



MEPD and TW Bulletin 23-06

Date: March 31, 2023

To: Eligibility Services Supervisors and Staff
Program Managers
Regional Directors
Regional Attorneys
Hearings Officers

From: Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy
State Office 2115

Subject: COVID-19 Update: COVID-19 Assistance Payments

The information in this bulletin will be included in a future handbook revision. Until the handbook is updated, staff must use the information in this bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- [Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook \(MEPDH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins>;
- [Texas Works Handbook \(TWH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

COVID-19 Update: COVID-19 Assistance Payments

Background

On January 27, 2020, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared that a public health emergency exists nationwide due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Additionally, on March 13, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott also declared a state of disaster for all counties in Texas due to the COVID-19 outbreak. HHSC is providing the following temporary guidance regarding policies and procedures for processing case actions during the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE).

COVID-19 Current Policy

The United States Congress passed several COVID-19 relief packages to provide one-time payments to eligible people. These payments, referred to as economic impact payments, stimulus payments, or recovery rebates, are considered tax rebates.

[MEPD and MSP](#)

When determining both eligibility and co-payment, recovery rebates are excluded as income in the month of receipt and are not counted as a resource for 12 months after the month of receipt.

- The 12-month exclusion period is based on the date of receipt.
- Any portion of the payments remaining after the 12-month period will be considered a resource when determining or redetermining eligibility.

COVID-19 New Policy

The Social Security Administration provided additional guidance on the income and resource treatment of COVID-19 related assistance that meets the criteria for disaster related assistance. This bulletin replaces previous guidance provided in MEPD and TW Bulletin 21-06.

[MEPD and MSP](#)

Certain types of assistance received during the COVID-19 public health emergency are considered disaster assistance and are excluded from income and resources. Any funds retained from these disaster related payments are permanently excluded as income and resources.

The following types of COVID-19 related payments are permanently excluded when determining both eligibility and co-payment:

- Economic Impact Payments (EIPs) (also known as Recovery Rebates);
- COVID-19 Funeral Assistance;
- Emergency Rental Assistance Fund;

- Emergency Assistance for Rural Housing/Rural Rental Assistance; and
- Homeowner Assistance Fund.

Automation

Automation changes are not required.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Handbook updates are not required.

Training

Training is not required.

Effective Date

This policy is effective with the release of this bulletin.