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Approval of Premium Pay For First Responders Still Weeks Away, OMB Says

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Hospital intensive care coronavirus ward: portrait of tired nurse wearing face mask sitting on the floor. By. GETTY IMAGES

First responders including healthcare workers employed at the territory's hospitals along with fire and police officers making a base pay of \$70,000 or under, must wait a while longer to receive their Premium Pay stimulus checks which were allocated for employees in the public and private sectors who worked throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

The one-time payments for government employees at the Bureau of Corrections, Department of Health and the two hospitals still have to go through an approval process, said Office of Management and Budget Director Jenifer O'Neal.

Ms. O'Neal said Tuesday that the stimulus will be approved after OMB completes its collection of information on the number of employees and the total amount owed, and submits that information to the U.S Department of Treasury. She told lawmakers during a legislative hearing Tuesday that she plans to submit that document within the next two to three weeks.

“We are preparing to send that waiver request to Treasury for those employees who are the first responders,” she stated.

The Bryan administration [announced Monday](#) that \$7 million in Premium Pay, or roughly 4,000 checks had already gone out to eligible employees.

A total of \$40 million for the Premium Pay program was allocated by the Bryan administration as part of the American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA to assist with Covid-related expenses.

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