

# Page Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

## ARP Act Financial Assistance Programs

\*Applications are at [www.ebci.com/covidrecovery](http://www.ebci.com/covidrecovery). Members without internet access, members who need assistance completing the application, or those with a question about a submitted application can contact the EBCI ARP Call Center for assistance at (828)359-7067 or [ARP@ebci-nsn.gov](mailto:ARP@ebci-nsn.gov)

### COVID-19 Relief Payments to Adult Members

- \$1,200 one-time payment per EBCI enrolled adult member.
- Qualifying applications received by July 9, 2021, will be paid on July 16, 2021.
- Payments will be made in the same way your per capita payment is distributed, either direct deposit or a mailed check. For the July 16, 2021, adult and minor assistance payments, the deadline to make address and direct deposit changes at the Tribal Enrollment Office is July 9, 2021, at 4:30pm.
- Must be born before 7/1/2003.
- Must have a demonstrated negative impact to the enrolled member or household as a result of COVID-19.
- The application asks for an estimated household income so the EBCI can gather information for reporting purposes. Your household income will not disqualify you from receiving the assistance.
- No residency requirements. Open to all EBCI enrolled members regardless of where they live.
- The application will remain open after 7/9/2021. Adult assistance payments will be processed on the last Friday of each month for those who have not already received their payment and who may miss the July 9th deadline. An announcement will be made when the application site will permanently close.

### COVID-19 Relief & School Readiness for Minor Members

- \$600 one-time payment per EBCI enrolled minor member.
- Complete and qualifying applications received by July 9, 2021, will be paid on July 16, 2021.
- Payments will be made in the same way your per capita payment is distributed, either direct deposit or a mailed check. For the July 16, 2021, adult and minor assistance payments, the deadline to make address and direct deposit changes at the Tribal Enrollment Office is July 9, 2021, at 4:30pm.
- Must have an EBCI enrolled minor member(s) in the household with a date of birth between 7/1/2003 and 7/1/2021.
- Applicant must be the primary care provider for the minor enrolled member(s) in the household.
- Must have a demonstrated negative impact to the enrolled member or household as a result of COVID-19.
- If applicant is not an enrolled member, applicant must also submit a completed IRS Form W-9.
- No residency requirements. Open to all EBCI enrolled members regardless of where they live.
- The application will remain open after 7/9/2021. Adult assistance payments will be processed on the last Friday of each month for those who have not already received their payment and who may miss the July 9th deadline. An announcement will be made when the application site will permanently close.

### COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program

- \$500 one-time payment per household paid directly to the energy service provider.
- Must have at least one EBCI enrolled member living in the household.
- The electric bill does NOT have to be in the enrolled member's name.
- The account must be a residential ACTIVE account.
- Must have a demonstrated negative impact to the enrolled member or household as a result of COVID-19.
- No residency requirements. Open to all EBCI enrolled members regardless of where they live.
- After you submit a qualifying and complete application, it will take approximately one month for the energy assistance payment to show up on your power bill. Please plan for the process time and continue to pay on your account.
- We have not set an application deadline for energy assistance. An announcement will be made when the application site will permanently close.

# ARP: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for Tribal Governments

These funds represent a historic investment in Indian Country and provide a substantial infusion of resources to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery. Recipients may use these funds to:

- **Support public health expenditures**
- **Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency**
- **Replace lost public sector revenue**
- **Provide premium pay for essential workers**
- **Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure**

Within these categories of eligible uses the following services are also eligible when provided by a Tribal government:

- **Addressing health disparities and the social determinants of health**, including community health workers, public benefits navigators, remediation of lead paint or other lead hazards, and community violence intervention programs
- **Building stronger neighborhoods and communities**, including supportive housing and other services for individuals experiencing homelessness, development of affordable housing, and housing vouchers and counseling
- **Addressing educational disparities exacerbated by COVID-19**, including early learning services, decreasing funding gaps between low- and high-poverty districts, and educational services or tutoring for at-risk students
- **Promoting healthy childhood environments**, including childcare, home visiting programs, and enhanced services for child welfare-involved families and foster youth

## EBCI Allocation Strategy

### Financial Assistance to Tribal Members

\$16,500,000

- Financial Assistance to Adult Members
- Financial Assistance for Minor Members
- Energy Assistance Program

### Building Stronger Neighborhoods & Communities

\$32,000,000

- Housing Infrastructure
- Community Pool and Recreation
- HELP Program Expansion
- Language Revitalization

### Broadband Expansion

\$20,000,000

### Small Business & Tourism Assistance Programs

\$8,000,000

### Long Term Care

\$25,000,000

- Tsali Care Center Phase 1

### Education

\$5,000,000

### Lost Revenue

\$10,500,000



## Financial Assistance to Tribal Members

### Energy Assistance Program

\$500.00 per household paid directly to the service provider. Open to all enrolled EBCI members regardless of where they live.

### COVID Relief Payments to Adult Members

\$1,200.00 to every qualifying adult member to address lost household income and increased household expenses related to COVID-19.

