:

+ 353 86 059 4538

(Text/WhatsApp)

Website:

www.safehomeireland.com

Email:

info@safehomeireland.com

Safe Home Ireland,
St. Brendan's Village,
Mulranny, Co. Mayo
F28 A386

Safe Home office hours:

Monday to Thursday:

9.00am to 5.00pm

Friday:

9.00am to 4.00pm

Thinking
of returning or moving to
Ireland?

Get in touch with us!

Safe Home Programme CLG
trading as Safe Home Ireland
Charity No: 20049119
Company Reg No: 351678

follow us



Applying for Irish Citizenship via the Foreign Births Register (FBR) Process

If you were born outside Ireland, and you are not an Irish citizen by birth, you can become an Irish citizen if:

(ii) One of your grandparents was born in Ireland OR

(ii) One of your parents was an Irish citizen at the time of your birth but was not born in Ireland. Your parent may have claimed citizenship through the Foreign Births Register themselves, or become a citizen by naturalisation.

In both these cases, you become an Irish citizen by registering your birth with the Foreign Births Register. Once a person is entered onto the Foreign Births Register they are an Irish citizen and entitled to apply for an Irish passport.

Notes!

- To begin the application process, apply online on the Department of Foreign Affairs website <https://fbr.dfa.ie/finprod/fbr301.xsp?t=1750888842668>
- Application fees (including postage); €278 for adult applications €153 for children
- Processing times are currently 9 months approx.

Documentation you will need for you/your child (if applying on their behalf);

- Original civil birth certificate (showing parent's details)
- Marriage certificate or change of name document (if applicable)
- Certified photocopy of current state-issued identification (passport, drivers licence, national identity card)
- Two proofs of address (not photocopies). If you are applying on behalf of a child, you must also include a letter from the child's school or doctor
- Four photographs
- If you are applying on behalf of a child, but you are not the parent of the child, you must include proof of guardianship

You must also provide documents relating to **the person you are basing your application on**. For example, your parent or grandparent.

In all cases you should send the Irish citizen's:

- Original civil birth certificate
- Original marriage certificate or change of name document (if applicable)
- Certified photocopy of current state-issued identification (passport, drivers licence, national identity card) or certified copy of death certificate if they are deceased

Note! If you are applying because your grandparent was born in Ireland, you will have to include the documents listed above for your Irish citizen parent.

For more information; Contact the Foreign Birth Registration Customer Service Hub via phone or online webchat. **Tel: +353 1 568 3331**

Visit the Department of Foreign Affairs website for full details on the FBR process, including a useful [Frequently Asked Questions section](#)

Applying for your Irish Birth Certificate

You can apply for your birth certificate via the Civil Registration Office or General Register Office. Other certificates (marriage, adoption, civil partnership and death certificate) are also available via these services.

To order a birth certificate for any registered birth, you need to provide the following;

- full birth name on the certificate
- date of birth
- place of birth
- gender
- mother's full birth name
- father's full name, if recorded

Fees: €20 for a full standard birth certificate + Postage; €2 (for within Ireland) €3 for outside of Ireland

Note! You can get a free copy if the certificate is required for social welfare purposes or registering for a public services card. However, you will need a letter from the Department of Social Protection to verify this.

You can apply for your birth certificate in a number of ways;

- **Applying in person;** visit any [Civil Registration Service](#). Some Civil Registration Services have a walk-in service. You may need to phone and book an appointment for others.
- **Applying by post;** You will need to complete the [application form \(pdf\)](#), then post it on to [your local Civil Registration Service](#) or the General Register Office.
- **Applying by phone;** You can order and pay for a certificate by phone in [most Civil Registration Offices](#) around Ireland (**except** Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow). Phone orders are generally processed within 5 working days.
- **Applying via email;** You will need to download the [email application form \(pdf\)](#), fill it in electronically and then email it to: **GROonlinepayments@welfare.ie** The GRO will then revert to you with further guidance.
- **Applying online;** please see link for online applications **HERE**

For more information or to find details of your local Civil Registration /[General Register Office](#)

Telephone: 0818 253070 (within Ireland) Tel: +353 90 6632900 (outside of Ireland)

Email: gro@welfare.ie

Upcoming Changes to Free Travel for Over-70s permanently resident in Ireland

As part of the Budget measures, from 1 September 2025, the Free Travel Scheme in Ireland will be expanded to **automatically** include a companion travel pass for anyone aged 70 or over.

Eligibility:

All Free Travel pass holders aged 70+ will receive the FT+C (Free Travel plus Companion) entitlement. This allows a companion (aged 16 or older) to travel with them for free on public transport.

No Medical Assessment Required: unlike the current system, there will be no need to provide medical evidence or apply separately for the companion pass.

How It Will Be Issued:

- If your current Free Travel Card / Public Services Card (PSC) expires after 31 August 2025, there is no need to do anything, a new card with the companion entitlement **will be automatically** sent to you.
- If your PSC expires before above date, you must renew it (online or make an appointment via an Intreo/social welfare office), once you complete the renewal process, a new card will be issued that includes the FT+C entitlement.

To avail of free travel within Northern Ireland, you must:

- Be aged 66 or over
- Have a Free Travel PSC, and
- Obtain a Senior SmartPass Card

Application forms (FTNI1) for Senior SmartPass Cards are available from local Intreo/Welfare offices

For more information, contact;

Free Travel Section – Department of Social Protection

Phone: + 353 71 915 7100 or 0818 200 400 (Ire)

Email: freetravelqueries@welfare.ie

Contributory Pension Arrangements for Long-Term Carers – Ireland

A new Long-Term Carers Contribution scheme was introduced in Ireland in January 2024 to help long-term carers access the State Pension (Contributory) when they reach pension age.

Under the scheme, anyone who has been a full time carer for at least 20 years (1040 weeks), can get Long-Term Carers Contributions to help them to qualify for the Irish State Pension (Contributory).

Normally, applicants need 520 employment contributions (which is 10 years of work) to qualify for the Irish State Pension (Contributory). However, those who meet the qualifying conditions as long-term carers are not required to have 10 year's contributions **from work.**

Other qualifying criteria (in addition to providing 1,040 weeks of long-term care), applicants must;

- Have lived in Ireland when providing the care
- Have been over 16 years and under pension age when providing care
- Not have been in employment, self-employment, voluntary work, training or education courses for more than 18.5 hours a week
- Not have been getting a weekly social welfare payment when caring, except for Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance or Carer's Support Grant
- Generally, applicants must have lived with the person they were caring for and provided full-time care and attention. In some circumstances, people may qualify if they did not live with the person being cared for, but still provided full-time care and attention

For more information or if you think you may qualify for a pension under this scheme, please contact; Pension Caring Supports Section - Department of Social Protection

Telephone: + 353 1 471 5898 OR 0818 690 690 (from within Ireland)

Email: pensioncaringsupports@welfare.ie