

**THE SOCIAL FUND AND SOCIAL SECURITY (CLAIMS AND PAYMENTS) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2020**

| <b>Contents</b>   | <b>Paragraphs</b> |
|---|-------------------|
| Introduction  | 1                 |
| Social Fund Funeral Payments – change to specific items for a burial            | 2 – 4             |
| Social Fund Cold Weather Payments   | 5                 |
| Electronic claims and communications  | 6-7               |
| Outstanding payments when a State Pension or State Pension Credit claimant dies | 8                 |
| Annotations   |                   |
| Contacts  |                   |

**INTRODUCTION**

- 1 This memo gives guidance on changes introduced by the Social Fund and Social Security (Claims and Payments) Miscellaneous (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 (S.R. 2020 No.148) and by the Social Security (Electronic Communications) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020 (SR 2020 No. 147). The changes take effect from 22.7.20<sup>1</sup>.

*1 SF & SS(C&P)(Amdt) Regs (NI), reg 1; SS (EC)(Amdt) Order (NI) reg 1*

**SOCIAL FUND AND FUNERAL PAYMENTS – CHANGE TO SPECIFIC ITEMS FOR A BURIAL**

- 2 Prior to 22.7.20, the specific items that could be awarded for a burial included
  1. the fees charged for the burial by the authority or person responsible for the provision and maintenance of cemeteries for the area where the burial takes place **or**
  2. the fees levied by a private gravedigger.

- 3 This meant that where a claimant was liable to pay fees charged by a private gravedigger in addition to fees charged by the burial authority or person responsible for the cemetery, the decision maker could only award the higher of the two amounts.
- 4 From 22.7.20 onwards, fees charged by a private gravedigger can be awarded in addition to any fees charged by the burial authority or person responsible for the provision and maintenance of cemeteries<sup>1</sup>.

*1 SFMFE (Gen) Regs (NI) 2005, reg 9(3)(a)(ii)*

## **SOCIAL FUND COLD WEATHER PAYMENTS**

- 5 Prior to 22.7.20, a social fund cold weather payment could be paid to a person who satisfied the prescribed description when a cold weather period was recorded or forecast at an authorised Met Office station. From 22.7.20, the word “station” is replaced by the word “site”, so that a social fund cold weather payment can now be paid to such claimants when a cold weather period is recorded or forecast at a site<sup>1</sup> accredited by the Meteorological Office.

*1 SFCWP (Gen) Regs (NI), reg 1(2); reg 2(1)*

## **ELECTRONIC CLAIMS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- 6 From 22.7.20,
  1. Social Fund Funeral Payments
  2. Sure Start Maternity Grants **and**
  3. Maternity Allowance

are included in the list of benefits that can be claimed electronically<sup>1</sup>.

*1 C&P Regs (NI), reg 4ZC(2)*

- 7 From 22.7.20, the list of benefits for which electronic communications can be made<sup>1</sup> includes
  1. Sure Start Maternity Grants **and**
  2. Maternity Allowance.

*1 C&P Regs (NI), reg 32ZA(2), Sch 8D, para 2(1)*

## **OUTSTANDING PAYMENTS WHEN A STATE PENSION OR STATE PENSION CREDIT CLAIMANT DIES**

- 8 From 22.7.20, when a State Pension or State Pension Credit claimant dies and an executor or administrator has not been appointed, any outstanding payment

of those benefits can be made to a relative or other qualifying person without them needing to make a written application<sup>1</sup>.

*1 C&P Regs (NI), reg 30(4B)*

## **ANNOTATIONS**

Please annotate the number of this Memo (DMG Vol 1/120 & 7/50) against the following DMG paragraphs:

2069 (Heading); 4152; 8353; 39271; 39700 (Heading); Chapter 39 Appendix 1 (Heading); Chapter 39 Appendix 2 (Heading); Volume 1 Annex B (Heading)

## **CONTACTS**

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