RESOURCE – Social Welfare. Habitual Residency Condition explained.

Habitual Residency Condition (HRC)

HRC is requirement applicants must meet to qualify for many social welfare payments.

Being habitually resident means demonstrating a proven link to Ireland, meaning you've lived there for some time and intend to stay here into the foreseeable future — though there's no strict legal definition for "habitual residence"

Programme refugees are automatically considered habitually resident under Irish law and do *not* need to prove they satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition (HRC) when applying for social welfare.

Legislation

Under Section 246(8)(a) of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005, the Habitual Residence Condition does *not* apply to people who:

"have been declared to be a refugee under section 17 of the Refugee Act 1996 (or under corresponding provisions of later legislation), or who have been given permission to enter and reside in the State as a programme refugee."

This includes:

- UNHCR-referred programme refugees
- Those arriving under formal resettlement or relocation programmes
- People with refugee status, subsidiary protection, or leave to remain on certain humanitarian grounds