

Office of Housing Counseling

**How Housing Counseling Agencies Can Help Their Clients
Leverage the Child Tax Credit**

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

Sid Alvarado: Hello, everyone. Thank you for joining us on today. Today we are going to be talking about how housing counseling agencies can help their clients leverage the Child Tax Credit. Before we get into the webinar on today, there are a few logistical items that I'd like to go over. As we're using Zoom on today, you'll notice that there are two boxes.

The chat box we are going to be using that to submit any technical issues. So if you have any issues throughout the webinar, don't hesitate to reach out to our technical support using the chat box. The Q&A box, that is going to be used to submit any content related question. So if you have any questions, feel free throughout the webinar to submit those questions. We'll be taking some time at the end to take time to answer those questions that you have today.

For those of you who would like to get credit for today's webinar, the materials will be posted on HUD Exchange in the webinar archive within 7 to 10 days. And you can find it by either search the date or the topic. And in order to obtain credit, what you want to do is you want to select the webinar and then click get credit for this training. And that's where you can gain access, get credit, as well as add the course to your transcript.

Future training opportunities. Be sure to visit the training digest on the HUD Exchange. This is where you can view upcoming trainings that are hosted by HUD, as well as those by other partners.

Before we get started on our content for the webinar today, we will be using Mentimeter. You'll notice that we'll be using this throughout the presentation. And this is where we're going to be asking questions via the polling software. Some of you have already had the opportunity to visit Mentimeter and use it with us. So what we would like for you to do now is to either grab your smartphone or other device, or you can take it and put it in your browser in your computer. And let's get started with our first question for the webinar today.

So you are going to need a code when you log in to Mentimeter. The code for today is 27 56 915. And we'll be sure to put that in the chat box as well. But our first question for today is, we want to know exactly what you're doing. So we want to know, are you providing information on the Child Tax Credit within a typical housing counseling session. And your options here at either yes or not at this time.

Now you have the code, 27 56 915. We see that many of you have taken the opportunity to respond. So the options once again are yes or not at this time. Okay. Thank you for taking time to respond.

We do have one more question before we get started. Our next question is, do you currently work with clients on the Advance Child Tax Credit. And your options here are yes or not at this time. Or unsure and please tell me more. So you have three options, yes, not at this time, or unsure, please tell me more. We'll give you a couple more seconds to chime in. Okay. So it looks like most of you have taken the opportunity to chime in. Thank you so much. We will have one more question toward the end of today's webinar.

Okay. So what are we going to be talking about today? And why is today's webinar important? Basically we want to know -- we want for housing counseling agencies or counselors to know how they can assist with the Child Tax Credit. So we're going to be talking today about learning more about the Advance Child Tax Credit and the benefits. We're also going to be talking about how you can provide information as well as referrals on the Child Tax Credit, including the Advance Child Tax Credit to your clients.

We want you to be able to understand how the Child Tax Credit can help stabilize families. And then how you can incorporate the Child Tax Credit benefits into the financial empowerment and other one on one housing counseling sessions that you provide to your clients. So now before we get into the webinar, I'd like to hand it over to Stephanie Williams, who's with the HUD's Office of Housing Counseling. Stephanie?

Stephanie Williams: Thank you, Sid. Good afternoon, everyone. I want to welcome you on behalf of the Office of Housing Counseling for attending today's training. The Office of Housing Counseling was very excited about the opportunity to partner with the White House and the Department of Treasury to present this information to you. Just looking at the Mentimeter poll that Sid just facilitated, it looks like a lot of good information will be in store for you. You're going to get a walk through demonstration of the tool and how to enroll clients or assist them enrolling. And we're just glad to have one more resource to offer to you so that you can help families achieve their goals.

Our speaker today is Deirdre Schifeling. And she is the advocacy director with the Office of Political Strategy and Outreach at the White House. At the end of her presentation she'll be joined by Mike Schmidt, who is a senior advisor with the US Department of Treasury. And he's going to assist with the Q&A. So please enjoy the training, get as much information as you can. And I'm going to turn it over to Deirdre now. Thank you.

