



Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

# COVID 19 Social Assistance

# FAQs



**Q?** What documents can I use as national identification?  
**A.** **National Electoral Identification Card only.**

**Q?** My national identification card has expired. Can I still use it as a form of identification to apply for the grants?  
**A.** **Yes, together with a copy of your birth certificate.**

**Q?** If the company at which I'm employed is closed, how should I get my employer's stamp and signature for my forms?  
**A.** **Try to contact your employer. If unsuccessful, please state, name, address, type of business and contact number of your employer. You must also include a copy of your last payslip.**

**Q?** If my employer does not want to sign my form, what can I do?  
**A.** **State that the employer is unwilling to sign the form and also state, name, address, type of business and contact number. You must also include a copy of your last payslip.**

**Q?** I was supposed to start the OJT Programme, so I resigned from my job and now I cannot assume duty on the Programme. Can I apply for these grants?  
**A.** **No, you do not qualify for the grants.**

**Q?** I had an interview for employment but with the current pandemic my interview was cancelled. Can I apply for these grants?  
**A.** **No, you do not qualify for the grants.**

**Q?** What is the timeframe for the receipt of these grants?  
**A.** **With the uncertainty of our current situation, we would not be able to give a specific timeframe, but we are working as fast as we can to process applications.**

**Q?** What can I use if I am not in the possession of a National ID Card?  
**A.** **Only the national electoral identification card is acceptable. These grants are for citizens and permanent residents only.**

**Q?** Are there any alternates that can be used if I do not have a bank account number?  
**A.** **You will receive a cheque if you qualify for the grants.**

**Q?** If I changed my company's name and it is not reflected in the name registered with the NIB what can I do?  
**A.** **Include your NIB number still, NIB grants are for individuals not companies.**

**Q?** If I have never filed any taxes will this hamper my eligibility?  
**A.** **No**

**Q?** What documents do I have to attach if I am self-employed to prove my earnings?  
**A.** **Latest bank statement, Assessment Notice from the Board of Inland Revenue.**



# HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE REGISTERED UNDER THE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME



- 1 Food Support for such families has begun through the offices of the Members of Parliament.
- 2 Families are encouraged to wait at home for a telephone call from the MP's office. In this way, they can help to reduce crowding and the risk of their household and the MP office's staff contracting COVID-19.
- 3 A listing of all children who are registered under the School Feeding Programme has been sent to all MPs' offices. The MP offices will contact parents to collect the cards.
- 4 The Ministry is NOT responsible for the distribution of these particular cards. The remit lies with the MPs offices.
- 5 Parents/Guardians SHOULD NOT rush to the Social Welfare Office or the MP's office if they HAVE NOT received such a call. Once the call is received, the national identification card and a copy MUST be taken. Other forms of ID are not permissible.
- 6 There is ONLY ONE (1) card per household, irrespective of the number of children/students.
- 7 The card will resemble that of an ATM (bank) card. Each card has a unique/private pin code to memorize for use at the grocery.
- 8 The card CAN BE used immediately. There is an initial \$510 TTD on the account. Any difference in the bill at the point of cashing, MUST BE PAID by the shopper.
- 9 DO NOT throw the card away. It will be topped up with the remaining sum or TTD \$1020 as a lump sum in April 2020. The final figure is representative of three (3) months of assistance.
- 10 The purchase of cigarettes and alcohol with the card are FORBIDDEN by law and as a result, WILL NOT be permitted.
- 11 Each parent or guardian MUST SIGN a Declaration at the MP's office, which states that the child/children are beneficiaries of the school feeding programme and the recipient is not presently in possession of a Food Card.
- 12 A copy of the national identification must be attached and both documents returned FROM the MP's office to the Ministry.
- 13 This card is ONLY AVAILABLE to nationals of Trinidad and Tobago and Permanent residents.
- 14 Assistance can be sought through various NGOs by non-nationals;
- 15 If you are in need of food support BUT your child is not registered with the School Feeding Programme, the household may be eligible for public assistance.

Q?	<i>Should I go to the Constituency Office where my child's school is located?</i>
A.	<b>No. Go to the Office in the community which you live.</b>
Q?	<i>What if my child's name has not been included in the list from the Ministry of Education?</i>
A.	<b>You will not receive a card unless the school supplies written proof in the form of a letter to the MP's office.</b>
Q?	<i>My child attends an ECCE Learning Centre or Secondary School that has not been listed.</i>
A.	<b>Please visit YOUR MP's Office with proof that the child is registered for the programme. Proof can be in the form of a letter from the school.</b>
Q?	<i>I have a food card. When will I receive credit?</i>
A.	<b>Single lump sum payment for 3 months to be made by mid-April.</b>

!	<b>Additionally:</b>
NOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households with 1-3 persons will receive \$150 TTD extra per month for three (3) months</li> <li>• Households with 4 - 5 persons will receive \$300 TTD extra per month for three (3) months and</li> <li>• Households with 6 and more persons, will receive \$450 TTD extra per month for three (3) months.</li> </ul>
Q?	<i>I have not received my food card? Do I apply for a "COVID Food Card?"</i>
A.	<b>Our staff is presently working on a list of those clients to make the card available in the shortest possible time. Please await a telephone call.</b>
Q?	<i>I am following up on a previous application.</i>
A.	<b>For those who usually receive payments by a cheque this will continue and you will receive the lump sum payment.</b>

**Q?** Can I apply for food support and rental support?  
**A.** **Yes you can, once you were terminated/retrenched/or experienced reduced income from March 1, 2020. However, the rental support is for domestic use and NOT for a commercial property and the sum will be paid to the landlord.**  
**We understand that some sole traders/entrepreneurs do undertake services from their homes.**

**Q?** I have not received a visit but:  
**I applied and passed the Standard Means Test at a social welfare office/MSDFS Outreach caravan;**  
**I qualified for the SEED/NSDP grant;**  
**I applied as a disaster victim prior to March 1, 2020 or**  
**I applied for public assistance prior to March 1, 2020.**

**A.** A team is presently working on this list of clients, and they can expect a call in subsequent weeks. There is no need to reapply.  
**SEED/NSDP** – If you were approved at the Outreach Caravan, additional documents can be dropped off to the COVID CSR at the various welfare offices. Those who have already completed the process, will receive a call.

