

From: Namrata.Mujumdar2@treasury.gov
Subject: RE: Questions on cash assistance
Date: February 10, 2022 at 5:11 PM
To: jgreen@johnsoncountyiowa.gov



Dear Mr. Green,

Thank you very much for your questions, and for your work on behalf of your community. Treasury is committed to ensuring that State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds serve the needs of communities across the country to create a stronger, more equitable recovery. Our guidance makes clear that responding to the needs of the most impacted communities should be a key priority of policymakers in allocating SLFRF funds.

You posed three questions in your email. Below are the questions and Treasury's responses to each. We hope that this helps provide the clarity you need to move forward with your program.

Questions:

1. Ideally, I would like the program application to establish proof of identity, residency, income and exclusion from previous payments. Is an affidavit of self-attestation sufficient for compliance with all of those except identity? E.g., we collect proof of identification and the rest of the application consists of, more or less: "I swear under penalty of perjury I am and have resided in Johnson County, Iowa, since March 3, 2020, my annual income from all sources in calendar years 2020 and 2021 was \$41,880 or less, and I have not received the previous stimulus checks."

Recipients generally have flexibility to determine how best to administer programs and services within the eligible uses; for example, a recipient can determine what types of documentation sufficiently establish that a household is within an eligible population or class. This may vary based on the type of service to be provided and the population to be served; for example, it may be very challenging for some populations like low-income households or unstably housed households to document income or other eligibility characteristics, whereas other populations or classes may be able to provide this information easily. In some circumstances, use of self-attestation or streamlined documentation may be appropriate.

2. Our staff currently argue we must open this program up to anyone under 60% AMI and who can show any number of adverse economic impacts due to the pandemic. If we proceed this way, we will almost certainly need to do a lottery as demand will far outpace our \$2m budget. Is it acceptable to limit the program to those who, as described above, have not received previous stimulus?

Yes, under the final rule, it is acceptable and appropriate to limit a cash assistance program to a subset of an eligible population that has been especially impacted by the pandemic or its negative economic effects, including prioritizing cash assistance for households that have not already received cash assistance to mitigate the hardship the pandemic has caused.

Generally, the populations presumed eligible by Treasury, including the income thresholds established for low- and moderate-income, represent the maximum set of households that are presumed eligible for services; however, a recipient can certainly decide to focus a service on a specific subset of the presumed eligible groups. This could include defining a subset of the presumed eligible population to be served based on the type of negative economic impact being addressed (e.g., focusing assistance on a subset of unemployed workers that did not receive UI). Similarly, a recipient could set a lower threshold for income eligibility than the rule's definitions of low- and moderate-income. A recipient does not need to serve every household in the presumed eligible populations in order for a service to be eligible. In addition, recipients have flexibility to identify other households or classes of households that experienced a negative economic impact of the pandemic (outside of the presumed eligible populations) and provide cash assistance that is reasonably proportional to, and not grossly in excess of, the amount needed to address the negative economic impact.

3. If we *must* open the program up as in (2) above, may we design the lottery to give higher preference to those excluded from previous payments?

As explained above, nothing in the statute or rule requires this outcome. Additionally, eligible uses of funds must be related and reasonably proportional to the extent and type of harm experienced due to the pandemic. The Final Rule notes that "[r]easonably proportional refers to the scale of the response compared to the scale of the harm. It also refers to the targeting of the response to beneficiaries compared to the amount of harm they experienced; for example, it may not be reasonably proportional for a cash assistance program to provide assistance in a very small amount to a group that experienced severe harm and in a much larger amount to a group that experienced relatively little harm."

Thanks,
Namrata

Namrata Mujumdar (she/her)
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From: Jon Green <jgreen@johnsoncountyiowa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 2, 2022 4:40 PM
To: Mujumdar, Namrata <Namrata.Mujumdar2@treasury.gov>
Subject: Questions on cash assistance

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Ms Mujumdar,

I am a county supervisor in Johnson County, Iowa. We supervisors approved allocating \$2 million of our \$28.357m ARPA distribution to an excluded workers fund. We are currently working with our technical staff on program design and, while I understand it is Treasury's position to not pre-approve these programs, I am hopeful you can nevertheless answer a few questions to ensure we get this right.

My preference is to provide a one-time stabilization payment of \$1,400 to those residents of Johnson County (living here since March 3, 2020) who have not received any of the previous stabilization/stimulus payments (i.e., \$1,200+\$600 CARES, \$600+\$600 Consolidated Appropriations Act and \$1,400+\$1,400 ARPA) and make less than 60% of AMI (\$41,880).

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I and many others have been working on this since nearly the day ARPA was signed into law. I have been following your rulemaking and want to express my appreciation for all of the hard work that has gone into this legislation and in your case, its implementation. I hope you find these questions within the realm of assistance Treasury is prepared to provide local jurisdictions, and anticipate your reply.

Very respectfully,
Jon

Jon Green | he, him, his [pronouns matter](#)
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