Deirdre Schifeling: Okay. Thank you so much. Thank you for having us. We are so happy to be here with all of you today. And just thrilled to have this opportunity to share more information about the Child Tax Credit. My colleague Ted is going to do a slide share. So Ted, are you able to take these slides and swap 'em? Yep. Okay. Thank you so much.

So as we just said, this is a webinar about the Child Tax Credit, and how families with children can get tax relief through the American Rescue Plan. Next slide. Help is here. President Biden and Congress passed the American Rescue Plan in the spring, and included in that American Rescue Plan was an expansion and a restructuring of the Child Tax Credit. We want to make sure that all families know, the families that are already receiving the Child Tax Credit, and the families that have not yet started to receive the Child Tax Credit, so that they can sign up and receive it. Next slide.

So during this period of time we're going to do a quick overview of what the Child Tax Credit is and how to get it. We're going to do a walkthrough of childtaxcredit.gov, the website that we collaborated -- the White House collaborated with the Treasury Department to create as a tool to really educate folks about the Child Tax Credit in a more accessible way. We're going to do a

demonstration of a new tool that non-tax filers can use to sign up. And we're hopeful that you all in your roles as housing counselors will take that tool and be able to share it with folks that you're working with.

And then we'll do a quick overview of the materials we have available and open it up to your questions. And we're so thrilled and lucky to be joined by Mike Schmidt, who knows everything there is to know about the Child Tax Credit. So we're blessed to have him with us today. Next slide.

So we have two goals through this outreach campaign. The first is to really help build awareness and understanding of what the Child Tax Credit is. Tens of millions of families have already received it, are in the process of receiving it. It went into effect in mid-July. So many, many, many people have already started to receive it. And we want to make sure that those families know what it is, appreciate that they have it, and engage them in a campaign to keep it.

Right now as we speak, Congress is debating the Build Back Better Plan, which is President Biden's signature help get America back on track plan with lots of components. One of those components is a continuation of this expansion of the Child Tax Credit through 2025. So we're hopeful that if we raise awareness and build public support for the Child Tax Credit, we will be able to keep this expansion of the Child Tax Credit through 2025 and hopefully beyond. So that's our first goal.

Our second goal is to really engage those families who are eligible, but have not yet filed their taxes. We want to make sure they also get the Child Tax Credit, as well as any recovery payments or stimulus payments that they might be due. And the Child Tax Credit is really sort of a misnomer. These are payments to families who have kids. They're advance payments to families who have kids. We want to make sure that every family who's eligible can receive it. And so that's where our partnership with all of you is so important. Next slide.

Don't just take it from me. We have a special message here for you from Vice President Kamala Harris on why the Child Tax Credit is so important and so transformational. So I'm going to let Ted tee up that special message.

Kamala Harris: Hi, everyone. Thank you for joining us today and participating in this training. It is critical that we get the word out about the Child Tax Credit. And we would not be able to do this work without you. With the expansion of the Child Tax Credit, we are supporting our nation's working families. We are strengthening our nation's middle class. And we are helping to lift half of America's children who are living in poverty out of poverty.

Just think about that. The impact of that will be historic. Seismic even. And it will be felt not only by the children of today. It will be felt by families, and communities, and by our country for generations to come. And that is something to celebrate. And as we celebrate, let us also remember our work is not yet finished. We need to make sure American families know about this credit and how they can receive it.

And I know you know this, but it bears repeating, if folks filed taxes for 2019 or 2020, or a stimulus check, they do not have to do anything. They will get the Child Tax Credit automatically. If they did not file taxes for 2019 or 2020, or a stimulus check, they do have to take action. They need to visit childtaxcredit.gov. I'm going to say that again, childtaxcredit.gov, and fill out a simple form.

