



Agudath Israel of Florida

Guidance for Individuals, Small Businesses and Non-Profits

The federal government and many state governments have implemented major changes in order to help individuals, small businesses, and non-profits get through the Covid-19 pandemic. Agudath Israel has worked with its team of professionals and volunteers from around the country to provide detailed guidance on these changes and will continue to provide additional information as this evolves.

Please keep in mind that decisions should not be made without consulting your tax professionals, legal counsel and financial professionals. We have made the best possible effort to make sure this information is accurate and up-to-date, but the regulatory landscape is changing hour to hour.

Individuals:

Stimulus Payments:

The CARES Act will provide one-time non-taxable cash payments to most Americans. Most adults will receive \$1,200 for themselves and an additional \$500 for every qualifying child. The payment decreases for individuals with an adjusted gross income above \$75,000, and fully phases out for individuals with no children if their adjusted gross income is \$99,000 or above. Couples filing jointly are eligible for the full stimulus payment if they make less than \$150,000 annually; it fully phases out for families with no children at \$198,000.

Payments will be based on your 2019 tax return, or if you have not yet filed this year, your 2018 tax return. You do not need to apply for the payment. If the IRS already has your bank account information it will be direct-deposited to your account. If the IRS does not have your direct deposit information, a check will be mailed to your address.

Unemployment:

The CARES Act creates a temporary Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program through December 31, 2020 to provide payment to those not

traditionally eligible for unemployment benefits (people who are self-employed, independent contractors, those with limited work history, and others) who are unable to work as a direct result of the coronavirus public health emergency. Specifically, the CARES Act provides that a “covered individual” includes anyone who self-certifies that they are able and available to work but is unemployed or partially unemployed due to any of the following:

- Has been **diagnosed with COVID-19** or is **experiencing symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis**;
- A **member of the individual’s household** has been **diagnosed with COVID-19**;
- The individual is **providing care** for a **family member** or household member who has been **diagnosed with COVID-19**;
- The individual is the **primary caregiver for a child** or other person in the household **who is unable to attend school** or another facility as a direct result of COVID-19;
- The individual is unable to work because a health care provider has advised the individual to **self-quarantine** due to COVID-19 concerns;
- The individual was **scheduled to commence** employment and **does not have a job** or is unable to reach the job as a direct result of COVID-19;
- The individual has to **quit their job** as a direct result of COVID-19; or
- The individual’s **place of employment is closed** as a direct result of COVID-19.

The law also applies to those who are self-employed (and independent contractors). As well as individuals are not eligible for benefits if they have the ability to telework with pay or are receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits. Part-time workers are also eligible for benefits, to calculate the amount click [here](#) . They are also eligible for the additional \$600 weekly benefit.

Other key features of the new unemployment benefits include:

- The amount of benefits includes the amount that would be calculated under state law **plus \$600 per week** for up to four months.
- Waiver of the usual one-week waiting period.

Retirement accounts:

Individuals may also be able to tap into retirement accounts. The provision waives the 10% early withdrawal penalty for distributions up to \$100,000

from qualified retirement accounts for coronavirus-related purposes made on or after January 1, 2020. In addition, income attributable to such distributions would be subject to tax over three years, and the taxpayer may recontribute the funds to an eligible retirement plan within three years without regard to that year's cap on contributions. Further, the provision provides flexibility for loans from certain retirement plans for coronavirus-related relief.

Student Loans:

Until September 30th, all payments to government held student loans will be automatically suspended.

Mortgage and Rent Forbearance

The legislation provides relief for homeowners and renters, ensuring that Americans' homes are not threatened by the coronavirus.

- It enables payment forbearance for federally backed mortgages, requires a foreclosure and eviction moratorium for homeowners with such mortgages, and imposes an eviction moratorium for renters in federally supported housing.

For assistance with this process, please call Agudath Israel's Mortgage Assistance Hotline: 718-435-1300 extension 120. Leave a clear message as prompted, and a SBCO Counselor will return your call as soon as possible.

