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Medical Card

If your sole income is social welfare then you will be eligible for a medical card.

If you are unemployed and receiving One Parent Family Payment for a minimum of 12 months (also applies to Jobseekers payments and Disability Allowance) and you return to work full time then you will keep your Medical card for 3 years. If you return to work part time then you will keep your Medical card for 3 years from the time that your income exceeds the relevant income guidelines

Also, if you take part in a CE Scheme or go onto the Back to Education Allowance then you will also be able to keep your medical card for the duration of the scheme. The income limits for a lone parent are as follows:

Based on gross income (less tax, Universal Social Charge and PRSI)

Married couple/lone-parent with dependent children	€266.50
Allowance for each of first 2 children aged under 16	€38
Allowance for 3rd and each subsequent child under 16	€41
Allowance for each of first 2 children aged over 16 (with no income)	€39
Allowance for 3rd and each subsequent child over 16 (no income)	€42.50
Each dependent over age 16 in full time third level education without a grant	€78

There is also a reasonable allowance for travel to work expenses, child care costs and mortgage or rent payments although at present there is no definition of what these are.