The President and I need your help to spread the word, and to fight to make expansion of the Child Tax Credit permanent. You know, after the President signed the American Rescue Plan into law, I said this. Americans will see what we did here, and they will feel the impact of this bill for generations to come. And that is certainly true.

So thank you again for your partnership and for your leadership, and know that the President and I will never stop fighting for our children, for our families, and for our nation. Thank you and take care.

Deirdre Schifeling: Okay. So you heard it from the source, Child Tax Credit. Just to reiterate, the American Rescue Plan increased the Child Tax Credit. It existed before, but the American Rescue Plan increased it. So it was \$2,000. It has been increased to \$3,600 total for every child under the age of six, and \$3,000 for every child ages 6 to 17. All families will get the full credit if they make under \$150,000 a year for a couple, or \$112,500 for a single family with children or head of household.

So this is the vast majority of families in our country are eligible for the full amount. There is a sliding scale up to a cutoff for families who make more than that. So you get a portion of it. But the vast majority of families in our country are eligible for the entire amount. So that's the first change that was made to the Child Tax Credit was increasing it during the recession -- you know, we're in a recession, in a pandemic. Folks need some help to take care of their kids. Help is here.

The second way that we changed the structure of the Child Tax Credit was to make it monthly. And we found through lots of studies and surveys is that people prefer monthly payments. It's predictable, you can budget around it, it helps stabilize family economies. So we structured it as an automatic monthly payment for six months. So people are receiving half of the Child Tax Credit in monthly payments from July through December of this year. And we're right in the middle of it. People have received payments for July, August, and September. And we will have payments to go through the rest of the year, through December. And those payments are \$300 each month for every child under six, and \$250 each month for every child ages 6 to 17.

They receive the other half of the Child Tax Credit when they file their taxes in 2022. So half now automatically and half later when they file their taxes. People who get IRS refunds through direct deposit, which is again the majority of tax filers, have inputted a checking account into the IRS to receive direct deposits for their tax refunds. So people who are already in the IRS system for direct deposit will get the Child Tax Credit in their bank account on the 15th of every month. And it just is deposited there. It's called Child Tax Credit. You can see it on your statement.

People who don't use direct deposit because they don't have a bank account or they don't want to use direct deposit for the IRS, will get a check in the mail around the same time, middle of the month. So that is what's happening right now with the Child Tax Credit. Next slide.

The Child Tax Credit is transformative because it helps almost all families in our country, whether to pay for rent and food for some, or to save for college for others. And we know from lots of studies and also just common sense, that when parents can afford to live and take care of their kids, kids do better. They have better health outcomes, they have higher educational attainment, they have higher future earnings, they have lower stress levels. It's good for everybody. It's a win/win. Yet 40 percent of families in our country cannot afford an unexpected \$400 expense. 40 percent. So the Child Tax Credit gives families a little more breathing room.

It also stabilizes the economy for everyone. So having -- we are just coming out of the biggest recession of our lifetimes. And thanks to stimulus checks, our economy is now stable and starting to grow. The stimulus checks boosted spending at all levels. It increased small business revenue. And so does the Child Tax Credit. People spend the Child Tax Credit on immediate needs and on taking care of their kids. So it goes right into the local economy, and helps stabilize our economy, and get our country back on track. So that is why the Child Tax Credit is really a transformative move by our government to help support all families and help get our economy back on track. Next slide.

It also helps cut poverty in a major way, in a transformative incredible way. So we have seen a number of studies, and there have been a number of news articles about these studies, after even just the first round of checks that came out in mid-July, showing a dramatic decrease in child hunger in our country. Columbia Center of Poverty and Social Policy did a study that showed that low income families with children saw a 43 percent drop in food insecurity, food insecurity being another word for family hunger, after the first payment. Just after the first payment alone, 43 percent drop in food insecurity.

