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Premium Pay Rollout Begins in June, OMB Confirms; 800 Private Sector Applications Received

Exclusive / **Published On May 26, 2022 04:29 AM /**

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The Bryan administration will start issuing Premium Pay checks to both private and public sector employees beginning in June, after receiving about 800 applications from the private sector following the announcement of the program.

That's according to Office of Management and Budget Director Jenifer O'Neal, whose powerful office manages the program. Speaking relative to government employees, Ms. O'Neal told the Consortium Wednesday that all departments were asked to submit their completed spreadsheets with all applicable information by May 20, while the semi-autonomous and autonomous entities have until June 10 to submit, she said.

Each U.S. state, territory, and tribal government will receive their portion of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, which includes an amount for Premium Pay stimulus checks. The U.S. Virgin Islands was allocated \$547.1 million from ARPA, and as of January, the territory was in receipt of \$531 million. For the Premium Pay program, \$40 million was set aside by Governor Albert Bryan.

"We intend to begin payments in June beginning with the private health care sector which includes pharmacies, doctors' offices, labs, etc.," Ms. O'Neal stated. "We have received around 800 applications from varying [businesses in the private] sector so you can imagine that it will take some time to get through all. However, the payments will be made in stages by sectors."

Ms. O'Neal further noted that while the rollout of payments will start with the private health care sector, the issuance of payments "will eventually be a mix of private and public, but still by sectors."

Premium Pay is a one-time payment that is based on guidelines established by the U.S. Treasury. It is for employees both public and private who worked throughout the pandemic in approved sectors during the period of March 2020 to March 2021. The payments, originally set to go out in February and March, was pushed to the summer.

Relative to the time period that secures qualification, Ms. O'Neal [said in March](#), "In particular, if you worked through March 05 to April 05th, 2020 and from August 13th to September 08th, 2020 you are eligible for Premium Payments if you meet all of the other criteria," she said while explaining that that period was the time when Governor Bryan declared a territory-wide lockdown.

"We had to remain at home, we were in that stay-at-home phase but there were some people who had to go to work like grocery stores workers who ensured that we all got food," she explained.

Workers whose [base salaries](#) fall above \$50,000 but no more than \$70,000 will receive \$1250; salaries less than \$50,000 will receive \$2,000 while those who worked for a minimum of two weeks or less than three months will receive a payment of \$500, said the OMB director.