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NMDWS offers a one-time $750 stimulus payment to self-employed New Mexicans

Available to the first 2,000 applicants that qualify

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(Albuquerque, NM) – Starting at 2:00pm today, Wednesday, April 8, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) will be offering one-time grants in the amount of $750 each to self-employed individuals affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. The Self-Employed Stimulus Payment (SESP) will be available to the first 2,000 applicants that qualify. This opportunity is funded by $1.5 million from the Rapid Response Layoff Aversion program under the directive of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Examples of people who can apply for this fund include musicians and artists with cancelled shows, contract massage therapists at health spas, food truck operators, Uber/Lyft drivers, and sound technicians at convention centers paid for by the job.

To be eligible for SESP an applicant must be self-employed worker, must not be currently collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits, properly registered with Selective Service (if applicable), be a U.S. Citizen or authorized to work in the U.S., provide proof of New Mexico residency, and have a bank account that can accept a direct deposit.

Applicants are able to apply by creating an individual account and logging into www.jobs.state.nm.us and clicking on the link for SESP located on their *My Workforce Connection* page. When submitting an application, individuals will need to provide the following information:

Personal Information:

- Full Name
- Social Security Number
- Date of Birth
- Address
- Phone
- Email
- Type of employment or services offered

Certify the following:

- U.S. Citizen or authorized to work in the U.S. (refer to I-9 acceptable documents)
- Identify reason for loss of work
- They are not currently receiving Unemployment Insurance
- Understand that the SESP is not Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)
- Understand they may not be eligible for PUA
- Understand that PUA requires a separate application
- Understand that PUA may equal less than the SESP
- Understand that false information could result in repayment of SESP to the department
- Understand that the SESP is a one-time benefit
- Agree to use the Self-Employed Stimulus Payment for the following activities only:
  - To cover the cost of purchasing remote access (for example: computers, printers, etc.) equipment and software to allow individuals to work remotely from home versus going without work;
  - To cover the costs of cleaning/sanitizing supplies and/or services that will allow an individual to maintain work-related activities as a result of exposure reduction though mitigation activities;
  - To pay for liability insurance for workers who adapt their service delivery methods, including delivery and offsite work detail;
  - For training or professional development opportunities for individuals to avoid loss of work, or to increase quality of service;
  - For other creative approaches and strategies to reduce or eliminate the loss of work or likelihood of business closures.

Payment Information:

- Name of institution
- Address of institution
- Routing number
- Account number

Required Forms (Uploads):

- 2019 1040SE
  - If unavailable, need a 2018 1040SE and a current 1099
- Driver's License or proof of New Mexico residency (utility bill)

- I-9 acceptable document to prove authorization to work in the U.S. (if applicable)

"Governor Lujan Grisham understands this situation is not easy for many New Mexicans and we will use all of the tools at our disposal to make sure that our neighbors can make it through this difficult time," said Bill McCamley, Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. "We're glad to see the federal government stepped up to the plate and opened up unemployment to our self-employed citizens, but the SESP program is meant to help people while we're getting our system up and running to handle PUA claims."

On March 27, 2020, Congress passed a federal stimulus package known as the CARES Act, or the Relief for Workers Affected by Coronavirus Act. The Act will expand Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, opening eligibility for independent contractors, the self-employed, and gig economy workers. The department will make an announcement once these benefits become available for individuals to apply for.

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