Not surprisingly they also found for families who have income below \$25,000 a year for the family, 57 percent of those folks spent their first payment on food, 52 percent on utilities, 39 percent on rent or mortgage, 31 percent on school supplies, etc. So we see that the Child Tax Credit is giving money to families who need it to take care of their basic needs and their children's basic needs. Economic hardship declined. Financial anxiety went down. It's had just an incredible impact in a very short time. So we want to keep it going. We want to provide a floor for all children in our country that they can count on. Next slide.

So how do families get this money? Tax filers, as we've already discussed, get it automatically. So if you have filed your taxes in 2019 or 2020, you're already getting it. If you have signed up to receive an economic impact payment or otherwise known as stimulus check from the IRS, you're already getting it. So you're already in the system. Individuals and families who did not have to file taxes last year or this year, because they didn't make enough money to have to file taxes, or because they didn't want to file taxes because they're part of the cash economy, or they're worried about immigration status, or whatever the case may be.

If they have not filed taxes in the last two years, and if they have not registered to get an economic impact payment or stimulus payment, they are not receiving the Child Tax Credit. But if their children have Social Security numbers, they could be. So they can still sign up for Child Tax Credit payments at childtaxcredit.gov. It's not too late. They can still receive the full amount. That amount will come in fewer payments because there are fewer monthly payment periods left. But they will be bigger payments. And they'll just like give the money that they've already missed in the forthcoming payments. They will also get any economic impact payments or stimulus checks that they're entitled to, but have not received. So that could be a quite transformative amount of money for those families. Next slide.

So what non-tax filers need to sign up is very simple. And we're going to show you a video in a second that really walks through how to help non-tax filers sign up. So you need about 20 minutes. You need a reliable mailing address that you can receive mail at. So it could be your sister, your friend, it could be a homeless shelter, or a domestic violence shelter. It does not have to be your home address if you don't have a home address, or if that's not a reliable mailing address for you, but wherever you can receive mail reliably.

You need an email address or a telephone number, cell phone number. You need your children's Social Security numbers, your own Social Security number or ITIN. And your bank account information, if you have a bank account, if you want to receive your payment by direct deposit. So you don't really need that, but if you want to get a direct deposit, it's good to put your bank account, if you have one, information in. That is it.

So this portal that allows you to sign up with this very, very basic information, is only going to be up until mid-November. And so we are really relying on your help to reach out to folks who are not tax filers, and encourage them to sign up through this portal. After mid-November the portal closes. And then the only way to receive the Child Tax Credit is to wait until they file their taxes, at which point they'll get the whole thing in a lump sum. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Ted again to show the video.

Male (video voiceover): This video will show you how to use Code for America's simplified tax filing portal, GetCTC. GetCTC is a new tool that allows families without a tax filing obligation to file a simplified 2020 tax return to access the new expanded Child Tax Credit and any of the three stimulus payments. GetCTC e-files a simplified return directly with the IRS. It's mobile friendly, available in English and Spanish, and chat assistance is available at any point in the process. People without children can use it too just to access stimulus payments.

First, GetCTC will go through a few steps to confirm that it's the right tool for me. The tool will check first that I'm allowed by the IRS to do simplified filing, since those with higher incomes are required to file a full return. GetCTC will then warn me that I could get even more money by filing a full return, since I can't get the EITC or state credits from this tool. Those who choose this option are sent to getyourrefund.org, which allows families to file full tax returns through VITA services. For now, I'll opt to continue with this tool.

Next, GetCTC will check whether I filed a 2020 return this year already. If I already submitted a return, the IRS would reject a new one I file through this tool. And the tool will check if I filed a

2019 return. If I did, the tool would confirm whether I needed to file this new return at all. And if so, it would collect my 2019 adjusted gross income, which the IRS requires from filers for authentication purposes. In this case, I'll say that I didn't file last year.

Finally, GetCTC will confirm I lived in the United States last year, and it will confirm that no one can claim me as a dependent, since that would make me ineligible for CTC and stimulus payments.

