

Since July 2025, the Special Advocate office continues to receive a significant amount of queries every week from Survivors and Affected Persons and their family members, seeking updates and information on the Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Act and related supports.

We are aware of the urgent need for transparency, and for clear, accurate, up-to-date information and practical guidance from relevant Departments on how to access these support measures. In response, we have collated some of the most Frequently Asked Questions raised by Survivors with the office to date.

The Department of Education and Youth have provided answers and further contact information for additional queries below, which Survivors and Affected Persons may find helpful.



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige**
Department of Education
and Youth

**Frequently Asked Questions
relating to Supports for Survivors of
Residential Institutional Abuse Act
2025 and related measures, based
on Survivor calls and emails to the
Special Advocate office**

Information on the Support Measures

Question: What is included in the Supports for Survivors Act which was signed into law in July 2025?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Act 2025 provides for the delivery of ongoing health and education supports to eligible survivors of abuse in residential institutions such as industrial schools and reformatories.

These supports will be available to survivors of abuse in relevant institutions who previously received an award of redress from the Residential Institutions Redress Board or similar court award or settlement. This is the same group of survivors who were previously eligible for supports from Caranua.

Separately to the Act, Sage Advocacy has been engaged by the Department of Education and Youth to provide information and advocacy supports to survivors of residential institutions to assist them in engaging with relevant services, such as the HSE, local authorities and social protection. Further information can be found on www.sageadvocacy.ie.

Information on supports for survivors will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports

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Question: What are the new/additional supports and other measures for survivors of relevant institutions

Answer: As well as the health, education and advocacy supports referred to above, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage has asked local authorities to give specific prioritisation to survivors' housing needs, Community Welfare Officer within the Department of Social Protection have been requested to give special consideration to survivors in relation to the costs of funerals, and the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration can provide confirmation that survivors who were resident in industrial schools do not have a criminal record as a result of their time in those institutions.

Information on Eligibility

Question: Who is eligible for these supports?
How will I prove my eligibility?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: As is outlined above, the health and education supports provided under the Act will be available to survivors of abuse in relevant institutions who previously received an award of redress from the Residential Institutions Redress Board or similar court award or settlement.

This is the same group of survivors who were previously eligible for supports from Caranua.

Eligible survivors will be required to engage with the Department of Education and Youth in order to confirm their eligibility and further information on this process will be published on the www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.



Information about the timeframe and roll out of the measures

Question: What is the timeframe to roll out the different elements of the supports package

- Medical Card
- Overseas Health Payment
- Education Grants and related

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The Department of Education and Youth is finalising the arrangements for the delivery of these supports to survivors and is engaging with relevant Departments and agencies to ensure that this happens as soon as possible.

Further information will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports in due course.

Question: As the Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutions Act 2025 was signed into legislation July 2025, why has there been a delay in the roll out of these redress supports?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: While the Department of Education and Youth was working to start delivering these supports to survivors in 2025, this was delayed by a protest and related mediation process which only recently concluded.

Government has now approved additional measures for survivors, which are related to the supports to be provided under the Act, and the Department and other bodies is now working to deliver on those commitments as soon as possible.

Question: As the Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutions Act 2025 was signed into legislation July 2025, will the costs I have already incurred (eg prescription charges which will be covered under the medical card) be reimbursed retrospectively?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: No. While the Act was signed into law in July, the sections of the Act which will enable the delivery of the supports have not yet been officially commenced. Once the arrangements for the delivery of the supports have been finalised, the Act will be commenced and survivors will be able to apply for the supports to be delivered.



Information on the application process

Question:

What is the application process going to involve?

What requirements will I need to apply for these measures, eg do I need to provide any paperwork or records of my time or experiences?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: Further details on the application process will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.

However, survivors will not be required to discuss or describe their experiences in residential institutions in order to confirm their eligibility for the health and education supports under the Act.

The Department will hold some information on survivors who received redress from the Residential Institutions Redress Board (name, address and date of birth), and applicants will just have to provide enough information to confirm that they are one of those survivors.

Survivors who received a similar court award or settlement will have to provide information which supports this.

Alternatively, survivors who previously received supports from Caranua can provide information on this.



Information about the administration of these measures

Question: Who will administer this package of supports

- Medical card
- Overseas Health payment
- Education grants and wellbeing grants
- Housing list prioritisation
- Funeral Grant

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The Department of Education and Youth will process applications to confirm eligibility for the health and education supports under the Act.

The Department will also make the health support payment for survivors who are resident abroad and the education support payments.

In relation to the medical card, after confirming an applicant's eligibility the Department will provide the HSE with the relevant information and the HSE will issue the card.

With regard to housing needs, survivors should contact their local authorities. Similarly, in relation to funeral costs, survivors should contact their Community Welfare Officer.

Sage Advocacy will be able to support survivors who would like assistance in engaging with local authorities, Community Welfare Officers and other services. Information can be found at www.sageadvcoacy.ie.



Communications and Promotion of the Supports for Survivors

Question: I am concerned about missing out on these supports.

Where can I find out more information, be kept up to date, or register my details to be kept informed?

Is there a Mailing List which I can add my details to?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: Detailed information will be published on the Department's website.

Survivors can also send an email to survivorsupports@education.gov.ie to be added to a mailing list and be informed when the application process is opened.

