



May Survey – Back To Work Family Dividend

Every month we invite your response to our online survey. Our Survey for May 2015 was on the Back to Work Family Dividend (BTWFD). As there has been a lot of confusion about this new dividend, we wanted to hear about your experiences with the process.

Background Information on the BTWFD

The BTWFD gives financial support to people with qualified children who are in or take up employment or self-employment, and as a result stop claiming all other social welfare payments such as a Jobseeker's Payment or a One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) on or after 5 January 2015. The weekly BTWFD payment is based on the standard Increase for a Qualified Child (IQC) rate of €29.80. The scheme, which came into effect in May, aims to support families to move from social welfare into employment.

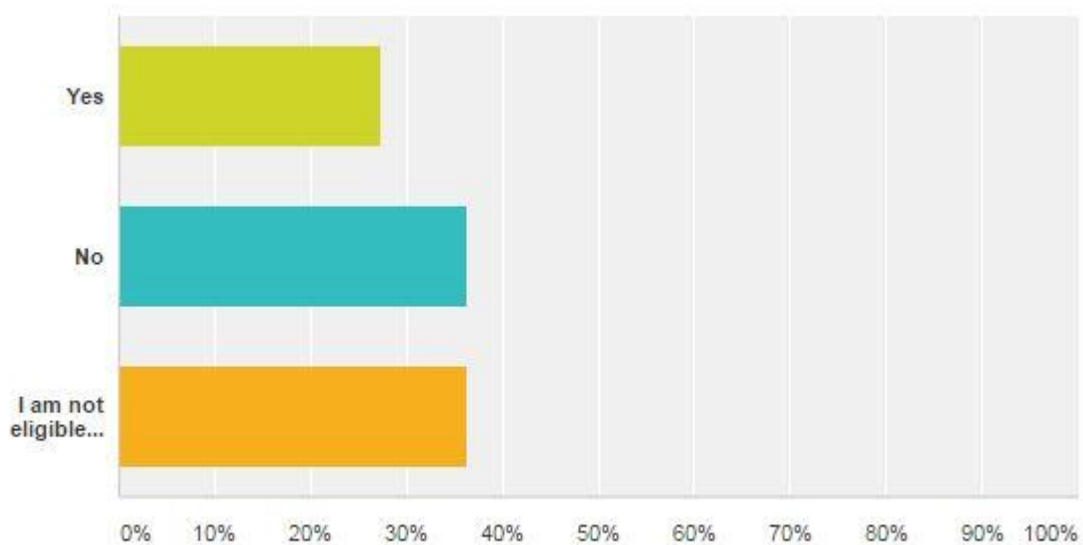
Parents who have been transitioned from the OFP throughout 2013 and 2014 as part of the current process of reform, and who were working part-time before 5 January 2015, are not eligible for the BTWFD.

The Questions

1. Have you applied for the BTWFD?
2. If you answered yes to Q.1, has your applications been accepted?
3. If you answered no to Q.2, what were the reasons given?

The Results

Q1 Have you applied for the BTWFD?



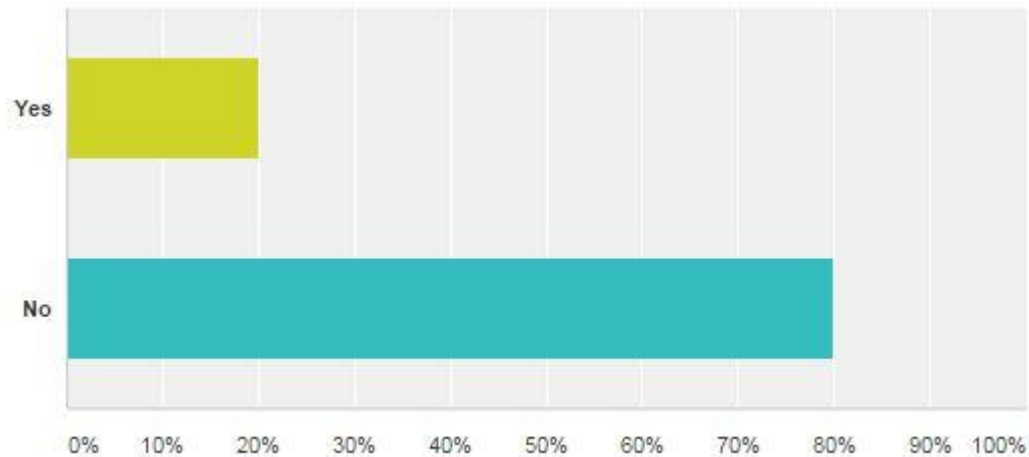
Over 27% of respondents reported that they had applied for the BTWFD. 36% of respondents reported that they did not apply for the payment and a further 36% reported that they were not eligible. There were a number of reasons given as to why people were not eligible for the payment; the most common reason being that the applicant was already in work prior to 5 January 2015 and was moved of OFP prior to that date.

“I took up employment prior to 01 Jan 2015”

“I am on half rate Carers Allowance”

“Apparently I’m not eligible as I lost the OFP before 5 January”

Q2 If you answered 'Yes' to Q.1, has your application been accepted?



As the above graph shows, only 20% of applications for the BTWFD were accepted, meaning that 80% are still being processed or have been denied.

Q3 If you answered 'No' to Q.2, what were the reasons given?

36% of respondents who had applied for the BTWFD were still awaiting a reply from their social welfare office. 57% of respondents who applied were denied the payment.

“I work half time in a Government funded job, I am a Community Development Officer. My half time hours are not acknowledged by the Dept. of Social Welfare as adequate to qualify for FIS or the BTWFD.”

“I lost OFP before 5 Jan 2015, so all the lone parents affected since July 2012 are suffering crippling financial loss. Despite working, are being left in the dark and totally ignored.”

Many are not aware that the BTWFD exists, which is further evidence of the lack communication by the Department and a lack of adequate information at local office level.

“I haven’t heard about it, haven’t been told about it.”