**Q?** The firm I worked with is now out of business and I can't obtain a letter from my previous employer. What do I do?  
**A.** **Submit your application form with an explanation. Remember to state the name, address, telephone number and main activities of your employer.**

**Q?** I have no access to a computer to email my application may I submit it in person and if so at what location?  
**A.** **Yes but only if you absolutely cannot send it in electronically. The latter method is more secure as it ensures that your application reaches the office safely. If you have to drop in the application you may do so at the Social Welfare Office in your district.**

**Q?** I already receive Public Assistance or the Disability Assistance Grant  
**A.** **For the initial 3 months, as of March 1, 2020, existing clients will receive extra income in the sum of:**  
● One person household - \$150 TTD  
● Where two (2) persons are beneficiaries - \$300 TTD  
● Where three (3) persons are receiving the grant - \$450 TTD and  
● Where four (4) or more are in receipt - \$500 TTD.

**!**  
**NOTE** **Rental Assistance for retrenched/terminated workers or those experiencing a loss in income from March 1, 2020**  
Support to be given for an initial three (3) months. Can be extended upon review for an additional three months at \$2,500 per month where the family consists of children. If considered necessary, a sum of \$1,500 per month will be granted for months 7 to 9 and a sum of \$1,000 per month from month 10 to month 12.

One form of national identification required for BOTH the tenant and landlord.  
Clients of the Housing Development Corporation can request a deferral or moratorium of HDC payments by emailing: [deferral@hdc.gov.tt](mailto:deferral@hdc.gov.tt)

**Q?** What happens if landlord does not want to supply his/her identification card. He/she believes that the agreement is enough.  
**A.** **The grant will not be allowed.**

**Q?** Where and how may I access Psychosocial Support?  
**A.** **Appointments to meet with a Social Worker may be made by calling the National Family Services Division at 613 – 2608; exts 6700 to 6707.**  
**The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts can also assist. Please call 225-4267 or 625-3911.**

**The NCRHA Stress Relief Centre.**  
**Incidents involving minors can be reported to the Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago at 623-7555 or 627-0748.**

**Q?** Who is eligible for the Salary Grant Facility?  
**A.** **The National Insurance Board will give further information soon.**  
**All claims must be submitted to the National Insurance Board of Trinidad and Tobago.**

**Eligible persons will include those who were retrenched or terminated with effect from March 1, 2020**  
**Such persons must also have had active NIS contributions, up to February 29, 2020.**  
**The value of the grant will be a maximum of \$1500. TTD per month for three months.**

Employers are encouraged to assist their employees by completing their relevant sections, assisting employees with completing the sections pertaining to them and submitting the form electronically on their employees' behalf.



**Q?** I am self-employed. What now?

**A.** A significant number of such persons may come from the creative, personal services, agricultural, as well as, food and beverage sectors. A greater number may consist of individuals who would not have been making NIS contributions.

Such persons will be eligible for public assistance and temporary food support.

Where such persons are not VAT registered but can supply proof of a reduction in income (such as musicians, nail technicians, taxi drivers, babysitters, domestic workers,) they will be asked to complete the requisite forms on the website of the MSDFS, as well as, the Ministry of Labour and Small and Enterprise Development, to access financial relief.

The Self Employed form is applicable to sole traders only, not partnerships or companies.

Such applications only to be done via email or electronically.

Important documents to attach include:

- One valid form of national identification
- Proof of Registration
- Two letters of recommendation to attest to the supply of services and/or goods before March 1, 2020.

**Q?** On the self-employment form, what is required in the section which says "Recommender Certification".

**A.** The recommender makes a statement here with respect to the applicant which may be similar to the following:

*"I, John Doe, certify that I have known the applicant, Samuel George, of the address stated in this application, for the past ..... years. Mr. George is self-employed as a barber."*

**Q?** My brother and I are self-employed and live in the same household. However, we have separate families. We both got laid off after March 1st. Will we both be able to access the benefits under the measures?

**A.** Yes because you have separate families. Only one member of each family however, will be able to access the benefits under these measures.

**FOR MORE INFO:**

Call - 623-2608 Extensions 1120 to 1132 OR

Visit - [www.social.gov.tt](http://www.social.gov.tt)

For Live Chat on the Chat Bot Feature from **ttconnect** for real time information and answers to your queries

## EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPORT

Measures during COVID Stay at Home Initiative

This measure was designed for such persons to call in to explain their situation and determine eligibility for emergency food. Such persons are required to provide information on their previous employer (e.g. employer's name and phone contact), so that the Ministry could verify recent termination or retrenchment.

**488-8920**

**488-9044**

**488-9187**

**488-8975**

**488-9245**

**488-9261**

**488-9316**

**488-9326**

**488-9038**

**488-9304**

**488-9287**

**488-9352**

**488-9357**

**488-9360**

**488-9378**



**800-1MSD (800-1673)**

**#covid19response**

**#keepsafeT&T**

**flattenthecurve**

**STAY AT HOME!**

**STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19**

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