

FACT SHEET: Treasury to Work to Ensure Families Get Access to Economic Impact Payments

January 22, 2021

In response to President Biden's COVID-19 Economic Relief Executive Order launching an all-of-government effort to provide economic relief, the U.S. Department of the Treasury will work to stand up an effort to help households who have not yet been able to access their stimulus payments get much-needed relief. As many as 8 million households may be eligible for but have not yet received payments from the CARES Act signed in March; many of these households could be legally entitled to as much as \$1,200 per adult. As the Treasury Department works to secure a full \$2,000 in direct payments for adults as part of the American Rescue Plan, it will take steps designed to reach as many of these missed households as possible – providing financial relief to a population that may be especially struggling during this crisis.

Over the past year, career staff at Treasury and the IRS have done remarkable work delivering payments as quickly as possible to millions of households. As part of this new effort, Treasury will build on that work done to date – incorporating lessons learned over the past year – to reach households who either were not issued payments or who otherwise were unable to access their funds. Doing so will not only help households get billions in relief they are entitled to and need, but can increase the reach of new direct payments if Congress enacts them.

In particular, the Treasury Department will:

- 1. Establish online tools for claiming their payments:** Last year, the IRS established new tools in collaboration with outside partners that allowed individuals who had not filed tax returns to simply provide the information needed to demonstrate their eligibility for stimulus payments. Treasury and IRS will build on that work to create in the coming

weeks simple options for people who have not filed an income tax return to do so. In addition, efforts will be taken to reach people who may not have access to the Internet or who may be non-English speakers.

2. **Work to reach households who were issued – but did not cash – payments:** Hundreds of thousands of CARES Act checks and debit cards have not been cashed or activated – for example, if the recipient mistakenly discarded the delivery. The IRS and Treasury will work quickly to either reissue unclaimed benefits or conduct outreach with those who did not claim their benefits to encourage claiming the benefit on their 2020 tax return, while taking steps to prevent fraud by – for example – turning off previously-issued debit cards when new payments are made.

3. **Analyze unserved households:** Developing a better understanding of which groups of potentially eligible households have not filed for and received Economic Impact Payments could allow the IRS and Treasury, as well as partners, to target their outreach efforts. For example, such research would allow greater outreach in ZIP codes with higher levels of non-payment or to households who benefit from other government assistance programs.