



For Immediate Release
April 1, 2020

Contact the Bolton office
at 601.866.9003

High Alert

COVID-19 STIMULUS REPORT

FIGHTING THE CORONAVIRUS

This bill includes a \$200 billion investment in hospitals, health systems, and health research. This includes funding for healthcare equipment and infrastructure, including personal protective equipment for health care workers, testing supplies, and new construction to house patients. It also includes increases in Medicare payments to all hospitals and providers to get them the resources they need during this crisis and additional investments into COVID-19 research.

The bill also includes \$150 billion for the Coronavirus Relief Fund, a program that provides direct funding to states to give them the resources they desperately need during this emergency. Mississippi is expected to receive \$1.25 billion in this funding for new and necessary expenses being incurred in the fight against COVID-19.

FOR INDIVIDUALS

Coronavirus Stimulus Checks

- A direct payment of \$1,200 to each adult and \$500 per child.
- No sign-up needed

Who exactly qualifies for a payment?

- Individuals with adjusted gross incomes up to \$75,000 a year will be eligible for the full \$1,200 check.
- Reduced checks will go out to individuals making up to \$99,000 a year
- Married couples are eligible for a \$2,400 check (adjusted gross income under \$150,000)
- Reduced checks will go out to married couples who earn up to \$198,000. Married couples also will receive an additional \$500 for every child under 17.
- People who file as a "head of household" are eligible for a \$1,200 check (adjusted gross income up to \$112,500) Reduced checks on a sliding scale are available for heads of household earning up to \$136,500 annually. Heads of household will also receive an additional \$500 per child under 17.

How does the U.S. government know where to send the money?

- If you have already filed a 2019 tax return, the IRS will use the direct deposit information on your 2019 return to send your payment to your bank account. If you don't provide the IRS with your direct deposit details or you closed that account, then the IRS will mail you a check.

- If you have yet to file a 2019 tax return, the IRS will see if you have filed a 2018 tax return and use that information to determine whether you meet the qualifications for a check and to find your bank details or mailing address.

When will the payments arrive? As soon as possible. Please check back for updates.

What about people on Social Security? People on Social Security are eligible to receive the coronavirus relief payment if their total income does not exceed the limit. Low-income Americans on Social Security do not need to file a tax return. If they received an SSA-1099 form (the Social Security benefit statement), the federal government will be able to send them a payment via the usual way they get their Social Security payment. Retirees and people on disability are both eligible for the special payment.

Who won't get a check?

- The wealthy
- Those who owe child support
- Nonresident aliens
- Dependents who can be claimed on someone else's tax return.

If I owe past taxes, will my check be reduced? No. The only reason a check would be reduced is if past child support payments are due.

I have a lot more questions. What should I do? The IRS [created a website](#) where more information will eventually be posted.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

- **Increased Benefit**
 - The Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation is a taxable \$600 a week in addition to regular state unemployment benefits.
 - States would be allowed to provide an additional 13 weeks of benefits beyond current law.
- **Expanded Eligibility**
 - People not normally eligible for unemployment insurance are now eligible under this expanded eligibility if their unemployment is due to COVID-19.
 - This specifically includes:
 - Self-Employed workers
 - Independent contractors/ freelancers (barbers, beauticians)
 - "Gig economy" workers (work-from-home, contract workers (lawn service, pest control) on-call workers and temporary workers)
 - People who were going to begin a new job or new contract which was canceled due to COVID-19.

How Do I File for Unemployment Insurance?

The Application process is administered by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

To file online, please visit their website: <https://mdes.ms.gov>

If you have additional questions, please contact the MS Dept. of Employment Security at 601.321.6000.

Remember lines may be extremely busy but keep trying!

The Department of Labor's toll-free call center can also assist workers and employers with questions about job loss, layoffs, business closures, unemployment benefits, and job training: 1-877-US-2JOBS (TTY: 1-877-889-5627).

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

In response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has approved the issuance of emergency supplement benefits for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients for March and April 2020.

SNAP households will receive an emergency benefit in March and April that, combined with the benefit amount the household is certified to receive, will equal the maximum benefit for the household, based on its size.

March emergency supplements for ongoing SNAP households will be issued March 29. March 2020 cases approved after March 29 will receive the emergency benefit amount two days after the case is approved.

April emergency supplements for ongoing SNAP households will be available on April 2. The household benefit amount will be made available on the household's regular issuance date.

