



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
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CHERYL LUSSIER POPPE  
Secretary, DVS

To: All Veterans Service Officers and all Department of Veterans Services Staff

From: Secretary Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Department of Veterans Services

Re: Treatment of Federal Economic Stimulus Payments to Chapter 115 Recipients and Applicants

Date: December 28, 2020

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Due to the current COVID-19 global health emergency, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has lost many of our most vulnerable citizens. In addition to the terrible loss of life, Massachusetts veterans have suffered from job loss, housing instability, and financial stressors. Presently, the President has signed a Federal economic stimulus package for United States citizens. The stimulus package includes provisions authorizing individual cash payments.

Massachusetts is a national leader in offering benefits for those who have served their country by providing far reaching protections and benefits enacted through Chapter 115 of the Massachusetts General Laws. These protections and benefits have served veterans and their families for many years and considering the current COVID-19 emergency coupled with the intent of the Stimulus Payments to help those who are most financially vulnerable during these difficult times, I am providing the following instruction.

Recipients of veterans' benefits under MGL c. 115, sec. 1, et seq. ("Chapter 115") should not negatively be impacted because they are in receipt of individual payments under the Federal economic stimulus package. Therefore, as a general statement, **individual cash payments received by a veteran by way of the Federal economic stimulus package shall be ignored when 1.) calculating the applicant's income and assets for eligibility purposes; and 2.) when calculating the amount of Chapter 115 benefits to be paid to the recipient.** Any increases in unemployment benefits related to the Federal economic stimulus package will continue to be an offset in the calculation of benefits.

If you have any questions about this guidance, please feel free to contact our counsel, Matthew Deacon at [matthew.deacon@mass.gov](mailto:matthew.deacon@mass.gov). Thank you for all the hard work you do helping our Veterans during these challenging times.



Cheryl Lussier Poppe  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans' Services