



PRESS STATEMENT

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Millions Paid in Assistance as Government Rolls-out GovUEBex Programme

Millions in unemployment assistance payments continue to flow as the Government and its partners streamline the implementation processes of the Government Unemployment Extension programme (GovUEBex). Since the National Insurance Board (NIB) launched its new online portal to administer the Programme, approximately \$8.7 million in assistance has been disbursed to about 18,000 Bahamian workers.

Verify Employment Status

With some 35,000 individuals pre-enrolled on the system, NIB is encouraging workers to register and verify their employment status to receive payments.

“We need workers to declare their current employment status. If they do not verify, the system assumes they are back to work, and they will not be included in the payment roster. Verification is an important step, so we urge everyone to log into the system and declare whether they remain unemployed. Workers must verify before each two-week payment cycle to ensure the smooth release of assistance payments,” said Dr. Nicola Virgill-Rolle, National Insurance Board Director.

Adjustments in Operations

Since the roll-out earlier this week, NIB adjusted its operations to address several challenges.

“After consultation with the Ministry of Finance, last week we added about 5,000 more people to the pre-enrollment list after expanding the eligible dates for the programme,” said Dr. Virgill-Rolle.

The online portal originally filtered people out if they were unemployed before March 23. NIB expanded the date to reflect the time when COVID-19 related lay-offs started to be recorded, which was March 13.

NIB also resolved a system issue that changed the form of payment for some direct bank deposit clients. Many clients received notifications that their payments were going to a digital wallet through our FinTech partner IslandPay. The issue was resolved for about 1,800 impacted clients.

Challenges Registering on the Portal

According to the Director, another challenge continues to be incorrect registration data. The online system looks for direct matches when it comes to inputting dates of birth, names and NIB numbers. NIB is encouraging individuals with challenges registering to reach out for assistance via email to govUEBex@nib-bahamas.com. A review process has also been established with NIB and Ministry of Finance staff to review cases that were deemed ineligible.

“NIB is working around the clock with a dedicated team that is committed to assisting as many people as possible, including processing a backlog of emails based on the volume of queries. We are asking for the public’s understanding and patience. So far we have disbursed over \$8.7 million in one week since restarting the program. That is remarkable as it continues to demonstrate the commitment of our team to deliver the much needed relief to almost 18,000 Bahamian workers receiving direct cash assistance in these difficult times,” said Dr. Virgill-Rolle.

For more information on NIB and the unemployment extension programmes, visit: www.nib-bahamas.com or our Facebook page. Media Email Contact: NIBpublicrelations@nib-bahamas.com