In the next section, GetCTC asks for some basic information about me. I'll enter my name, date of birth, and Social Security number. Note that I can also enter an ITIN. As required by the IRS, GetCTC asks for my phone number. It also asks if I was a member of the armed forces in 2020, since that could impact the amount of my recovery rebate credit. GetCTC does not require users to create an account and does not require them to have an email address. Users simply have to sign up using their phone or their email. In this case, I'll choose to sign up by phone. GetCTC will send me a six digit code that I must enter to confirm that phone number is indeed mine. For purposes of this demo, I'll enter a fake code on this page.

In the next section, if I'm married, GetCTC will collect needed information about my spouse. I'll enter my spouse's name, date of birth, and Social Security number or ITIN. After I enter my spouse's information, GetCTC will display what I entered to confirm it's right. In the next section, GetCTC allows me to list my 2020 dependents. Rather than assume I've read all the rules, GetCTC asks me all the questions I need to answer to make sure I can claim my dependents. Keep in mind that the pages users see in this section very much depend on the answers they provide.

First, I'll enter my dependent's basic information, name, date of birth, and relationship to me. GetCTC will ask a couple of other specific scenarios to confirm eligibility in certain cases. Next, GetCTC will ask me to confirm a few more criteria. If at any point my dependent doesn't meet the main criterion, GetCTC will ask whether one or more valid exceptions apply. Once it is clear that I could claim this dependent, GetCTC will ask for their Social Security number or adoption taxpayer identification number. Behind the scenes, GetCTC will determine which credits my dependent is eligible for. Finally, GetCTC will show me a list of my dependents, including whether they are eligible for CTC or only for stimulus payments. I can keep repeating this process until all my dependents are recorded. For now, I'll say I only have one dependent.

In the next section, GetCTC will help me claim any stimulus payments I missed out on. While the IRS will calculate and issue the third stimulus payment automatically using the information on this return, the IRS requires the family to calculate for themselves any amount of the first two payments they missed out on, and report that amount directly on their return as their recovery rebate credit. GetCTC makes this process easier by calculating how much families should have received. If I got this amount, I would skip this section. Instead, I'll say I received less than this amount, and I have missing stimulus to claim.

GetCTC will then help me figure out how much I received in the first two payments, including providing some tips about where to find the information. I'll say in this case that I received \$1,200 in the first payment, and that I didn't receive any of the second payment. GetCTC will

then let me review the amount I'm claiming and confirm that I would like to claim it. Finally, GetCTC will collect my payment information and allow me to review it in my return. I could select direct deposit or a mailed check. In this case, I'll select direct deposit.

GetCTC asks me to confirm that my name is on the bank account so the payment is not rejected. I'll provide my routing number and my account number. And finally we'll have the chance to confirm my information. The IRS also requires that I provide my mailing address. GetCTC allows me to enter identify protection PINs for anyone in my family who has one, and provides more information about what an IP PIN is. I'll say that no one in my family has one.

Now I can review all the information I've submitted and go back to edit anything that's wrong. On this page, as required by the IRS, I set a five digit PIN that I can use to authenticate when I file next year. Finally, I'll agree to the legalese on the last page, and I'll file. Just like that, I filed my simplified return. GetCTC will alert me within a couple days whether my return has been accepted or rejected by the IRS. You can find GetCTC at GetCTC.org. For more resources about the CTC and stimulus payments, visit GetCTC.org/navigators.

Deirdre Schifeling: Okay. Just going to wait for Ted to put back the screen share on our last final two slides. Thank you for hanging in there with us. So how you can help. Help sign up non-filers. What we've learned from lots of conversations with people who don't file taxes and people who are part of community groups or other agencies that interface with folks who don't file taxes or haven't filed taxes, is that it generally takes two conversations with a trusted messenger to sign up somebody for the CTC.