Question: How will information about the redress measures be communicated and promoted – in Ireland and overseas – to ensure that Survivors don't miss out.

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: Information on the supports will be published on the Department's website. The Department will also provide information to survivor and advocacy groups and other services, including overseas, to ensure that information on the supports is communicated to as many survivors as possible.

Question: My contact details have changed since I previously received redress. How will I hear about these redress measures?

Will I be contacted directly?

How can I add / update my contact details to the officials administering the redress measures?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The previous Redress Scheme was a confidential process, so the Department is not permitted to use details provided at that time to contact survivors directly.

However, survivors who wish to receive information on the supports directly from the Department can email survivorsupports@education.gov.ie.



Information about the specific elements of the supports

Question: I would like more information about the **medical card**, which I have heard will be part of the package of supports– can more detail be provided on what this includes?

How does this differ to a ‘normal’ medical card?

I currently hold a medical card , should I apply for this new card ?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The health supports to be provided under the Act are similar to those under the standard medical card but there will be some additional benefits.

The new medical card will be for life and will not be subject to review or means-testing.

In addition, holders of the new medical card will not be required to pay any prescription charges and will also have improved access to counselling and physiotherapy services.

The HSE will also appoint dedicated liaison officers for survivors.

Further information on the health supports for survivors will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.

Question: I would like more information about the **overseas health payment** which I have heard will be part of the supports package – can more detail be provided on what this includes?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The Act provides for a once-off health support payment of €3,000 to be paid to survivors who are not resident in Ireland. This will be administered by the Department of Education and Youth and further information will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.

Question: I would like more information about the **additional counselling and physiotherapy supports** which I have heard will be part of the package of supports – can more detail be provided on what this includes?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: Government has now approved the strengthening of counselling and physiotherapy supports for survivors. Further information on this will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.



Question: I would like more information about the **education support payments**, which I have heard will be part of the supports package – can more detail be provided on what this includes?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The education support payments to be provided under the Act will include payments ranging from €500 to €2,000 for survivors who wish to engage in formal education leading to an award. The amount of the payment will vary depending on the level of the course and whether it is full-time or part-time.

Government has now approved the expansion of this scheme to support informal learning, self-development and wellbeing activities.

Further information on this scheme will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.

Question: I would like more information about **funeral grants**, which I have heard will be part of the supports package – can more detail be provided on what this includes?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The Department of Social Protection has instructed Community Welfare Officers to give specific consideration and recognition to survivors of residential institutions for funeral costs.

When making the application for financial support in respect of funeral costs, the person making the application should advise the Community Welfare Officer that the person who has passed away was a survivor of residential institutions.

This measure is completely separate from the scheme which was previously implemented by Caranua and which provided funding to survivors to buy pre-paid funeral packages from funeral homes. Any arrangements paid for under that scheme, which is now closed, are unaffected.

Question: I would like more information about the **grants to support informal learning, self-development and wellbeing** which I have heard will be part of the supports package – can more detail be provided on what this includes?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: As is outlined above, Government has recently approved the expansion of the education support payments scheme to support informal learning, self-development and wellbeing activities.

Further information on this scheme will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.



Question: I would like more information about the **prioritisation of Survivors of Industrial School and Reformatory Institutions on Social Housing lists** in Ireland, which I have heard will be part of the supports package – can more detail be provided on this?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: Local authorities have been asked to identify an appropriate member of staff within the housing section of each local authority who can act as a dedicated liaison and contact point for survivors

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage has also written to each local authority requesting that they consider the housing needs of survivors on compassionate grounds when assessing social housing support applications from survivors.

The Minister has also requested that local authorities use their powers to prioritise social housing support on compassionate grounds to survivors of industrial and reformatory schools.

Survivors should engage with their local authorities in relation to their housing needs.

Question: I would like more information about the **dedicated Health Liaison officers** for Survivors of Industrial School and Reformatory Institutions in Ireland, which I have heard will be part of the supports package – can more detail be provided on this?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The Government has approved the appointment of health liaison officer within the HSE specifically for survivors of residential institutions to assist survivors in accessing relevant services.

Further information on this will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports.



Contact Details for Department of Education and Youth for Survivors

Question: I have queries relating to these support measures. How do I get in contact with the relevant unit in the Department of Education and Youth?

Queries from Survivors in relation to these supports measures can be directed to the Department of Education and Youth in the following ways:

- **Email:** survivorsupports@education.gov.ie
- **Phone:** (090) 648 3625
- **Website:** Further information on this scheme will be published on www.gov.ie/survivorsupports
- **Mailing List:** Survivors can also send an email to survivorsupports@education.gov.ie to be added to a mailing list and be informed when the application process is opened.

Other Queries relating to the Residential Institutions Redress Board or Caranua

Question: I have queries relating to my application or redress received under the Residential Institutions Redress Scheme. How do I get in contact with the Residential Institutions Redress Board?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The records of the Residential institutions Redress Board are still held by the Board – the Department of Education and Youth does not hold those records.

Any queries can be direct to info@rirb.ie

Question: I have queries relating to my application or redress received under the Caranua. How do I get in contact with Caranua?

Answer from the Department of Education and Youth: The records of Caranua are still held by Caranua.

Any queries can be directed to info@caranua.ie