In addition, many banks and credit card companies are willing to temporarily suspend other loan payments. Please contact your lender.

The Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act:

For a helpful Q & A, see here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions> Here is a summary:

The Act provides financial assistance to employees who are unable to work due to the closure of a child's day care or school due to a Public Health emergency (the child must be below 18 years old). The employee will receive 2/3 of their salary capped at \$200 a day. The first ten days of leave is unpaid, but one may use paid sick leave or other paid time off (PTO). The employee cannot be forced to use PTO. The program lasts up to 12 weeks.

If an organization has completely closed and there is no work for employees, they cannot go on family leave.

If parts of the organization remained open, those employees who would otherwise still be working and who have work to do, but cannot due to the need to care for a child, are eligible for family leave.

Employers will be completely reimbursed as a tax credit.

This act does not apply to employers who have more than 500 employees.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act:

The same Q & A linked before also provides guidance on this: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>

This Act provides financial assistance to an employee (as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act) who is unable to work due to either:

- being subject to a quarantine or self-isolation order due to COVID-19 (the order can come from government or medical advice to do so); or,
- caring for a family member who is in quarantine or self-isolation; or
- closure of a school or childcare due to COVID-19 concerns.

If the employee went on sick leave because he or she was quarantined/ self-isolated they are capped at \$511/day, and \$5,110 total.

Small Businesses and NonProfit Businesses:

There are several programs in the CARES Act to help small businesses.

The Payroll Protection Program (PPP):

This program allocates \$350 billion to help small businesses retain their workers. It provides Small Business Administration (SBA) loans that may be forgiven if borrowers maintain their payrolls through the crisis or restore them afterward. These loans are potentially 100% forgivable if used to keep workers on payroll during the “covered period” of Feb. 15 – June 30, 2020. You must apply for forgiveness of your loan, and certain documentation will be required.

Your business may be eligible for a PPP loan if you have less than 500 employees. Sole proprietors, independent contractors, and self-employed individuals who regularly carry on a trade or business can also apply.

The maximum “loan” you can apply for is 2.5 times the average monthly payroll costs in the 12 months prior to the loan origination date, up to \$10 million. There are exclusions, including employee compensation that exceeds \$100,000 annually.

The loan may be used for operational expenses such as payroll, health benefits, paid leave, mortgage or lease payments, utilities, and interest on debt incurred prior to February 15, 2020.

Borrowers can qualify for loan forgiveness equal to the following costs incurred during the covered 8-week period:

- payroll costs,
- interest payments on covered loan obligations, and
- covered rent and utility payments.
- Payroll includes parsonage, health care benefits, paid time off (PTO), and retirement benefits.
- For educational institutions, payroll does not include qualified tuition reimbursement (QTR) or the amount of employee salaries that is above \$100,000.

Forgiveness amounts will be decreased for any reductions in the number of employees or reductions in wages 25% or more when comparing the covered period of employment to that same period in 2019. The interest rate on the loan is 4%.

Loans will be made by SBA-approved lenders, which include most major national banks. The SBA is setting the guidelines, and the banks will be processing loan applications. **Please contact your bank asap!**

Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs):

EIDLs are low-interest SBA loans of up to \$2 million that are being made available to small businesses that are suffering substantial economic injury due to COVID-19. The SBA is processing loan applications for small businesses and nonprofits. The application can be found here: <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>

Additional assistance can be found [here](#).

Taking out an EIDL can impact your eligibility for a PPP loan, thus it may be advisable to pursue a PPP loan first. Applying for an EIDL, however, has other advantages, such as the Emergency Economic Injury Grant (see next section).

Emergency Economic Injury Grants:

These grants provide an emergency advance of up to \$10,000 to small businesses and private non-profits harmed by COVID-19 within three days of applying for an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). To access the advance, you first apply for an EIDL and then request the advance. The advance does not need to be repaid under any circumstance, and may be used to keep employees on payroll, to pay for sick leave, meet increased production costs due to supply chain disruptions, or pay business obligations, including debts, rent and mortgage payments.

