

WHAT WASHTENAW COUNTY RESIDENTS NEED TO KNOW

About American Rescue Plan Benefits



How will the American Rescue Plan help you and your family?

The American Rescue Plan funds dozens of programs that will help people and families during the COVID-19 pandemic including:

- Cash benefits*
- Unemployment benefits
- Food assistance
- Health care coverage
- Child and dependent care tax credits*
- Child tax credits*
- Housing and utility assistance
- TANF cash assistance
- Earned income tax credits*

The major benefits for people and families are listed below, along with information about how to access each of them. Benefits listed above with an asterisk (*) are accessed through tax returns.

The American Rescue Plan will provide \$1,400 per person—including child and adult dependents—to more than 85 percent of U.S. households.*

That means: If you're a single parent with two kids, you're entitled to \$4,200 in cash.

What you need to do: Most people don't need to do anything to receive the cash. But if you didn't file a tax return or non-filer submission in 2019 or 2020, you need to file a return before the May 17 deadline. If you require assistance, call 211.

More details: If you filed a 2020 tax return, the IRS will use it to calculate your cash benefit. If you haven't filed a 2020 tax return, the IRS will use your 2019 return (or non-filer submission) to calculate your cash benefit. If the IRS has your bank account information, the payment will be sent directly to your bank (this is the fastest way to receive your payment). [Learn more](#)

How will the American Rescue Plan help you and your family?

The American Rescue Plan will extend unemployment benefits through September 4 and supplement them by up to \$300 per week.

That means: If you're receiving unemployment benefits, those benefits will be supplemented by an additional \$300 per week through September 4.

What you need to do: 1) Continue to submit bi-weekly certifications as usual; 2) check the [UIA website](#) for more information as it becomes available; and 3) quickly respond to UIA requests for additional information.

More details: You may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation, or Mixed Earners Unemployment Compensation. \$10,200 of unemployment benefits received in 2020 will be exempted from income tax. [Learn more](#)

SNAP benefits were increased by 15 percent in December 2020. This increase was set to end in June, but will now continue through September.

That means: A family of four should be receiving just over \$100 per month in additional food assistance through September 30.

What you need to do: If you're already receiving food benefits, you don't need to do anything.

More details: SNAP is based on the size of your household, income, expenses, and assets. In addition to adults, children who are living at home (up to age 21) qualify for [food assistance](#). Call the Food Bank Council of Michigan at 888-544-8773 or visit [Food Gatherers](#) for a list of [local agencies](#) that can help. [Learn more](#)

Many more people will qualify for Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance subsidies and will pay less, sometimes nothing, for health insurance.

That means: You can enroll in health insurance programs for less, sometimes nothing.

What you need to do: Sign up for coverage, or renew your coverage, by August 15 at [healthcare.gov](#). For help, contact members of the WHI's Medicaid and Marketplace Outreach and Enrollment Work Group: Washtenaw Health Plan at 734-544-3030 or whp@washtenaw.org, Michigan Medicine at 877-326-9155, or St. Joseph Mercy Health System at 734-712-2009.

More details: If you don't have health insurance coverage, review plans at the ACA Marketplace. Costs have decreased dramatically. If you already have health insurance coverage through the ACA Marketplace, renew it before August 15 to reduce your costs. If you collected unemployment in 2021, you may qualify for free ACA coverage. If you lost your job in the past year, employer-sponsored health insurance coverage can be maintained free of charge through COBRA. [Learn more](#)

How will the American Rescue Plan help you and your family?

The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit has been increased for the 2021 tax year and more people are eligible to receive it.*

That means: If you have one child under 13 in child care or one dependent in care so you can work or look for work, you will get up to \$8,000 in tax credits.

What you need to do: When you file your tax return for 2021, claim the full cost of employment-related child and dependent care.

More details: The American Rescue Plan has raised the dollar limit on employment-related child (up to age 13) and dependent care expenses from \$3,000 to \$8,000 for one qualifying individual and from \$6,000 to \$16,000 for two or more. The maximum reimbursement percentage has also been increased. [Learn more](#)

The Child Tax Credit will increase from \$2,000 per child to \$3,000 per child (up to age 17) or \$3,600 per child (under age 6).*

That means: A person with two young children will receive \$6,600 in tax credits. A person with two toddlers will receive \$7,200 in tax credits.

What you need to do: The IRS will reach out to all Americans who may be eligible for this financial assistance with more instructions. To expedite the process, file a 2020 tax return—even if you don't owe taxes and are not required to file one.

More details: If you're eligible for a 2021 Child Tax Credit, the IRS will advance the payment to you. This advance will come in the form of periodic payments between July – December, 2021 so you do not need to wait until the 2022 tax filing season to receive your benefit. Additionally, the child tax credit is now fully refundable. [Learn more](#)

The American Rescue Plan provides increased emergency aid to those who owe back rent, help with mortgage and utilities, and additional support for those recovering from or at risk of homelessness.

That means: If you have a low-income and are struggling to pay for housing or utilities, you are likely to qualify for assistance.

What you need to do: Call the Housing Alliance of Washtenaw County (HAWC) at 734-961-1999 to connect with someone who can help you access these resources.

More details: The federal government will send this aid to states and local governments across the country. Regions with high-need may receive additional assistance. These resources will be distributed to emergency aid providers, who will handle distribution to people and families.

[Learn more](#)

How will the American Rescue Plan help you and your family?

The American Rescue Plan provides additional cash assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

That means: Parents with low incomes may receive additional cash assistance through Michigan's Family Independence Program (FIP).

What you need to do: To apply for TANF and other cash assistance programs, use the [MI Bridges](#) platform. If you need help, dial the 24/7 211 platform.

More details: To apply for TANF, you must be 1) a resident of Michigan and a U.S. citizen or qualified alien; 2) unemployed or underemployed and 3) have low or very low income. You must also have a child 18 years of age or younger, be pregnant, or be 18 years of age or younger and the head of your household. [Learn more](#)

The American Rescue Plan increases the Earned Income Tax Credit for 17 million low-income workers, including workers without children.*

That means: A childless low-wage earner can now receive up to \$1,000 in tax credits.

What you need to do: File your tax return to receive the tax credit.

More details: The Earned Income Tax Credit for childless low-wage workers will increase by up to \$1,000 in 2021. The minimum and maximum age for childless workers who wish to claim the credit will expand. [Learn more](#)

You must complete a tax return to access several of the benefits listed in this document. If you need assistance with your return, please complete this [short form](#).

Note that if you miss the 2020 tax filing deadline—May 17, 2021—you can still claim your benefits by submitting a return after the deadline.