The first conversation is really just educating them about the Child Tax Credit, and answering questions, allaying fears. So fears around immigration. These are all things that Mike Schmidt can speak to in detail., fears around impact of filing if you haven't filed for a while, questions around child support and back taxes, and just all the different ways that people -- all the different fears and worries that people have around interacting with the IRS. So first conversation is really educating about the Child Tax Credit, why it's so beneficial, and allaying those fears. And we'll give you more information about how to do that.

Second conversation is really helping folks walk through how to sign up on the portal. So hopefully that six-minute video was helpful. Even with the six minute video, even with this portal that kind of is super-supportive of you as you walk through and answers a lot of questions, many people who are not tax filers still need a human being sitting next to them who they trust to help them walk through it. And so I think that's part of the reason we are so thrilled to talk to all of you as trusted messengers, as human beings who are connecting with those non-tax filers. So this is the most important way that you can help get the word out right now, is from now until mid-November, talk to those folks in your network who are not tax filers, help them understand what the Child Tax Credit is, and how to sign up for it. So that's the first thing.

Second thing is just raising public awareness generally by sharing flyers, posting on social media, holding training events, all the different ways that we can generally raise awareness and build public support around the Child Tax Credit. And we will share materials that you can use to help spread the word. Next slide.

Here are the materials that we will provide. This is Help is Here. And basically Child Tax Credit 101, basic information on it and how to sign up. It's in English and Spanish. Probably you can take the information on here and do a better job of making it visually appealing. Ours is pretty text heavy. And making it more engaging for your audience. So please don't consider this the bible. This is just like a starting point. But we will provide these flyers. Next slide.

We'll also provide an outreach email with links to all the materials in case you want to organize your own training with other people in your network to learn about the Child Tax Credit and to learn how to sign folks up. And we will share this slide presentation that we have just gone through. Next slide.

Last but not least, GetCTC.org is the step by step guide to using the GetCTC simplified filing portal. That's the thing that we just went through in the video. So going to GetCTC.org is a good way to get all the information that you need on using that portal and helping folks sign up. And that's by Code for America, in partnership with the White House and the Treasury. Next slide.

And then last but definitely not least, you can always go to childtaxcredit.gov to get started and get more information, answer basic questions. And a last reminder, folks have to file their taxes in 2022 to get the second half of the CTC payment. So this whole presentation was mainly about how to sign up from now until November, mid-November, November 15th, in order to get the Advanced Child Tax Credit and get that in a monthly payment form. After mid-November, you need to file your taxes in 2022 to get the second half of your CTC payment. Or if you didn't sign up at all, get the whole CTC payment. So just a quick reminder on that.

And with that, I'll end and turn it over to Mike Schmidt. Thank you so much for your participation today. And I'll turn it over to Mike.

Mike Schmidt: Great. Thank you so much, Deirdre. It is so great to be with all of you. And I'm happy to walk through your questions. My name is Mike Schmidt. And I work in the Treasury Department. And I work on the Child Tax Credit program. So I'm so excited to have such a big group of folks on here interested in participating in the program, and interested in driving enrollment in the program. And some really good questions here, and so I'm happy to walk through them. Please do use the Q&A function to ask questions. And that way I can just go through them here.

So first question we have from Kathy. Kathy asks, if the credit is extended, will the credit still be allocated half throughout the year and half at filing? Well that's a really good question. And that is one that ultimately is going to depend on Congress and what Congress decides to do. I think our expectation, looking at the current legislative drafts that have been floated around, is that the credit -- the advanced payments would be for the full credit amount next year. Which is to say this program payments started in July this year. Next year if they start at the beginning of the year or early in the year, the payment amounts would be the same, but they'd cover the full year. So they would cover the full credit.

We have a question from Leslie about college age students in the CTC. So this program, the advanced payments, this expanded Child Tax Credit program is through age 17. There is a credit for other dependents, that's a \$500 credit that you can claim on your tax return. So that's something that happens next filing season with other tax credits like the EITC and others. So that is available. It's \$500. And it's if you have other dependents that are not CTC eligible. Many of those can be eligible for the credit for other dependents.