### COVID Relief & School Readiness for Minor Members

\$600.00 for every qualifying minor member to address increased household costs due to remote learning, increased cost of childcare, and to help children prepare for in-person or continued remote learning. The payment will be distributed to the primary care provider for the minor enrolled member(s) of the household.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Q. When can EBCI tribal members begin applying for the assistance programs and what are the deadlines?

A. Applications will be available online starting June 14, 2021 at [www.ebci.com/covidrecovery](http://www.ebci.com/covidrecovery). Members without internet access, members who need assistance completing the application, or those with questions about a submitted application can contact the EBCI ARP Call Center for assistance at (828)359-7067 or ARP@ebci-nsn.gov. **All complete and qualifying applications for adult or minor assistance received by July 9, 2021 will be paid on July 16, 2021.** The application site will be left open, and minor/adult assistance payments will be processed on the last Friday of each month for those members who cannot apply by July 9, 2021. Currently we have not set an application deadline for energy assistance. After you submit a qualifying and complete application, it will take approximately one month for the energy assistance payment to show up on your power bill. Please plan for the process time and continue to pay on your account. An announcement will be made when the application site will permanently close.

## Q. How will adult assistance and minor assistance payments be distributed?

A. Adult and minor assistance payments will be made in the same way your per capita payment is distributed, either direct deposit or a mailed check. **For the July 16, 2021 adult and minor assistance payments, the deadline to make address and direct deposit changes at the Tribal Enrollment Office is July 9, 2021 at 4:30pm.**

## Q. Who qualifies for COVID-19 energy assistance?

A. To qualify for the \$500 COVID-19 energy assistance an enrolled member must live in the household. The account must be a residential ACTIVE account to receive the payment. The electric bill does NOT have to be in the enrolled member's name. With the previous energy assistance program (LightenUp) participation was restricted to the 7-county service area in Western North Carolina. The energy assistance program being offered now will be open to all tribal members regardless of where they live.

## Q. If I applied for adult assistance, minor assistance, or LightenUp previously, do I need to apply again?

A. Yes. Information from the previous applications will not be used for these new assistance payments.

## Q. How did leadership arrive at the \$1,200 per adult member for the COVID Relief Payments?

A. The guidance provided by the United States Department of Treasury states direct financial assistance payments are allowable to the extent a household has experienced a negative economic impact related to COVID-19. This means the tribe is not allowed to send direct payments without verifying the extent of economic impact. The guidelines also state the direct financial assistance must be a reasonable amount and when considering the appropriate size of permissible direct financial assistance take guidance from the stimulus amounts previously provided by the federal government. Under the CARES ACT, COVID-related Tax Relief Act, and ARP Act, the federal government provided stimulus payments totaling \$3,200 per adult. The EBCI provided direct financial assistance in December 2020 totaling \$2,000 per adult member, therefore the EBCI is confident making an additional \$1,200 adult assistance payment will not create a compliance issue.

## Q. How was the amount determined for the COVID Relief & School Readiness for Minor Members assistance?

A. The EBCI looked at the national average costs of school supplies, childcare, technology costs, educational disparities among tribal youth, and federal programs to arrive at the \$600 per minor benefit.

## Q. Where can I find more details on the United States Department of Treasury's guidelines for the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for Tribal Governments?

A. The Interim Final Rule which specifies the eligible uses of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, can be found at [www.treasury.gov/SLFRPTribal](http://www.treasury.gov/SLFRPTribal)

## Q. What is the risk to the EBCI for not complying with the guidelines?

A. The EBCI is required to treat this funding like any other federal award, which includes compliance and financial reporting. This funding will be audited for compliance as part of the tribe's annual financial audit. Additionally, tribes can be required to participate in audits from the United States Office of Inspector General. Tribes who act outside the established guidelines will be required to repay funding to the United States Department of Treasury.

## Q. Why does the EBCI require an application for the assistance programs?

A. Under the guidelines provided by the United States Department of Treasury direct payments must be relative to the economic impact on each household. The best way to ensure the EBCI is compliant with these provisions is to provide self-certification of impact through an application. Per capita payments to everyone without an assessment of individual need would go against the eligible uses of Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.

## Q. How was enrollment data used to determine the amount of funding? What other data was used?

A. The ARP Act's Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds allocated \$20 billion to Tribal governments, where \$1 billion was allocated equally among eligible Tribal governments. The remaining \$19 billion is allocated by 65% of those funds, or \$12.35 billion, distributed based on Tribal enrollment, and 35% of those funds, or \$6.65 billion, distributed based on Tribal government and Tribal entities' employment numbers. Each tribe receiving fiscal recovery funds was required to submit their certified enrollment numbers and submit their total number of employees for the Tribal government and Tribal entities.

## Q. Who are the external consultants that presented ARP Act guidelines to Council?

A. The EBCI is required to complete a financial audit each year and our external audit firm for a three-year period is Baker Tilly. We engaged a separate division of Baker Tilly to help us with ensuring compliance to the United States Department of Treasury's guidelines on eligible uses of Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. Baker Tilly is currently engaged with approximately twenty other tribes to provide consulting on ARP Act compliance, and they have an immense amount of expertise on the requirements of expending Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.

## Q. How long does EBCI have to expend the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds?

A. Funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026.