

Government Benefits & Economic Impact Payment During COVID-19

A Guide for Self-Advocates

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Will I still be eligible for MA during the COVID-19 emergency?

If you had coverage as of March 18, 2020, then YES, you will continue to be MA eligible unless you moved out of PA, requested that your benefits be closed, or went to jail.



What are economic impact payments?

Many Americans have lost money because of the Coronavirus (also known as COVID-19). The government has passed the "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act" (CARES), which means the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is giving money to most Americans. The money given is called an economic impact payment or a stimulus check.



I receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Am I able to receive an economic impact payment?

SSI recipients automatically receive stimulus checks of \$1,200. Some adults may be claimed as a dependent on an annual tax return. For example, a parent can claim their child on a tax return. If you are claimed as a dependent you will NOT be eligible for stimulus checks.

If I have a representative payee, how should they assist me in using the economic impact payment?

Your representative payee should discuss the payment with you. If you want to use the payment independently, your representative payee should give the payment to you. If you ask for help in using the payment in a certain way, the representative payee can provide that help.

How can my service provider assist me in using the economic impact payment?

Again, your payment belongs to you, as the SSI participant. If you have questions about the payment, your provider should help you answer those questions or help you reach out to your representative payee for more help. If you need help using your payment in a certain way, your provider can help you manage your finances and use your money the way that you want.

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What if I feel like my representative payee misused my economic impact payment?

The Social Security Office is NOT able to tell you if your payment was used incorrectly by your representative payee. If the Social Security office receives a report that the payment was used incorrectly they may decide to look into it. You can find more information about the representative payee's responsibilities here: <https://oig.ssa.gov/what-abuse-fraud-and-waste/misuse-benefits-representative-payee>

How will the economic impact payment affect my assets and resources?

You have 12 months to spend the stimulus check. After 12 months, if you haven't spent the money it will be counted toward your assets. If you are worried about having resources that are more than the amount allowed to maintain eligibility for MA and/or SSI, you should think about opening an ABLE bank account. You can find more information about PA's ABLE program here <http://www.paable.gov/>.

How will my economic impact payment effect my room and board charges?

The economic impact payment is not counted as monthly income. It will not be used to calculate your room and board charges.

