

2021 COVID Reentry Payment Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated 6/30/21.

1. What is the financial assistance that is available, and what can it be used for?

Through the COVID Reentry Payment program, eligible applicants with completed applications will receive a one-time electronic payment of \$500. The applicant can determine how to use the money to support their reentry. More information about this program is available online at bit.ly/reentrypayment.

2. When will applications be open?

The COVID Reentry Payment program application will open on Tuesday, April 6th, 2021.

3. How long will the application be open, and how much assistance will be available?

The application will be open until the available assistance runs out. We hope to be able to make payments to at least 650 people. We do not know how long that will take, so we encourage applicants to complete the application steps as quickly as possible.

4. Who Can Apply?

To be eligible, an applicant must meet all of these criteria:

- Released from the Philadelphia Department of Prisons on State Road (CFCF, PICC, ASD, RCF or DC) between 3/1/2020 and 6/30/2021.
- Be a resident of Philadelphia.

- Have had an annual gross income equal to or less than \$33,000 in 2020.
- Have or will have a bank account, mobile banking account, or reloadable debit card in their name that accepts direct deposits.

5. How do I apply?

The steps of the application are:

1. Applicant completes Part 1 of the Application online: bit.ly/reentrypayapp.
2. Applicant submits documentation by email. See Question 6.
3. Someone from the Office of Reentry Partnerships will contact the applicant to complete Part 2 of the application over the phone.

Each eligible applicant will be prioritized in the order they complete Part 1 of the application, however, the application cannot be completed until the required documents are received.

6. What documents do I need to apply?

Applicants must submit two types of required documentation by email to reentrypayment@phila.gov:

1. A signed self-certification form confirming the applicant's identity and eligibility, and that the financial assistance will be used to support the applicant's reentry. This form is available online [here](#).
2. **Official Banking Document:** To receive the electronic payment, applicant must submit **one** of the following:
 - a. A bank document with your name, account number, and routing number;
 - b. A document with your name, account number, bank name, and bank address;
 - c. A document or image including your name, a routing and account number for a mobile banking application or pre-paid debit card.

Example documents include direct deposit form, voided check, or bank statement.

Identification is not required to complete the application. If you do have any type of photo ID, please email it with the required documents.

7. How will I know after I complete Part 1 if I am eligible?

The Office of Reentry Partnerships will contact eligible applicants as quickly as we are able in order to complete Part 2 of the application over the phone. Having already received the required documents from the applicant by email will speed up this process.

The Office of Reentry Partnerships will also attempt to contact applicants who are found NOT eligible to let them know.

8. How do I calculate my gross annual income?

To calculate your gross annual income, include all income you earned in 2020.

Gross income means before taxes and payroll deductions are taken out. It includes:

- Wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses;
- Net earnings if you own your own business.
- Interest, dividends, or other income from real or personal property;
- Any payments you get on a regular basis like Social Security or a pension;
- Payments such as unemployment, disability, worker's comp, TANF, child support or alimony

It does NOT include:

- Payments received for care of a foster child or adult;
- Lump sum inheritance or insurance payments
- Payments to cover the cost of medical expenses for any family member, including to support a family member with a developmental disability;
- Student financial aid paid directly to the student or to the educational institution;
- Most deferred SSI, Social Security or VA disability benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts

9. How will payments be received?

All payments will be by electronic ACH payment. If you do not have a bank account, we can make payments to some payment apps or to prepaid debit cards that support ACH.

10. Will receiving this assistance impact my benefits?

TANF and Medicaid benefits will not be affected.

For most individuals and families, SNAP benefits will not be affected. A very small number of households must meet a resource test to remain eligible for SNAP benefits in Pennsylvania. If you think this may apply to you, you can call your County Assistance Office (CAO) for additional guidance.

11. What if I need help?

If you are already connected to a community organization, ask them if they are able to help you complete the initial online application, and any subsequent steps of the application.

For help completing Part 1 of the application online:

- **JEVS Looking Forward Philadelphia Program**
 - Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm, Walk-ins are allowed but preferable to schedule an appointment
 - Contact:
 - By Phone: 484-533-7002
 - By Email: lookingforward@jevs.org
 - Address: 1526 Cecil B. Moore

- **Fruits of the Family Table**
 - Remote support: Wednesdays 10am-1pm, contact for evening and weekend appointments
 - Contact Mrs. Wilson:
 - By Phone: 267-410-6188
 - By Email: s.wilsonft@gmail.com

For help submitting required documents:

- **JEVS Looking Forward Philadelphia Program**
 - See hours and contact information above.

For help opening a bank account:

- **JEVS Looking Forward Philadelphia Program**
 - See hours and contact information above.
- **City of Philadelphia Financial Empowerment Centers:**
 - Remote support: 1-855-346-7445
- **For information on how to open up a Bank Account**, visit www.phila.gov/bankon

For help obtaining identification:

- **City of Philadelphia Office of Reentry Partnerships** can help obtain a “face sheet” from the Phila. Department of Prisons for documentation towards a PHL City ID.
 - Contact Gil Coleman by phone: 215-685-0771.
 - ORP will cover the cost of the ID.
 - More info about PHL City ID and to make an appointment: <https://www.phila.gov/programs/phl-city-id/>
- **JEVS Looking Forward Philadelphia Program** can help obtain and cover the cost of identification.
 - See hours and contact information above.

If You Have Questions About the Application

Contact the Office of Reentry Partnerships with questions about the application by:

- Calling 267-601-4087, 10am-12pm Tuesdays or 12pm-2pm Wednesdays
- Emailing reentrypayment@phila.gov with “help” in the subject line

12. How will the information I provide be used?

The information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this application.

13. Am I responsible for providing documentation about how I use the payment?

No, you are not responsible for providing any documentation after you receive the payment. However, the Office of Reentry Partnerships may contact you 3-6 months after you receive the payment to ask if you will voluntarily share how the financial assistance supported your reentry.

14. Why did the Office of Reentry Partnerships create this program?

The Office of Reentry Partnerships created this program in light of the challenges people experience with reentry during COVID-19. This includes living in a congregate setting while in custody, returning to families and communities impacted by COVID-19, increased uncertainty and unknowns, high unemployment, widespread financial insecurity, reduced access to support services and overburdened social service systems, and reduced access to benefits available to the general public.

15. Why are only people released from the Philadelphia Department of Prisons eligible?

The Office of Reentry Partnerships believes it is our responsibility to do as much as we can to support Philadelphians who have been incarcerated in City jails, which in the case of this program means prioritizing them to receive this assistance.

16. Why is the income limit \$33,000 annual gross income?

This annual gross income is based on what HUD defines as very low income.

17. How long does the application process take?

From submitting Part 1 of the application to receiving payment may take several weeks to a few months, depending on staff capacity, if we run into any difficulty confirming an applicant's eligibility, and the timeliness and accuracy of document submission. To ensure the process moves quickly, we recommend emailing all the required documents as soon as possible and to check your email routinely.

18. I received an email confirmation that payment was made. What do I do if I have not received payment?

Once you receive email confirmation, the payment may still take a few weeks to transfer into your account. If you do not see payment within two weeks, please email reentrypayment@phila.gov or call 267-601-4087 to check the status of your application.

19. Can I apply and receive multiple payments?

The program is limited to one payment per eligible applicant at this time. For more reentry support, please reach out to the Office of Reentry Partnerships by calling (215) 683-3370, emailing rise@phila.gov, or filling out this [request for reentry support by phone](#).