

THE ARMY PENSIONS ACTS (1923-1980) EXPLAINED

The principal provisions in the Army Pensions Acts relating to persons involved in the 1916 Rising and in the War of Independence and the dependants of these persons are as follows:

● The Army Pensions Act, 1923 ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1923 provided for the grant of wound pensions to members of [Óglaigh na hÉireann](#) including the [Irish Volunteers](#) and the [Irish Citizen Army](#). The Act also provided for the grant of allowances and gratuities to the widows, children and other dependants of members of the [Irish Volunteers](#) and the [Irish Citizen Army](#) killed in the course of duty.

● The Army Pensions Act, 1927 ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1927 provided for the doubling of the allowances specified in the 1923 Act to the dependants of the Signatories of the 1916 Proclamation. The Act also included provision for the grant of disability pensions in respect of disease attributable to military service contracted by members of the [Irish Volunteers](#) and the [Irish Citizen Army](#) and the grant of allowances and gratuities to the widows and children of members of the [Irish Volunteers](#) and the [Irish Citizen Army](#) who died from disease attributable to service.

This Act also provided for the establishment of the Army Pensions Board. The principal function of the Board was to assess the level of disablement, if any, due to service in the forces and to report to the Minister for Defence.

● The Army Pensions Act, 1932 ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1932 extended the scope of the 1923 and 1927 Acts to include members of all the organisations involved in the War of Independence. The organisations covered by the legislation were [Óglaigh na hÉireann](#) (Irish Republican Army), the [Irish Volunteers](#), the [Irish Citizen Army](#), [Fianna Éireann](#), the [Hibernian Rifles](#) and [Cumann na mBan](#) (Old IRA and related organisations).

This Act provided for the establishment of the Military Service Registration Board. Every application for a benefit under the Army Pensions Acts by or in respect of a member of the Old IRA or related organisations had to be referred by the Minister for Defence to the Board. The principal functions of the Board were to determine if the person concerned was a member of the relevant organisations, whether the person was involved in military service and whether he/she had received a wound or injury, contracted a disease or was killed during his/her military service.

● The Army Pensions Act, 1937 ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1937 made provision for special increases in the allowances paid to the dependants of the Signatories of the 1916 Proclamation. Where deceased members of the Old IRA and related organisations had been killed while engaged in military service or had died within four years from a wound while engaged in military service, provision was made for the grant of means tested special allowances for the dependants of such members. The Act also made provision for special gratuities to be paid to persons who were wounded or injured as the result of keeping arms belonging to or being accidentally shot by a member of the Old IRA or related organisations.

Payment was subject to the sons being incapable of self-support by reason of age or permanent infirmity of body or mind.

Provision was made in the Act for the payment of a means tested special allowance to certain members of the Connaught Rangers who took part in the Mutiny in India in June and July 1920 and who had been granted a service, wound or disability pension under the Connaught Rangers (Pensions) Acts.

The Army Pensions Act, 1941 extended the time limit for application for wound and disability pensions and widows' and dependents' allowances under the 1932 and 1937 Acts.

● **The Army Pensions Act, 1943 ●**

The Army Pensions Act, 1943 provided for the grant of special allowances to persons whose means did not equal or exceed a prescribed sum, who were incapable of self-support, and who had been awarded pensionable service under The Military Service Pensions Acts of 1924 to 1934 in respect of service during Easter Week 1916, or a wound or disability pension under the Army Pensions Acts in respect of a wound or a disability contracted during that week (*DP series*)

● **The Army Pensions Act, 1946 ●**

The Army Pensions Act, 1946 amended Section 7 of the 1943 Act so as to make eligible for the grant of special allowances persons whose means were such as already laid down and who were awarded a medal with or without bar in respect of membership of stated organisations continuously for the three months ended on the 11 July 1921.

● **The Army Pensions Act, 1953 ●**

The Army Pensions Act, 1953 provided special rates of allowances for widows, parents, dependent sisters and dependent invalided brothers of deceased persons who had pre-Truce service and were killed in military service before 1 October 1923 or who died before 1 October 1927 from wound or disease due to military service. The same Act provided for allowances to each daughter and each son of a signatory to the Proclamation published in 1916.

● **The Army Pensions Act 1957 ●**

The Army Pensions Act 1957 provided for increases in pensions and allowances payable under the Acts. The Act also gave legal authority to the Minister for Defence to stop the payment of a special allowance where the Minister ceased to be satisfied that the Service Medal for continuous membership of the Old IRA or related organisations for the three months ending on 11 July 1921 was "duly awarded". The Minister could also restore payment of the allowance if further later evidence substantiated the original claim to the medal which was the basis for eligibility of the allowance.

● **The Army Pensions Act, 1959** ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1959 provided for the repeal of the provision in the 1953 Act that the medal for continuous membership of the Old IRA or related organisations for the three months ending on 11 July 1921 had to be “duly awarded”.

● **The Army Pensions Act, 1971** ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1971 provided for the grant of allowances to the widows of pensioners under the Military Service Pensions Acts and the widows of pensioners under the Connaught Rangers (Pensions) Act 1936.

● **The Army Pensions Act, 1973** ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1973 provided for the grant of allowances to the widows of persons who were granted certificates under the Military Service Pensions Act, 1924 and died while serving in the Defence Forces.

● **The Army Pensions Act, 1980** ●

The Army Pensions Act, 1980 provided for the grant of means tested allowances to the widows of persons who were granted special allowances under the Acts.

For a full and detail list of the Army Pensions Acts, see <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/>

**Military Service
Pensions Collection**