

September 10, 2021

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

The purpose of this letter is to inform County Welfare Departments of information and resources for clients seeking to obtain their Economic Impact Payments, authorized by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021 and to announce the launch of the [2020 Tax Filing Information and Resources Hub](#) on the California Department of Social Services website.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

September 10, 2021

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT DIVISION

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES TAX FILING
OUTREACH INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

REFERENCE: [CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY \(CARES\) ACT OF 2020;](#)
[AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021](#)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter is to provide information and resources for County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding the state's outreach plan to help California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and CalFresh program recipients obtain their Economic Impact Payments, also referred to as federal stimulus payments, by filing their 2020 tax return.

In response to COVID-19 and to assist Americans in meeting their basic needs, the federal government passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020, which authorized direct payments to eligible individuals. [All County Welfare Directors Letter, released April 15, 2020,](#) describes how rebates received under the CARES Act are treated within CalFresh, CalWORKs, Refugee Cash Assistance, and Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP).

Additionally, the federal government passed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021. This legislation authorized a third stimulus payment to eligible individuals as well as expanded the Child Tax Credit. In order to receive these payments, individuals must file a 2020 federal income tax return before the extended tax filing deadline of October 15, 2021.

2020 Tax Filing Outreach to CalWORKs and CalFresh Program Recipients

To promote the receipt of the expanded Child Tax Credit and the Economic Impact Payments, the California Department of Social Services will be conducting outreach to recipients of the CalWORKs and CalFresh programs to encourage them to complete the tax filing process for tax year 2020. The outreach effort will consist of messages sent via different modalities including voice messages, emails, and text messages (for clients who have opted in to receive text and email communications). Messages will be sent in English and Spanish and additional resources in Armenian, Arabic, Farsi, and Vietnamese are available on the [CDSS 2020 Tax Filing Information and Resource Hub](#). The messages will be delivered in a staggered fashion so as to not overwhelm county welfare departments with calls from clients. CDSS has prepared a [resource hub](#) and also a Job Aide to support county staff in directing clients to the appropriate resources.

2020 Income Tax Return Filing and Resources Hub

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has launched a [2020 Income Tax Return Filing Information and Resources Hub](#) to support CWDs and community-based organizations supporting clients served by programs that CDSS oversees and other members of the public. Housed on this landing page is an option to choose information and resources for:

- [County Welfare Departments or Community-Based Organizations](#), or
- [Members of the Public](#)

To File a 2020 Income Tax Return

The CDSS has partnered with the California Policy Lab (CPL) through the University of California, Berkeley, and Code for America, who has applied a human centered design approach to filing taxes, resulting in a streamlined, mobile-friendly tax filing platform. In collaboration with these partners, tax filing outreach messages will offer the option to file a full return, typically filed by those individuals with a tax filing obligation, or to fill a simplified return; a new filing option made available in 2020 and 2021 for individuals to claim their economic impacts payments and expanded Child Tax Credits. These options are expanded upon below:

For Non-Filers

For those whose income is below the filing threshold or those without earned income, [click here to file](#) your federal income tax return.

For those with a tax filing obligation

For those with earned income above the filing threshold of \$12,400 (single filer) or \$24,800 (joint filer), [click here to file](#) your federal and state income tax return.

CalWORKs and CalFresh program recipients may receive all three economic impact payments and individuals with dependents may also receive the expanded child tax credit. These specific tax credits are described below. Program recipients may also be eligible for additional income-dependent tax credits *not* described below.

Payment Amounts

Credits	Amount
Economic Impact Payments	1 st : Adult = \$1,200 ; Each Child = \$500 2 nd : Adult = \$600 ; Each Child = \$600 3 rd : Adult = \$1,400 ; Each Child = \$1,400
CTC Monthly July - Dec 2021	Per child 5 years and younger = \$300/month Per child 6-17 = \$250/month *Filing your 2021 income tax return will give you the remaining payment for this tax credit. These changes apply to tax year 2021 only.

Additional information about the economic impact payments is available at: [IRS Economic Impact Payment Information Center](#). Information about the expanded Child Tax Credit is available at: [IRS Child Tax Credit Information Center](#)

If you have questions or need additional guidance regarding the information provided in this letter, contact CalWorksOutreach@dss.ca.gov.

(Attachment)

ATTACHMENT 1: Job Aide For Incoming Calls Concerning 2020 Tax Filing

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is encouraging CalWORKs and CalFresh recipients to file their taxes in order to claim all available economic impact payments, as known as federal stimulus payments. Messages will be sent out to program recipients in early September through to the extended tax filing deadline of October 15, 2021. Additional resources, including outreach message scripts, are available on CDSS' [2020 Income Tax Return Filing and Resources Hub](#). This job aide is intended to support County Welfare Departments (CWDs) in answer questions and reassuring message recipients of the authenticity of the messages received.

Due to the availability of the extended Child Tax Credit and Economic Impact Payments, message recipients, depending on earnings, may have the choice to file a simplified, non-filer return, or a full return. The options and considerations therein are described below:

OPTION 1: Claim all available payments by filing a full 2020 tax return Best for people who worked in 2020 <u>and</u> who have all the required information for a full tax return.	OPTION 2: Claim the federal stimulus payments and Child Tax Credit only Best for people who did not work in 2020 <u>or</u> who don't have the necessary information to file a full tax return.
What are the available Tax Credits? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal stimulus payments• Child Tax Credit• Federal Earned Income Tax Credit• California Earned Income Tax Credit• Golden State Stimulus payments• California Young Child Tax Credit A household with 1 child under the age of 6 can receive an estimated return of: \$12,200 A household with no children can receive an average of: \$4,300	What are the available Tax Credits? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal stimulus payments• Expanded Child Tax Credit A household with 1 child under the age of 6 will receive: \$7,500 A household with no children will receive: \$3,200
What information will I need? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment documents for you and your family (W2's, 1099's, etc.)• Paper copy of Social Security Card or Individual Tax Identification Number paperwork for all members of your family	What information will I need? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social security numbers for you, your spouse, and/or your child(ren), where applicable
How long will it take? Complete over the course of 2-3 weeks Ready to file your tax return? Go to GetYourRefund.org	How long will it take? Complete in 30 mins Ready to claim your federal stimulus and Child Tax Credit? Go to GetCTC.org

Suggested language for “on hold” message:

Did you know the deadline to file your 2020 taxes and claim all federal stimulus payments is October 15, 2021? For help with filing your taxes, please visit <https://www.getyourrefund.org>. Resources are available in both English and Spanish. Make sure you are getting all of the federal stimulus payments available to you by filing your 2020 taxes by October 15, 2021. For more information visit <https://www.getyourrefund.org>. Resources are available in both English and Spanish.

Suggested language for Call Center Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

To get more information about the resources call the CalWORKs outreach line at 916-651-0515 for a pre-recorded message and list of resources.

Key Definitions

Economic Impact Payments, also known as Federal Stimulus Payments: are an advance of a temporary credit for tax year 2020 (which you file for in 2021). Payments are non-taxable income that does not need to be paid back.

Expanded Child Tax Credit: is a temporary tax credit for families with children.

- Children 5 and under: Families will receive \$300 each month for every child 5 and under through December 2021. Families may receive an additional \$1,800 for each child 5 and under in their care by filing their 2021 federal tax return.
- Children 6 to 17: Families will receive \$250 each month for every child 5 and under through December 2021. Families may receive an additional \$1,500 for each child 5 and under in their care by filing their 2021 federal tax return.