

Q&A – Salary Relief Grant

1) What is the Salary Relief Grant?

The Salary Relief Grant is a measure implemented and funded by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, through the Ministry of Finance, to provide additional relief, valued at up to \$1,500.00 per month for up to three months in the first instance, to citizens whose employment is terminated or suspended without pay as a result of the impact of COVID-19 in specified sectors. This is not an NIBTT benefit, but the organisation will assist in administration.

2) Who can apply?

Persons, between the ages of 18-65 years, who are registered with the National Insurance Board (NIB), are citizens or permanent residents, whose last employer is registered with the NIB, and whose employment has been directly impacted by the Covid-19 Public Health Regulations in 2020 and terminated or suspended without pay/furloughed after March 19, 2020.

3) Who is eligible to receive the SRG?

Two groups of persons will be eligible for phase one of the Salary Relief Grant roll-out, those who were terminated involuntarily and those who have had their income suspended without pay. Applicants must have no other source of income.

4) What documentation will be required to access the Salary Relief Grant?

- A completed application form
- Copy of national identification card/driver's permit/passport
- Proof of citizenship (National ID card or Passport) or permanent residence (Stamp in Passport Stamp or Certificate) in Trinidad and Tobago
- Last payslip issued in the month preceding or the month of termination or suspension
- A bank or credit union statement. **This does not need to be certified by the bank or credit union. An online printout or bank statement/credit union statement within the last twelve months, which clearly shows the person's name, address and account number, will suffice. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure accuracy when the Grant is sent by bank transfer to the beneficiary's account.** This requirement is also under review,

and alternative options are being explored for viability, such as verification by the banks or credit unions of account numbers.

4) How much is the Salary Relief Grant and how long will it be paid?

The Salary Relief Grant is up to \$1,500 per month and will be paid for up to three months - April, May & June 2020, in the first instance.

5) Where can persons access Application forms?

Persons can download the Application Form from the NIBTT'S website at www.nibtt.net or collect a form from designated Police Stations across Trinidad and Tobago.

6) How can persons submit the Application?

Persons can print, scan and email the completed application form with supporting documentation to srg@gov.tt or deposit in drop-boxes at designated TTPOST locations.

7) How will payments be made?

Payments will be made to the financial institution specified on completed application forms or cheques will be issued to eligible applicants (where applicable).

8) When will the payment be made?

Barring unforeseen circumstances, payments are scheduled to commence, once eligibility is determined, at the end of April 2020 and/or early May 2020, depending on the volume of applications.

9) Will you still qualify for the Salary Relief Grant if you do not have a NI number?

Phase 2 of the Salary Relief Grant roll-out, which will be finalised by early May 2020, will consider for relief, persons outside of the National Insurance System, including the self-employed and persons who may have issues with their National

Insurance records.

10) If I was not dismissed and my employer has asked me to access my vacation, can I access the Salary Relief Grant?

The Salary Relief Grant is for persons who have been terminated or their employment suspended **without** pay. No other form of leave is considered.

10) If I was terminated from employment prior to the 19th of March 2020, can I access the Salary Relief Grant?

Only persons who have been terminated or their employment suspended without pay **after** 19th March 2020 will be considered for this grant.

11) The employer section of the form speaks to termination and suspension of employment but no section for loss of earnings, how shall my employer indicate loss of earnings as I was not suspended or terminated?

The Salary Relief Grant is for persons who have been terminated or their employment suspended **without** pay. Persons with partial loss of earnings do not qualify. This will be considered in Phase 2 of the Grant roll-out

12) Where or how can I get help with completing or filling in the form? (employer and employee)

The application form requests standard information including specifics about the applicant's identity, employment history and financial account details. If necessary, assistance from immediate family and friends should be all that is required in completing the form. In the case of the employer, only basic information about the company and the employee are required. **If the Employer is unavailable or unwilling to certify the applicant's employment status, a copy of a letter of termination or suspension of employment can be submitted. However, this may lead to enhanced due diligence to determine the bona fides of same**

13) Would there be any consequences to terminated or suspended employees for accessing the Salary Relief Grant?

Accessing the Salary Relief Grant does not impact access to any NIBTT benefit.

15) What amount of contributions should someone have to apply for the Salary Relief Grant?

The number of contributions paid into the NIS does **not** determine eligibility for this grant. The minimum criterion is that both the employee and the employer must be registered with the NIBTT.

16) Can one obtain Sickness Benefit and Salary Relief Grant?

The Salary Relief Grant is for persons who have been terminated or their employment suspended without pay as a result of COVID-19 measures.

The sickness benefit is a separate benefit and payable under the National Insurance System.

17) Will the funding for the SRG compromise my NIS pension?

The funding for the Salary Relief Grant is fully covered by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The NIBTT administers the grant but does not approve nor fund the Salary Relief Grant.

18) Do I have to apply every month to get the \$1,500 Salary Relief Grant?

This issue is under review, and the policy will be determined by the end of April 2020/early May 2020, and publicised. There will be a system of checks and balances to determine whether persons have regained their employment or income, since it is not the intention or policy of the Government to allow persons to continue to receive the Salary Relief Grant after they have returned to work.

19) What if I don't have a bank account?

Persons without bank or credit union accounts will select "NO" to the question: "Do you have an account?" and can leave the part of the form requesting financial information blank. Once eligible, these applicants will receive a cheque.

20) Is a bank or credit union statement absolutely necessary in submitting the Salary Relief Grant Application form?

As indicated in the Answer to Question 4, a Bank or Credit Union statement/letter will help verify that the submitted financial information is correct and that it belongs to the applicant accessing the grant. If one is not provided, neither the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, nor the NIBTT, will be held liable for any payment issued to the wrong financial institution or account.

21) Are the Salary Relief Grant and the Income Support Grant the same?

These two Grants are NOT the same.

At this time, in Phase 1 of the Salary Relief Grant roll-out, **the Salary Relief Grant is for INDIVIDUAL PERSONS who are registered with the National Insurance System (NIS)** and it is being administered by the NIBTT on behalf of the Ministry of Finance.

The Income Support Grant is for HOUSEHOLDS whose members are NOT registered for NIS, such as the self-employed.

It is being administered directly by the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, along with other forms of Covid-19 social welfare and relief.

The application procedures, forms and documentation for the two grants are different and the qualifying criteria are also different.

Persons are advised to take note of this fact and to read the information pertaining to the two types of Grants carefully