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Coronavirus Stimulus Check
Frequently Asked Questions

The first wave of coronavirus stimulus checks are expected to go out in days, and if you're eligible, the Treasury Department will deposit the $1,200 stimulus check directly into your bank account or mail you your check. Not every person who qualifies will receive $1,200 — some will get more, some less. The payments are based on your income listed on your most recent tax return, as well as the number of child dependents you have.

Here are the answers to many common questions about the payments:

How much money will I get?
U.S. residents with an income of up to $75,000 will receive payments of $1,200. For every $100 you earn above that threshold your payment shrinks by $5. Someone making $85,000, for example, will take home $700. The payments phase out entirely at an income of $99,000.

Your income level is based on the last tax return you filed last year (for 2018 income) or this year if you've filed already (for 2019 income).

The payments are based on your adjusted gross income, which can be found on lines 7 or 8 on your 2018 or 2019 1040 federal income tax return.

If you do not normally file taxes, see below.

What if I'm married?
Both the payments and the limits are doubled for your home if you file your taxes jointly. Couples with household income of up to $150,000 will receive a $2,400 payment. At higher household income levels, the payments shrink and stop entirely at $198,000.

What if I have kids?
Parents with children ages 16 or younger will get an additional $500 per child (as long as you've claimed them as a dependent on your tax returns). If you split custody, whichever parent has claimed your child on their tax returns will get the $500 benefit.

What if I'm a single parent?
Single parents who file their taxes as "head of household" have higher limits to qualify for the payments than single people without kids. Single parents who make up to $112,500 will get the full $1,200 benefit. The system then works the same way with payments shrinking by $5 for every $100 you earn above that threshold up to $136,500. You will also qualify for $500 per dependent child you have who is age 16 or younger.

What if I have no income?
There is no minimum income threshold. Even if you make $0 you qualify for the $1,200 payment. But in practice, this will not always happen. Low-income people may not pay taxes or have a Social Security number. People who are unhoused may not have a bank account or fixed address to send the payments to.

What if I haven't filed my taxes in 2018 or 2019?
The best thing to do is quickly file your 2019 taxes. If you choose not to file, your stimulus check might be delayed. For more details visit www.irs.gov.

Remember that if you receive a call, email, Facebook message, or other communication soliciting your bank information for your stimulus check, it's probably a scam. The government will never ask you to provide or verify personal information over the phone and certainly will not ask for money.

How do I get the money?
If you have received a tax refund through direct deposit in the past, you don't have to do anything, the IRS will just deposit the money into your account. Same goes for people who are on Social Security or disability (more on that below).

If you don't have direct deposit, the IRS will send you a physical check. But that could take time — one IRS report estimated that some people might not get payments until September.

When will I get the money?
The Treasury Department has said that everyone with direct deposit should get the payments before April 24. Then they'll start sending out paper checks, which could take months.

Is the money taxable?
No. You'll get the full amount you qualify for.

What about college students and young adults?
This is a big loophole in the law: Many college students and young adults will not qualify for these payments. It depends on whether parents claimed the student as a "dependent" on their most recent tax returns (whether they filed this year for 2019 or last year for 2018). If so, students and young adults will not get any money, and if the student or young adult is 17 or older parents won't get $500.

If parents did **not** claim the student or young adult as a dependent, such as young people who entered the workforce after college, they will qualify for the payments.

What about adult dependents?
This is another of the law's major loopholes: Any adult that you claim as a dependent on your tax returns — including adult children with disabilities living at home and elderly parents — will not qualify for the payments, and you will not get any additional money on their behalf.

What if I'm on Social Security or disability?
You'll still receive the payments, as long as you meet the income thresholds. Even if you do not typically file taxes, the IRS will send you the money the same way you normally get your benefits. However, the IRS notes that it does not have information on dependents for people who do not have to file their taxes, so in those cases, you will not get an additional $500 for dependents age 16 or younger.

What if my income has changed since I last filed taxes?
If your income goes up, your payments do not have to be paid back. Say your last tax return was from 2019 when you made $75,000 and you receive a deposit for the full $1,200. If you file your 2020 taxes with income of $100,000, you will not have to pay back the coronavirus payment, even though technically you no longer would qualify for it.

The trickier situation is when your income goes down. If you file a new tax return that shows you are entitled to a larger coronavirus payment, you will get that money, but not right away. When your next tax return is processed, the extra coronavirus money will be added.

I owe back taxes — will that be taken out?
No. The only money that will be taken out of the payments is for people who owe child support.