

Special COVID Payments



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL PAYMENT I AM RECEIVING?

The federal government approved special payments to people to spend any way you want to help the country during the COVID-19 pandemic. Payments held after 12 months will no longer be counted in the resource test toward the \$2,000 Social Security (SSI) asset cap.

People who receive disability payments from Social Security will get their payment the same way they get regular SSI payments each month, either by paper check or direct deposit. Many people have already received these payments.

Beware of scams! The IRS will not call or email you. Protect your money by not sharing your personal information on the phone or over email.

DO I HAVE TO USE THE MONEY ON THINGS RELATED TO MY DISABILITY?

No. These are **NOT** payments from Social Security – they are a payment from the government to use any way you choose. While some people will use their payment now, or within 12 months, others may contribute all or part to an ABLÉ account.

WHY SHOULD I PUT THIS PAYMENT INTO AN ABLÉ ACCOUNT?

The payments are a chance to start saving for things not covered by benefits including education, adaptive vehicles and transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology, personal support services, and other expenses that help you to live in the community. Starting an ABLÉ account is the first step to saving for a rainy day or saving up for what you want.

WILL ABLÉ ACCOUNT SAVINGS DISQUALIFY ME FROM BENEFITS I NEED?

No. ABLÉ accounts are different from other savings accounts because ABLÉ can fund disability-related expenses and the assets in the ABLÉ account are not counted to determine your eligibility for Social Security benefits. Remember, if you keep the payment more than 12 months, it may impact your eligibility for government benefits. Contributing the funds to an ABLÉ account within 12 months gives you the flexibility to save the funds or spend it beyond the 12 month period.



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CAN OTHER PEOPLE HELP ME DECIDE HOW TO SPEND THE MONEY OR SET UP AN ABLE ACCOUNT?

Making big financial decisions is hard for many people. There are people who can support your decision-making including family members and caregivers. They can also help you set up an ABLE account. But it is your decision how to spend the payment.

WHAT CAN REPRESENTATIVE PAYEES, GROUP HOME PROVIDERS, AND OTHER SUPPORT WORKERS DO TO HELP WITH THE PAYMENTS OR SET UP AN ABLE ACCOUNT?

People who help individuals with their finances need to be sure they do not have a conflict of interest when they help individuals with supported financial decision making. They should use supported financial decision-making practices for spending down the payment before the 12-month deadline. While some individuals may spend the payment now, it is important to discuss the long-term benefits of ABLE accounts as well and help them work with their state's ABLE administrator if they decide to save.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIAL PAYMENTS?

IRS. "Economic Impact Payments." (January 2021)
<https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payments>



Iowa DD Council
<https://iowaddcouncil.org/>

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ABLE ACCOUNTS?



IAble
<https://www.iable.gov/>

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SUPPORTED FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING?

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

"Your Money, Your Goals: Focus on People with Disabilities." (March 2019)

https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/documents/cfpb_ymyg_focus-on-people-with-disabilities.pdf