



PRESS STATEMENT



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2020

NIB WILL LAUNCH NEW ONLINE PORTAL GOVERNMENT-FUNDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT EXTENSION (GovUEBex) PROGRAMME ON JULY 20, 2020

On Monday, July 20, 2020 The National Insurance Board (NIB) will launch a new online portal for eligible individuals to register for the Government-Funded Unemployment Benefit Extension Programme (GovUEBex).

Individuals who were unemployed due to the COVID-19 shutdown between March 23 – June 30, and continue to be unemployed, are eligible for the extension programme if they fall under one of four categories:

1. They have exhausted their 13 weeks of NIB's unemployment benefit (UEB) payments which became payable because of layoffs/termination due to COVID 19.
2. They were enrolled in the Hurricane Dorian UEB Extension Programme and had exhausted the 13 weeks of extended payments.
3. They were employed in full time employment for at least 3 months before the COVID-19 related shutdown and were **under** the age of 35 but did not meet the required number of contributions to claim NIB's unemployment benefit.
4. They are self-employed individuals in the tourism sector who were previously enrolled in the Government-funded Unemployment Assistance (UEA) Programme.

All eligible individuals must register on the portal to receive financial assistance. Eligible individuals will receive \$150 per week for a maximum of 13 weeks during periods of unemployment.

NIB has assessed the records of thousands of contributors and self-employed persons, and will pre-enroll individuals that meet the eligibility requirements for the extension programme. The new portal dynamically pulls information from the NIB database to simplify the process of registration for eligible individuals.

Important Things to Know

1. All eligible persons must register on the portal to verify their information and view their enrollment status to receive payments under the extension programme. They will also receive an email notification after registering.
2. After signing into the portal, individuals will see a notice indicating whether they meet the requirement for enrollment or not.
3. Payments will begin on Thursday, July 23rd 2020 and will continue every two weeks thereafter for a period up to 13-weeks.
4. Prior to receiving payments every pay-out period, registrants must declare their current employment status on the portal. This verification is to be done a minimum of 3 days before the

next payment. If a person does not verify within the mentioned timeframe, they will not get a payment.

5. If a person is working part time (i.e. less than 40 hours per week) and that person would normally be a full time worker, they are eligible to receive \$30 per day for each work day they did not work during the week. For example, if a person verifies that only worked 3 days in a given week, they would be eligible for 2 days' payment or \$60. NIB will check with employers to confirm.
6. NIB reserves the right to contact a registrant's employer, where applicable, to verify an individual's declaration. Only individuals who remain unemployed or partially employed are eligible to receive assistance.
7. Individuals who received their NIB Unemployment Benefit payment directly through their employer during the COVID-19 shutdown period, will continue to receive funds by that method while on this extension programme. Employers will verify the employment status on an individual's behalf.
8. Persons who received NIB Unemployment Benefit payments via direct deposit to their bank account from NIB during the COVID-19 shutdown period will continue to receive payment by bank transfer. Payments may be delayed if incorrect banking information was provided.
9. Persons who received NIB Unemployment Benefit payments via cheque, for any reason, during the COVID-19 shutdown period, will receive extension payments through the provider 'Island Pay', via an Island Pay Digital Wallet. Payments in Grand Bahama and the Family Islands will be made via cheque until further notice.
10. Self-employed persons in the tourism sector will continue to be paid assistance via the method they had been using before (direct bank deposit, Suncash or cheque payment).
11. It is an offense to file a false claim of unemployment. If a person does so, he or she will be prosecuted and could be subject to criminal penalties. If a person goes back to work, he or she should not apply or complete a false verification form. NIB will conduct checks with employers and otherwise to confirm information provided by applicants.

Claimants who applied for the ordinary NIB UEB during the COVID19 period (March 23 – June 30, 2020) but have not received payments, are reminded to send an email to UEBresolution@nib-bahamas.com for an agent to address your claim.

For more information on NIB and the Government-funded unemployment extension programmes, visit:
www.nib-bahamas.com

or on Facebook at the Ministry of Finance, the Bahamas | National Insurance Board – Bahamas