SNAP households that currently receive the maximum benefit for their household's size will not receive an emergency supplement.

SNAP Eligibility Requirements:

- Identity- Individuals must show proof they are the person they claim to be. Applicants must provide proof of their identity.
- Residence- the client must be living in Mississippi.
- Citizenship- household members can include either US citizens and/or certain aliens with verifiable USCIS documentation.
- Enumeration- households must provide or apply for Social Security numbers for each member before certification.
- Work Registration- all able-bodied adults, with specific exceptions, must register for work and accept suitable employment

How to Apply:

Step One

- Fill out an application online by visiting access.ms.gov/Application.

Step Two

- Gather the documents you will need to verify the information in your application. (i.e. driver's license, work or school I.D., social security number, alien status, wages, self-employment) full list provided on the website.

Step Three

- After receiving your application, a MDHS employee will call you to conduct an interview over the phone, saving you time. Please provide a valid telephone number for contact purposes.

For more information on SNAP and other services available through the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), call 1-601-359-4500 or visit their website at www.mdhs.ms.gov/.

SNAP participants may also meet the income eligibility guidelines for nutrition services through the Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC) offered by the Mississippi Department of Human Services.

SMALL BUSINESSES

Paycheck Protection Program

- The program will provide 100 percent federally guaranteed loans to employers who maintain their payroll during this emergency. If employers maintain their payroll, the loans would be forgiven for amounts expended for payroll over certain periods and certain other business expenses.
- Small businesses and non-profits will be able to apply if they were in business as of February 15, 2020, and the program will remain open for applications until June 30, 2020.
- Loans under the Paycheck Protection Program may be made up to \$10,000,000 amortized over 10 years depending on a business' circumstances.
- These loans can be taken out from all current SBA 7(a) lenders. Most local banks are currently SBA 7(a) lenders and many of the ones that are not are quickly joining the program. Contact your banker to inquire into their process.

Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) & Emergency Economic Injury Grants

- EIDLs are lower interest loans of up to \$2 million, with the principal and interest deferment available for up to 4 years, that are available to pay for expenses that could have been met had the disaster not occurred, including payroll and other operating expenses.
- Emergency Economic Injury Grants provide an emergency advance of up to \$10,000 within three days of applying for an EIDL to small businesses and private non-profits harmed by COVID-19.
- Sole proprietors, ESOPs, cooperatives, businesses with no more than 500 employees, and tribal small businesses can apply.
- To apply for an EIDL online, please visit <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/> or contact the Mississippi SBA District Office at 601-965-4378.

Small Business Debt Relief Program

This program will provide immediate relief to small businesses with non-disaster SBA loans, in particular 7(a), 504, and microloans. Under it, SBA will cover all loan payments on these SBA loans, including principal, interest, and fees, for six months.

To Apply for a 7(a) loan click [here](#).

To Apply for a 504 loan click [here](#).

Microloans: To apply for a Microloan, you must work with an SBA approved intermediary in your area. Approved intermediaries make all credit decisions on SBA microloans. For more information, contact the Mississippi SBA District Office at 601-965-4378.

HOMEOWNERS AND RENTERS

- Mortgage Forbearance: Homeowners with FHA, USDA, VA, or Section 184 or 184A mortgages (for members of federally-recognized tribes) and those with mortgages backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac have the right to request forbearance on their payments for up to 6 months, with a possible extension for another 6 months without fees, penalties, or extra interest. **Homeowners should contact their mortgage servicing company directly.**
- Eviction Protections: Renters residing in public or assisted housing, or in a home or apartment whose owner has a federally-backed mortgage, and who are unable to pay their rent, are protected from eviction for 4 months. Property owners are also prohibited from issuing a 30-day notice to a tenant to vacate a property until after the 4-month moratorium ends. This protection covers properties that receive federal subsidies such as public housing, Section 8 assistance, USDA rural housing programs, and federally-issued or guaranteed mortgages. **Renters whose landlord is not abiding by the moratorium should contact the relevant federal agency that administers their housing program or their local Legal Aid office.**

501(c)(3) NON-PROFITS

501 (c)(3) nonprofits, including houses of worship/churches, are eligible for the following:

- Paycheck protection program loans
- Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)
- Self-funded Nonprofits and Unemployment
- Charitable Giving Incentive
- Employee Retention Payroll Tax Credit
- Delayed Payment of Payroll Taxes
- Economic Stabilization Fund

For more information, contact the Mississippi SBA District Office at 601-965-4378.