



Mr Seán O'Callaghan,  
Senior Executive Officer,  
Cork County Council,  
County Hall,  
Cork



21 July 2015.

Dear Seán,

I refer to your letter to the Secretary General dated 14 July, regarding activation measures for the unemployed.

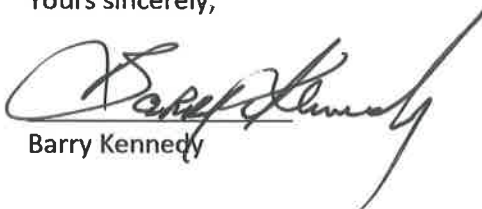
The key objective of activation policy and labour market initiatives is to offer assistance to those most in need of support in securing work and achieving financial self-sufficiency. This policy objective prioritises scarce resources to those in receipt of qualifying welfare payments. Accordingly the employment services and schemes provided by the Department are focused, in the first instance, on this cohort of unemployed people.

Many services are also available to the unemployed who are not in receipt of a qualifying social welfare payment. For example employment services, such as advice on job-search activities and the use of online job search tools, are available to people if they register with the Department's Intreo Centres, regardless of their social welfare status. Furthermore, unemployed persons not in receipt of payments may also be eligible to avail of up-skilling opportunities, for example through Education and Training Board (ETB) training for unemployed people, although they are not eligible to receive a training allowance while undertaking the course. Springboard and Skillnets courses, funded through the Department of Education and Skills, are also open to the unemployed regardless of their social welfare status.

The Pathways to Work 2015 strategy includes a commitment to develop and evaluate actions to extend services to people not on the Live Register and improve the promotion/communication of existing activation options. This will be considered in the light of the developing labour market and budgetary context.

In short, the Government is committed to supporting as many people as possible to participate more fully in employment and to become more self-sufficient by providing supports that address barriers they may encounter in finding sustainable employment.

Yours sincerely,



Barry Kennedy