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NEWS RELEASE

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Oregon Launches \$500 Emergency Relief Check Program

SALEM, Ore. – Starting today, Oregonians facing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be able to apply for a one-time payment of \$500.

This first-of-its-kind project is a collaboration between the Oregon Legislature, Oregon Department of Administrative Services, Central Willamette Credit Union, Clackamas Federal Credit Union, InRoads Community Credit Union, Old West Federal Credit Union, OnPoint Community Credit Union, Oregon Community Credit Union, Rogue Credit Union, SELCO Community Credit Union, Umpqua Bank, and Columbia Bank.

There are more than 150 locations in all regions of the state where eligible Oregonians will be able to receive relief checks.

To be eligible, a person must:

- Be a current resident of Oregon and 18 years or older.
- Be able to prove their identity and that they are an in-state resident.
- Attest that they are experiencing severe financial hardship directly or indirectly due to the Governor's Stay Home, Save Lives executive orders.
- Have earned \$4,000/month or less pre-tax prior to their income loss due to COVID-19.
- Not have received all unemployment payments they are owed.

Oregonians who think they may qualify should go to <https://emergencychecks.oregon.gov> starting today. It will direct them to the nearest participating credit union or bank's website. There they can follow the instructions on how to apply at that location and complete their application. Each applicant must adhere to public health protocols when applying in-person.

“While we know these limited funds aren't enough and won't allow us to help everyone, we felt it was important to try something,” House Speaker Tina Kotek said. “After months of hearing from increasingly desperate Oregonians who were doing everything right and still not getting the unemployment they were owed, we hope this effort offers a streamlined way for some financial relief. The state is stepping up, and I hope Congress will act soon to provide more support that is desperately needed.”

“The Governor's order prevented thousands of COVID-19 cases and saved hundreds of lives,” Senate President Peter Courtney said. “But it also impacted many people's income. With such a huge jump in unemployment, some people are still waiting for their benefits. We know \$500 isn't going to solve all of these problems, but if we can help a family buy groceries for the month, pay for child care, or cover an unexpected repair, it's worth it.”

On July 14, the Legislative Emergency Board allocated \$35 million in federal Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars to provide \$500 one-time payments to Oregonians who are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19. The unique public-private partnership with participating financial institutions will allow approximately 70,000 Oregonians across the state to conveniently access relief funds during a time of great economic uncertainty.

If eligible Oregonians are unable to access the state website, they should call 211 and ask about the Emergency Relief Check Program. 211 is also a useful resource for those who need help with rent/mortgage payments, food assistance, child care, or other COVID-19 related issues.

The presiding officers will also be holding a press conference today at 9 a.m. to discuss this program further. Media should RSVP to Danny Moran at danny.moran@oregonlegislature.gov and a link to the press conference will be shared.

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