

Solve M.E. Answers Reader Questions



Q: *I receive Social Security benefits, and I'm confused about what steps I need to take in order to be eligible to receive the \$1,200 COVID-19 payment from the government. I don't usually file a tax return, but do I need to file one this year in order to get the payment? -- Lisa*

A: The Department of the Treasury (Treasury) announced on April 1 that Social Security beneficiaries who are not typically required to file tax returns will not need to file an abbreviated tax return to receive an economic impact payment. The IRS will use the information on the Form SSA-1099 to generate \$1,200 economic impact payments to Social Security beneficiaries who did not file tax returns in 2018 or 2019.

Treasury, not Social Security, will make automatic payments to Social Security beneficiaries. Beneficiaries will receive these payments by direct deposit or by paper check, just as they would normally receive their Social Security benefits.

For updates from the IRS, visit www.irs.gov/coronavirus, and be sure to check Social Security's COVID-19 web page at www.socialsecurity.gov/coronavirus/ for updates, too.

Q: *I've read that viral outbreaks like COVID-19 triggered ME/CFS-like illnesses in people who'd been infected. Do you plan to study COVID-19 in order to possibly learn more about ME/CFS? -- Robin*

A: We believe our You + M.E. Registry and Bio-bank is well-suited to track both the impact of COVID-19 on people with ME/CFS and the development of ME/CFS-like symptoms following COVID-19 exposure. To that end, we've integrated a COVID-19 questionnaire in the You + M.E. survey dashboard so that we can track the impact of COVID-19 on the health of people with pre-existing ME/CFS.

We've also initiated partnerships with established COVID-19 registries and apps to include questions that ask participants whether they have developed post-viral ME/CFS-like symptoms. If they answer yes, they will be referred to You + M.E. so they can provide more comprehensive information. We believe the combination of these two actions will enhance our collective understanding of the short and long-term impacts of COVID-19.

You can learn more at You + M.E. Registry <https://youandmeregistry.com/>.