

Alameda County Responsibility to Community Health (ARCH) Frequently Asked Questions-2/23/21 UPDATE

1. Who does the program assist?

The program assists individuals who are:

- Age 18 years or older
- Alameda County resident for at least 6 months
- Initial test positive for COVID-19 as of 2/23/21; no retest within 90 days.
- Referred by Case Investigation/Contact Tracing (CI/CT) units: designated community-based partners, City of Berkeley, or Alameda County Department of Public Health.

2. Is there a phone line or website to apply for the stipend?

The ARCH application and referral process for COVID-19 positive adults who meet all program eligibility requirements is managed through our designated community partners, City of Berkeley, and the Alameda County Public Health Department's CI/CT Units. There is no online application or referral number for the general public or other service providers.

3. How can people apply?

Again, there is no “public” application process for the ARCH program. If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, as of February 23, 2021, they will be screened for the ARCH stipend based on eligibility criteria to determine if they qualify for the program. Screening is conducted by CI/CT Units from either Alameda County Public Health Department, City of Berkeley, or contracted community-based providers. If it is determined that an individual meets all ARCH program requirements, an application is completed on behalf of that individual and referred to the Social Services Agency for ARCH stipend.

4. When does the program start?

The ARCH program began on August 24, 2020. On 2/23/21 the Alameda County Board of Supervisors (BOS) authorized \$500,000 in temporary funding for ARCH. There is no guarantee that ARCH will continue after this funding is exhausted.

5. Are there designated Health Clinics for testing to receive a referral for the ARCH stipend?

Vulnerable residents can get tested at any location as testing locations and ARCH screening are separate. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and meets all ARCH program eligibility requirements will be referred to the program by the Alameda County Public Health Department, City of Berkeley, and community-based partners' CI/CT Units.

6. Can I qualify if I am receiving Unemployment or another source of income?

No. You are not eligible for the ARCH program if you are receiving employer-paid sick leave, Unemployment Insurance Benefits, retirement, Social Security Income (SSI) or equivalent benefits such as Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) during the mandatory isolation period.

7. Do I qualify if I have employer paid sick leave?

No. If you qualify for and are receiving employer paid sick leave of any kind, you are not eligible for the ARCH program.

8. Will immigration status impact program eligibility?

No. Program eligibility is not based on immigration status.

9. Am I eligible for the program if I have been laid-off or furloughed, but have not tested positive for COVID-19?

No. Eligibility for the ARCH program is based on a positive COVID-19 test in addition to the eligibility criteria above.

10. Is the stipend retroactive?

No. Stipends are not retroactive. The effective date of program eligibility for this re-start is February 23, 2021.

11. How long can I receive the stipend?

Stipends are available to eligible COVID-19 positive individuals, who meet all eligibility criteria, on a one-time basis. This round of ARCH stipends will be issued until the \$500,000 gap funding is exhausted.

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12. How will I receive the stipend?

Stipends will be issued in the form of a check.

13. If I am still sick after 2 weeks, can I get a second stipend payment?

No. The stipend program is for a two-week period only. Extensions will not be considered.

14. I am waiting for my test result. They told me that I should not go to work until I get my test result. Am I eligible for the stipend?

No. Eligibility for the stipend is effective once the individual has received a positive COVID-19 test result and is contacted by CI/CT Unit staff. For this re-start timeframe, eligibility begins with a positive test result date of 2/23/21.

15. Is the stipend taxable income?

No. Stipends are not taxable income.

16. Will my information be shared with any other government agency?

No. All information provided to determine ARCH program eligibility is confidential and will not be shared with any outside entities other than the identified participating County agencies, the City of Berkeley, and community partners at this time.

17. Do I have to be employed to receive the stipend?

No. Employment is not a program eligibility requirement; however, all eligible adult household members must test positive for COVID-19 and meet all program eligibility criteria.

18. I am homeless and have tested positive for COVID-19. How can I receive a stipend?

Eligible homeless ARCH applicants are required to self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days, in Operation Comfort hotel, operated by Alameda County, before they are eligible to receive a stipend.

19. If I am homeless and self-isolate in a hotel other than an Alameda County-run Operation Comfort hotel, will I be eligible for the stipend?

No. At this time self-isolation is limited to Alameda County-operated Operation Comfort COVID isolation hotels.

20. Will the Case Investigation/Contact Tracing (CI/CT) Unit provider complete applications for each adult in household?

Yes. Resource Navigators from community partners, City of Berkeley, or Alameda County Public Health Department CI/CT Units will complete an ARCH application on each COVID-19 positive adult (as confirmed by lab test) living in the house to determine program eligibility.

21. If more than one family lives in a house, are they limited to one stipend?

No. If multiple adults living in one house test positive for COVID-19, a separate referral to the ARCH program will need to be submitted for each COVID-positive adult. ARCH program eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis.

22. Is marriage a factor for eligibility?

No.

23. I live with other COVID-19 positive adults. Should they be included on my ARCH application?

No. This would be a violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

24. I received a positive COVID-19 test through my primary care physician. Do I need to have another COVID test done at one of the identified health care partners to qualify for the ARCH stipend?

No. Vulnerable residents can get tested at any location as testing locations and ARCH screening are separate. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and meets all ARCH program eligibility requirements will be referred to the program by the Alameda County Public Health Department, City of Berkeley, and community-based partners' CI/CT Units.