



ELEVATE BOULDER

DIRECT CASH ASSISTANCE FOR FINANCIAL STABILITY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: APPLICATION

For questions related to eligibility requirements or general program questions

- Please visit the Elevate Boulder webpage: bldr.fyi/elevate-boulder.

For questions related to the status of an application or application questions

- Please contact support@elevateboulder.aidkit.org, (720) 713-7495 or the community-based organization you applied with.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

How will people be selected for the project?

Eligible applicants will be entered into a randomized lottery that will select 200 project participants for enrollment.

Do I need to be a permanent resident or a U.S. citizen to participate?

Applicants do not need to be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. Anyone, regardless of your immigration status, can apply for the project if you meet the eligibility requirements.

Is there any risk of public charge if I am currently seeking permanent residency in the United States?

For anyone seeking to become a permanent resident in the United States, these payments will not count towards public charge based on the current federal government policy. These funds are provided as a part of the American Rescue Plan Act.

When will I know if I have been selected?

Applicants will be notified if they have been selected to enroll, waitlisted, or are ineligible for the program by the end of December 2023, no later than December 23, 2023.

How will my application information be used?

This application will ask questions to help us:

- Determine whether or not you are eligible for this project, and
- Understand more about who is applying to this program, and your needs

Each section of the application explains why we are collecting this information.

Any information that you provide in the application will be securely stored in an encrypted database. It will not be used for any other purposes other than determining your eligibility for this program and informing the evaluation of the program.

If you select to auto-verify your eligibility with another benefits program, your information will be shared with that program to verify your eligibility. No other application information will be shared.

What does “impacted by COVID-19” mean?

Examples of COVID-19 impacts may include, but are not limited to:

- Loss of job (for example, you were laid off or furloughed)
- Reduction in wages (because your work hours were reduced)
- Reduction in business income (for people who are self-employed)
- Loss of income because of COVID-19 health reasons (became ill or were unable to work because of high-risk)
- Household income during COVID-19 was not enough to pay for all necessary household expenses like rent, groceries, transportation costs, utility bills, etc.
- Household expenses increased due to personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, etc.), grocery delivery fees, or higher prices for food and other basic household goods.
- The household had significant expenses due to COVID-19, including child care, internet, medical costs, and/or dependent expenses.

I have a new phone number or my contact information changed since I submitted my application. What should I do?

If you would like to change your contact information, you must notify support@elevateboulder.aidkit.org or (720) 713-7495.

Does the money have to be used in a certain way?

The \$500 monthly payments can be used however you feel is best.

I haven't heard from anyone yet, does this mean I haven't been selected?

You should receive a text message or an email to confirm if you have been selected to enroll, placed on the waitlist, or not selected. If you do not receive an email or text by (but not before) December 23, 2023, contact support@elevateboulder.aidkit.org or call/text (720)713-7495 with questions. We cannot answer any questions about the status of your application, before December 23.

I was not selected to participate but I still need help, are there any resources available?

There are many programs and benefits available for Boulder low-income community members. For example, you can visit the [Boulder County Financial Assistance resource page](#) or findhelp.org to learn more about what programs and resources may be available. You can also call 2-1-1 to speak with someone about benefits you may be eligible for.

TAXES

Do I have to report that I receive this income on my tax returns?

It is Elevate Boulder's position that the monthly payments are a non-taxable gift. However, it is important to understand that guaranteed income is a new idea. Government authorities such as the IRS and the courts have not yet weighed in on whether the government considers payments like these to be gifts or taxable income. Elevate Boulder cannot guarantee that the IRS or the State of Colorado will consider the payments to be non-taxable. It is your responsibility to determine the tax impacts of accepting the payments. If you have specific questions about possible tax impacts based on IRS standards, please consult with a tax professional.

PUBLIC BENEFITS

Will receiving this cash payment affect the current public benefits I receive (i.e. SNAP, WIC, etc.)?

Some selected participants may be experiencing a loss or decrease in public benefits (i.e. SNAP, Housing Vouchers, etc.) as a result of the Elevate Boulder monthly \$500 payments. All people selected as participants are encouraged to very carefully consider the risks; you are responsible for understanding the impact on your benefits, and deciding if you want to enroll. You can withdraw at any time. See the [Benefits Guide](#) for more detailed information and please speak to your case manager at the benefits office to discuss your specific case. There are several tools available to help estimate the possible impacts to public benefits, including:

- If you receive money through the social security administration, you can use [DB101 tool](#) to estimate the impact the Elevate Boulder payments may have on your benefits, like SSI and SSDI.
- Your local government or nonprofit agency case manager or call Colorado PEAK staff at 1-800-536-5298.

What benefits are most at-risk?

The benefit with the highest risk is Supplemental Security Income (SSI), as the rules for SSI are complicated and 'gift income' still counts towards eligibility. Because it is so difficult to receive SSI in the first place, it's important for individuals to weigh the risks and benefits of the additional monthly income through this program. If you receive SNAP, Section 8 Housing, or Housing Choice Vouchers (i.e. Boulder Housing Partners programs), you may see a loss in your benefit depending on how much money you make outside of this program, and will likely see an increase in your monthly rental payments. See the [Benefits Guide](#) for more detailed information.

Do I have to tell my benefits office that I am receiving this assistance?

We encourage all participants to share with benefits agencies about your participation in Elevate Boulder, to be honest and transparent and avoid any unintentional problems. You should bring the verification letter you received/will receive during enrollment to the benefits office so they know that this income is a gift.

You said applicants who receive SSI are at risk of losing their benefits and should calculate the benefits and risks of joining the program to determine if you are comfortable enrolling in the project, if selected. How do I do that?

You have a few options if you receive SSI to get more clarity:

- Use the new [DB101 tool](#) developed by the social security office. This is an online tool that can help you calculate how much you might lose if you receive the monthly \$500 payment through Elevate Boulder.
- Visit the social security office benefits counselors. More information about other options can be found [here](#).
- Check out more information about benefits planning and benefits counseling [here](#).

If I have more questions about my benefits, who do I ask?

The best person to go to with questions about your benefits is your case manager or an agency benefits worker. To find your case manager or a specific benefits worker, look for emails or texts you've received in the past. If you are still unable to identify who they are, call the customer service line of that benefits office for help. You can also visit the Colorado PEAK website and use the "Am I Eligible" tool:

https://coloradopeak.secure.force.com/AC_Welcome?Language=EN or call their phone at 1-800-536-5298.

Will my participation in this pilot stop me from accessing any other benefits or programs run by the City of Boulder?

This pilot will not affect your ability to apply for or participate in other City of Boulder benefit programs.