



“Kristian Lamb in Columbus, GA received a \$1,200 payment, which she used to pay accumulated bills. But she didn’t get the additional \$1,500 she expected for her three children under age 12, and she can’t figure out why. **“It is hard being a single mother of three...I only can just sit around and wait and just try to survive,”** she said.

## Congress must provide monthly payments of \$2,000 for every adult and child throughout this crisis.

The federal government must deliver direct cash payments to every adult and child in need. Direct cash assistance is fast, [efficient](#), and [well-targeted to those who need it most](#).

Any direct cash assistance program must meet the following criteria:

1. Payments must be big enough to ensure that families can make ends meet with at least \$2,000 for each adult and child;
2. Payments must be easily available to everyone in need, especially low-income families, underbanked communities through preloaded EBT cards, and those who did not qualify for the first round of payments through the CARES Act; and
3. Payments must be made monthly until the economic crisis subsides.

**Every adult—and every child—should receive a payment of \$2,000 a month.** This cash will ensure that families get money as quickly as possible and have the flexibility to pay their bills, cover their rent, seek necessary health care, and put food on the table, all of which will also help stimulate the economy. The \$2,000 payment for both adults and children is based on [a proposal introduced in March by Senators Brown, Bennet, and Booker](#).

**Federal estimates show the monthly cost of raising a child—including housing, food, clothing, health care, child care and education, among other things—ranges between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a month.** Unfortunately, the payment disparity built into the CARES Act meant that a two-adult household with no children received more money (\$2,400) than a single parent with two children (\$2,200). We know that [single parents, especially single mothers of color, are already more likely to live in poverty and experience economic insecurity](#). During this pandemic, families need more support as they deal with not only the high cost of raising children but also the additional pressure to act as breadwinners, caregivers, playmates, and educators for their children all at the same time.

**Additionally, Congress must expand cash assistance for groups excluded from direct assistance under the CARES Act** including:

- immigrant workers and their families (both ITIN filers and mixed-status households);
- dependent children over the age of 16;
- older youth claimed as dependents by their parents; and
- children living with kinship caregivers outside the formal child welfare system.

The Treasury Department must also identify everyone eligible for these payments and make sure payments actually get to them, especially people who are low-income and don’t file taxes, are unbanked, or are experiencing homelessness.

**Direct cash payments should continue monthly until the economy recovers so American families can stay afloat and provide ongoing stimulus to the economy.** The need for such ongoing assistance is clear: the [Congressional Budget Office estimates](#) the unemployment rate will rise to 16 percent during 2020 and remain above 10 percent through next year.

Congress should continue these payments until the unemployment rate returns to its pre-crisis levels, and after the crisis ends, payments should restart if the economy falters. Americans are demanding robust and comprehensive action to support our communities through the pandemic: [a recent poll showed 70 percent of Americans agree that Congress needs to do more](#).

## After these payments phase out, we need permanent policy changes to reduce child poverty.

Once the COVID-19 pandemic and economic fallout passes, and the direct cash assistance program winds down, Congress should adopt permanent measures to ensure children and families are *always* supported. A fully refundable and expanded Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), coupled with increases to basic needs programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and housing vouchers would lift millions of children out of poverty and strengthen our nation’s economic future.