



Impact of COVID-19 Stimulus Payments and Pandemic Unemployment Benefits on Health Insurance Eligibility

The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act includes financial assistance to help stimulate the economy and assist those struggling during the economic downturn resulting from the COVID-19 emergency. The two main types of financial assistance are the **stimulus payments** and **expanded unemployment compensation**.

Below is a summary of the new benefits and information on whether and how they impact eligibility for Medicaid, CHIP and subsidized Marketplace insurance. Remember, even if the County Assistance Office or Marketplace will ultimately disregard some payments, they still must be reported.

Economic Stimulus Payments

What are they and how do I get them?

Economic stimulus payments are one-time payments which are being provided by the federal government to people whose income is below a certain threshold. To qualify for an economic stimulus payment, you must:

- Be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident or [qualifying resident alien](#);
- Not be claimed as a dependent on someone else's return;
- Have adjusted gross income below an amount based on your filing status and the number of your qualifying children; and
- You have a valid Social Security number (SSN). (But if either spouse is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during 2020, then only one spouse needs to have a valid SSN.)

Most people will get \$1,200 (\$2,400 for a married couple). People with children undwill also get an additional \$500 per dependent child. If you filed a tax return for 2018 or 2019, you do not need to do anything to receive your economic stimulus payment; the amount will be sent to you in the same way the IRS sent your tax refunds previously.

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Do economic stimulus payments count as income for Medicaid, CHIP or Marketplace insurance?

No. Economic stimulus payments are not counted in determining income eligibility for Medicaid, CHIP or subsidized Marketplace insurance.

Do economic stimulus payments count as a resource for Medicaid?

Economic stimulus payments do not count as a resource in determining Medicaid eligibility for the first 12 months after the payments are received. If a person still has their stimulus money after 12 months, it will count as a resource for those Medicaid categories that have resource limits.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)

What is it and how do I apply?

[Pandemic Unemployment Assistance](#) (PUA) is unemployment compensation for people who are not eligible for regular unemployment compensation, and who are not working for a reason related to the COVID-19 emergency. For example, independent contractors, gig workers, people who are self-employed, and people who don't have enough work history are usually not eligible for regular unemployment compensation, but they may be eligible for PUA if the reason they are not working is related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Individuals can file for PUA online [here](#). For detailed instructions on filing for regular unemployment compensation, visit www.uc.pa.gov and click "File an Initial Claim".

Does PUA count as income for Medicaid, CHIP or subsidized Marketplace Insurance?

Yes. Just like regular unemployment compensation, PUA is considered income for Medicaid, CHIP, and subsidized Marketplace insurance eligibility purposes.

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)

What is it and how do I get it?

[Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation](#) provides an additional \$600 per week to people getting regular unemployment compensation or PUA. It is available through July 25, 2020. Individuals receiving regular unemployment compensation or PUA don't need to do anything extra to receive the \$600. These individuals should just continue to file biweekly claims and the benefits will be automatically updated.

Does FPUC count as income for Medicaid or CHIP?

No, FPUC is not counted in determining income eligibility for Medicaid or CHIP.

Does FPUC count as income for subsidized Marketplace Insurance?

Yes. FPUC is included when determining income eligibility for subsidized Marketplace Insurance.

| Table: Does pandemic-related financial assistance affect eligibility for health insurance? | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| | Economic Stimulus Payments | Federal Pandemic Unemployment | Federal Unemployment Assistance |
| Medicaid | No | No | Yes |
| CHIP | No | No | Yes |
| Marketplace | No | Yes | Yes |

Where can I get more information or assistance?

For more information about eligibility for Medicaid, CHIP, or Marketplace subsidies and cost-sharing, or if you are denied Medicaid or CHIP and need legal assistance, call PHLP’s Toll Free Helpline at 1-800-274-3258.

Please note that we *do not handle unemployment compensation cases*, but we can talk to you about how these benefits impact Medicaid, CHIP, and Marketplace eligibility,

This publication is intended to provide general legal information, not legal advice. Each person’s situation is different. If you have questions about how the law applies to your particular situation, please consult a lawyer or call the Helpline at 1-800-274-3258.