Employee retention credit for employers subject to closure due to COVID-19:

There is a refundable payroll tax credit for 50% of wages paid by employers to employees when the workplace is fully or partially closed due to COVID-19 or gross receipts declined by more than 50% when compared to same quarter as last year. For employers of over 100 employees, the credit can only apply to retained employees who are not providing services due to COVID-19; employers of under 100 employees can apply to all employees. The credit is capped at \$10,000 per employee and applies to compensation and health benefits through the end of 2020.

Delay of payment of employer payroll taxes:

This allows employers to defer payment of the employer contribution to the Social Security tax over the next two years (first half due December 31, 2021; second half is due December 31, 2022). This cannot be combined with forgiveness of the PPP loan.

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- caring for a family member who is in quarantine or self-isolation; or
- closure of a school or childcare due to COVID-19 concerns.

If the employee went on sick leave because he or she was quarantined/ self-isolated they are capped at \$511/day, and \$5,110 total.

If an employee is caring for an individual that is sick or quarantined, or has a child home due to school closure, then they are eligible for 2/3 of regular pay, capped at \$200/day and \$2,000 in total.

The employer will be reimbursed 100% through a tax credit.

Unemployment:

Under the new stimulus package, eligible workers would receive an extra \$600 per week on top of their state benefit. Part time employees are eligible as well.

If you own a business which closed due to coronavirus, your employees are eligible for unemployment.

This unemployment counts as income and would affect other programs the employee may be eligible for, except for CHIP and Medicaid. An employee who was already on unemployment and exhausted their benefits can still reapply and will be eligible for at least 13 weeks of the \$600 increase.

A non-profit which is self-pay for unemployment insurance will split the cost 50/50 with the federal government. It is still unclear if this split includes the additional \$600, or if the federal government will cover that completely.

FLORIDA PROGRAMS:

Business Damage Assessment Survey:

The [Business Damage Assessment Survey](#) is a critical piece of DEO's efforts to help gather the information needed to evaluate and access tools to help businesses potentially lessen the impacts of COVID-19 and help the economy recover. To submit a survey response, please visit [FloridaDisaster.biz](#).

Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program:

The Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) works with the Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network and Florida First Capital Finance Corporation to provide cash flow to businesses economically impacted by COVID-19. Currently, \$50 million has been allocated for the program. The application period [opened](#) March 17, 2020 and runs [through May 8, 2020](#). Visit [FloridaDisaster.biz](#) to learn more.

Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan:

The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides small businesses with working capital loans up to \$2 million that can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue businesses may be experiencing. For more information, visit [FloridaDisaster.biz](#).

Short-Time Compensation Program:

The [Short-Time Compensation Program](#) is designed to provide prorated Reemployment Assistance benefits to employees that have had work hours and earnings reduced as part of a Short-Time Compensation plan to avoid a total layoff of some employees. This program allows Employers to avoid the expense of recruiting, hiring, and training new workers when business conditions improve. More about the Short-time Compensation Program can be found on [FloridaJobs.org](#)

Reemployment Assistance (RA) Benefits:

[Reemployment Assistance](#) provides temporary wage replacement benefits to eligible individuals who are out of work through no fault of their own. If your employment has been negatively impacted as a result of the mitigation

efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19, you may be eligible to receive RA benefits. RA claims are handled by the CONNECT system.

You can file your claim by accessing CONNECT through www.floridajobs.org in the Reemployment Assistance Service Center in the right-hand corner of the page. People who need assistance filing a claim online because of legal reasons, computer illiteracy, language barriers, or disabilities may call 1-800-204-2418 or visit FloridaJobs.org

Temporary Layoff Program:

A [Temporary Layoff](#) occurs when the employee is separated from their job due to lack of work, and the employee has a return-to-work date within eight weeks of the separation. An employee that is temporarily laid off from work may be eligible for RA benefits. You can file your claim by accessing CONNECT through www.floridajobs.org in the Reemployment Assistance Service Center in the right-hand corner of the page. People who need assistance filing a claim may call 1-800-204-2418 or visit FloridaJobs.org.