



Third Economic Impact Payments Q & A

A third Economic Stimulus Payment from the US Government is being paid. This time, the payments are up to \$1,400 for individuals, \$2,800 for couples, and an additional \$1,400 for dependents. Again, it will be the IRS that distributes the checks. Here are some answers to common questions.

Will I have to do anything to get a stimulus payment?

[From IRS communications:] “No action is needed by most taxpayers; the payments will be automatic and, in many cases, similar to how people received the first and second round of Economic Impact Payments in 2020. People can check the ["Get My Payment"](#) tool on *IRS.gov* to see the payment status of the third stimulus payment.”

So, if you have filed a 2019 or 2020 tax return, you don't have to do anything.

Or, if you don't usually have to file a tax return and you used the IRS's “Non-Filers” tool last year, the IRS will base your payment on the information you submitted there. So, if you received the first and second payments, you'll likely receive this one).

If you receive Social Security or other federal benefits (SSI, SSDI, VA payments) you will generally receive the third payment the same way as your regular benefits. The date those payments will be made will be announced by the IRS soon.

If you don't have to file tax returns and did NOT use the IRS's “Non-Filer Tool” last year to get your payment, go to [IRS.gov](#) and see if they have opened up that tool this year. (As of today, the IRS has not said if it will.) Otherwise, if you did not automatically get the first or second stimulus payment in 2020 and are eligible for the payments, you may need to file a simple tax return for 2020 to get the third payment and also to claim the first and/or second payments.

What is this stimulus payment based on?

If your 2020 tax return is already filed and processed when the IRS is ready to send your payment, your stimulus check will be based on information from your 2020 tax return. If your 2020 return isn't filed and processed at that point, the IRS will use your 2019 return.

If your 2020 return is filed and/or processed after the IRS sends you a stimulus check, but before July 15, 2021 (or September 1 if the April 15 filing deadline is pushed back), the IRS will send you a second payment for the difference between what your payment should have been if based on your 2020 return and the payment actually sent based on your 2019 return.

What if my financial situation is worse in 2020 than it was in 2019?

A. Third Stimulus Payment: If your income was too high for a payment based on your adjusted gross income for 2019 but you think you may be eligible based on your circumstances from 2020, you should file your 2020 tax return as soon as you can. For example, you may have lost your job last year. Or, you may have had a child, which would make you eligible for a dependent payment of \$1,400. However, the IRS has cautioned that you shouldn't file before you have all the



information you need to submit an accurate return; making sure your tax return is done right can save you a lot of headaches later.

B. First and Second Stimulus Payments: You may be due more than you received if you had a child in 2020 or if your income decreased from 2019 to 2020. If you think you did not get the full amount you were due for yourself or your dependents, you can claim it as a credit on your 2020 tax return. That tax credit is called the [Recovery Rebate Credit](#) and it appears as Line 30 on the 2020 IRS Form 1040. For more information, read [this Washington Post article about Line 30 on IRS Form 1040](#).

How soon will I get a stimulus payment?

President Biden said the IRS will “get the checks out the door starting this month [March]”. The other stimulus payments started within a few days of being approved so they could come soon.

My spouse is undocumented which made all of us ineligible for the earlier payments. What about the third payment?

Congress changed the eligibility for the third payments. Now each family member, including dependents, who has a Social Security Number (not an ITIN) in a family with mixed-immigration status can receive the payment. And, those with an SSN who did not receive the earlier payments can now retroactively receive them. If the earlier payments were not received, they can be claimed on your 2020 tax return as the Recovery Rebate Credit.

For ESL speakers to understand the tax filing process better, IRS Publication 17, [Your Federal Income Tax](#), is now available in [Spanish](#), [Chinese \(Simplified\)](#); [Chinese \(Traditional\)](#); [Vietnamese](#); [Korean](#); and [Russian](#). (However, these documents may not be updated to include information on the 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit.)

How much do I have to earn to qualify for a payment?

You don't have to have income to qualify for a stimulus payment.

If I make too much money, will I be ineligible for the payment?

Yes. For this third round of payments, eligible individuals with an adjusted gross income (AGI- shown on Line 11 of your 2020 IRS Form 1040) of \$75,000 or less are entitled to the full \$1,400. The ceiling is \$112,500 for individuals filing as head of household and \$150,000 for couples filing jointly. This time around, the AGI phase-out for incomes higher than those levels happens sooner than in the previous stimulus packages. So you may have received money in the first and second round but won't get a check in this latest stimulus package.

How will I get my money?

In previous rounds, the IRS issued payments either by direct deposit, a mailed check or prepaid debit card. However, just because you got a direct deposit previously doesn't mean the payment will be delivered the same way for this third round. You may get a check. It's also possible the IRS may send payments on a prepaid debit card.



Is there an age cutoff for stimulus payments for dependents?

In the previous rounds of stimulus relief, parents could get a payment only for dependents who were younger than 17. However, now eligible taxpayers will get payments for older dependents. For example, dependent college students (up to age 23), disabled adult children, or an adult parent will qualify for the \$1,400 dependent payment.

Eligible taxpayers will receive an additional \$1,400 for each dependent. However, self-supporting college students or young adults living on their own who can't be claimed as a dependent may be eligible for their own stimulus payment up to \$1,400.

How Much Will I get?

Click on this link to [calculate how much your third stimulus check will be.](#)

Sources of information:

IRS Newswire Issue Number IR-2021-54, March 12, 2021, and IR-2021-56, March 16, 2021.

["What you need to do to get the third stimulus payment of up to \\$1,400", Washington Post online, March 8, 2021, Michelle Singletary](#)

["Biden Signs Stimulus Bill - When Will Your Third Stimulus Check Arrive?" Kiplinger online, March 11, 2021, Rocky Mengle](#)

["How Your Third Stimulus Check Will Differ From the First Two Payments", Kiplinger online, March 10, 2021, Rocky Mengle](#)

["To claim your stimulus payment, look for Line 30 on your 1040 tax form", Washington Post online, February 9, 2021, Michelle Singletary](#)