

Policy Profile

Am I Eligible for a Stimulus Check?

-Submitted by Hanni Raley, Assistant Executive Director-

Coronavirus (COVID-19) wasn't expected and it has left many Americans unprepared for the potential of lost or reduced wages. Figuring out how to make rent/mortgage payments, how to buy food, and how to stay healthy and safe, all while staying entertained and busy is no easy task! Thankfully, Congress took action and will provide relief to nearly 90% of Americans by providing a stimulus check to each household via the passage of the **CARES Act** (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act).

As a follower of The Arc of Aurora, what does this mean for you? You are likely wondering if receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) makes you eligible for the COVID-19 stimulus payment. The answer is YES! And boy do we need some good news, like our getting a financial boost, right now!

You are eligible for a stimulus check as long as you have a Social Security number and you are not claimed as a dependent on someone else's tax return. There is plenty of information floating out there, much of which might be outdated or updated from the first communications. Below, we've offered the most current information available to better understand the details of the check that is likely headed your way.

Details to know:

- You must have a Social Security number. Unfortunately, a taxpayer ID number will not make you eligible.
- If you have children, you will receive an extra \$500 for each child who is under the age of 17, as long as the child lives with you for more than half the year.
- If you received SSDI, SSI, or veteran benefits in 2019 and you don't have children under 17, you don't need to do anything. The government will send your check automatically even if you didn't file a tax return.

- For SSI and veteran pension eligibility purposes, the stimulus check is not taxable and won't count as income or an asset to you unless you still have all or part of it 12 months after it is deposited in your account.
- You should receive the automatic payment the same way you normally receive your monthly disability or pension payment—by direct deposit, Direct Express debit card, or paper check.
- If you started to receive SSDI payments in 2020 or typically do not file a tax return due to low income or haven't made it a habit, you should complete a non-filer form to get your stimulus check. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has made this easy and partnered with two free websites for non-filers to enter their personal information into a simple tax return to receive the stimulus payment: [Free File Fillable Forms](#) and [TurboTax](#).
- Don't fall for stimulus check scams! The IRS will not contact you for your information, and you do not have to pay a fee to receive your check. For security reasons, the IRS will mail a letter to your last known address. While all communication will come from the IRS, your payment will come from the United States Department of the Treasury.

If you haven't received your economic boost yet or are curious about how much you will receive, visit www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment and click on "Get My Payment" to find out the amount and what day your stimulus payment will be deposited.

It is a crazy time for everyone and sometimes good news is hard to find. But a check that can cover some essentials is just what we all need right now! If you have any questions about the stimulus check and what it means for you and/or your family, feel free to reach out to The Arc of Aurora or consider exploring the [IRS website](#) for more information.