SECOND ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS

On Thursday, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued an alert that the second round of Economic Impact Payments (EIP) will be sent by prepaid debit card in an effort to speed the delivery of the payments. To find out if you are getting a payment, use the IRS tool at Get My Payment.

The IRS encourages people to watch their mail carefully as the EIP cards are being sent in a white envelope from the U.S. Department of Treasury and states that is "Not a Bill or an advertisement."

BEWARE OF SCAMS

Scammers are active during COVID-19 and may attempt to take your EIP. Some things to remember:
1. The IRS will not contact people by phone about tax-related matters;
2. The IRS will not insist on prepayment by gift card, prepaid debit card, or wire transfer;
3. The IRS will NEVER request your personal or financial information by email, text, letter, or social media.

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ERAP) "HARD DEADLINE"

January 21, 2021

Last week, we reported that the deadline for tribes or tribal designated housing entities (TDHE) to apply for ERAP funds closed on January 12, 2021. During a tribal consultation call with the Treasury Department on Thursday, January 14, 2021, the Treasury Department stated that the "hard deadline" to apply for the ERAP funds is January 21, 2021. To apply, visit this link.

Tribes or TDHEs that applied by January 12, 2021 should expect payment next week. Please note that in some instances both the tribal government and TDHEs applied. In those cases, the Treasury Department will be reaching out to tribes directly to confirm which application to use.

The Treasury Department must distribute the funds by January 26, 2021, so any tribe/TDHE that does not apply by January 21 will forfeit their portion and that amount will be reallocated and distributed to the tribes that applied.

If you have questions about the application process, email: ERAPapplication@treasury.gov and be sure to cc tribalconsult@treasury.gov to ensure you email is tracked.

If you have any problem with the application forms, email: caresITforms@treasury.gov.

REPORTING SCAMMERS

To report an IRS-Related Coronavirus Scam, please click here.
PRESIDENT-ELECT BIDEN’S STIMULUS APPROACH AND PRIORITIES

On January 14, 2021, President-Elect Biden announced his plan to address the COVID-19 pandemic. President-Elect’s plan will focus on three areas with a $1.9 Trillion plan. First, the plan address a national vaccine program in an effort to contain the virus and reopen schools. Next, the plan focuses on delivering direct relief to working families, including a $1400 stimulus check, housing assistance, childcare assistance, healthcare access, and a federal minimum wage increase. Finally, the plan focuses on supporting communities through small business assistance. The amount is not guaranteed, but highlights priorities for President-Elect Biden.

PANDEMIC EBT PAYMENTS EXTENDED FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

The Pandemic-EBT is available for the full school year for children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. The program was developed last year to help families address concerns of food insecurity during the Pandemic. A household will receive up to $365 per eligible child.

SAFE SCHOOLS FOR ALL

California has developed website for California’s Safe Schools for All Plan. The plan focuses on support and accountability in the phased return of in-person instruction. The website will consolidate key resources for information related to COVID-19 and schools. The website also includes an option for parents to report a concern about COVID in a California school. To make a report, click here.

Visit the California Safe Schools for All website here.

SENIORS 65+ ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE COVID-19 VACCINE

California is prioritizing individuals 65 years and older to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. More information about California’s vaccination plan can be found here.

FCC SEEKING INPUT ON PROVIDING LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS WITH BROADBAND SERVICES AND DEVICES

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is creating a program under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 to reimburse companies for providing discounted broadband and connected devices to low-income eligible households during COVID-19.

Through the program, up to $50 per month will be paid for a broadband connection for each qualifying household. On tribal lands, up to $75 per month. The program will also purchase a device like a phone, laptop, or tablet, to connect to the internet, up to $100. More information about this request for comment can be found here.

WEBINARS

- Tuesday, January 19 at 12:00 PM (PST) 
  EMS Response to COVID-19
  National Indian Health Board (NIHB) will provide an overview of best practices for EMS response to COVID-19. The COVID response model used by the Pueblo of Laguna will be discussed. Visit this link to register.

  January 27-29, 2021 at 9:00 AM (PST) 
  Restoring the Balance: Preparing Tribal Food Systems for Uncertain Times
  The Third Annual Conference focuses on planning resilient food tribal systems, supporting a food resilience movement, and showcasing tribal food system resilience. To learn more visit this link.