We have a question from Marcy about what happens when parents split custody of a child. And Marcy, this is a really good question. It's one we hear a lot about. A very common fact pattern is the one you laid out, when one parent receives the credit in an even year, let's say, and the other parent claims the credit in the odd year, and they have an arrangement or an agreement whereby they do that.

Right now the IRS is making payments based on the 2022 tax return. So the returns that were filed earlier this year in 2021. So whoever claimed the child in that year is the parent who will be receiving advanced payments. If that parent isn't receiving advanced payments and they claim the child, it could be because there's some other eligibility issue or the IRS is continuing to make an eligibility determination. But as a general matter that's how the program is working. The important thing is that for the other parent, if you are eligible to claim the credit in 2021, that other parent should claim the credit when they file their taxes next year. You are eligible to claim the credit, you should claim the credit. And that is as a general matter how that circumstance is working right now with the program.

We have a question from an anonymous attendee asking, what about those that do not want to receive the advanced payments anymore and would rather receive the remaining payments next year when they file their taxes? That's a really good question, an important one. The IRS has set up an online tool, an online portal. This is separate from the tool that Deirdre walked through. The tool that Deirdre walked through is really dedicated for the non-filer population, like getting people signed up, or people who are already signed up who want to check their information or make changes to their account, they can do that using this online tool. It's on the IRS' website.

And one thing that it does, one thing it allows you to do, is unenroll from the advanced payment program. And that way you stop receiving payments this year. But you can go in, you can still claim the full credit next year. So if you'd rather receive -- you have a client or someone you're working with who would rather receive their payments in a lump sum at the end of the year, that is totally okay, totally your choice. You just go in and unenroll for advanced payments on the IRS' website.

We have another question here that says, if a person owes back taxes or child support payments, can they still qualify for the CTC? The answer is, yes, absolutely they can qualify. One question is, okay, well will those payments -- will their payments be reduced to satisfy those debts? And the answer is for back taxes and child support, the advanced payments are protected from what's called offset. So the IRS does have programs where it will reduce the amount of payments that it makes in refunds to satisfy federal debts like back taxes. But these advanced payments are not subject to offset. They're exempt from offset. So they're available.

When you file your taxes next year, the remainder of the credit which will be part of the refund, that actually is subject. So slightly different rules in terms of it being subject to advanced payments, advanced payments being not subject to offset, but the credit in the refund part is just a function of the law, how it was written. That portion is subject to offset.

There's also -- often we get questions around garnishment. So offset is, okay, the IRS is going to reduce the payment amount before it goes out. Garnishment is, okay, the payment has been received, it's sitting in the bank account, but there's an outstanding debt, maybe state, local, private creditor, and the bank debt is garnished to satisfy that debt. The treatment of garnishment is really going to be subject based on the local rules. So it's going to be state by state, jurisdiction by jurisdiction, how their rules deal with garnishment.

We have a question, if I filed a 2020 tax return, will I receive automatic monthly payments? That is how the system as a general matter is working, based on 2020 tax return information if you claimed a kid, if you're otherwise eligible, it should be those [inaudible] are receiving automatic monthly payments. If you think you should be receiving payments and you're not, one thing you can do is to go into that information portal that I mentioned on the IRS website and check your eligibility status on that information portal.

Richard asks if we can have a link to the video, the GetCTC video. Absolutely. Those will be in the materials that we distribute after this session. So we'll make sure to definitely provide that with you.

We have a question here from Maria. It says, what are the steps to follow when a couple with child [??], and it's filed in 2019, 2020, but has not yet received the CTC and stimulus checks. That's a really good question. And obviously it's hard -- there are a million different circumstances. And every taxpayer is unique. And it's hard to generalize in terms of every particular case. But the IRS does have a dedicated phone line for the Child Tax Credit. So I think step one is to go into that information portal online to view information about eligibility. If that doesn't get you the information you need, the next step is to call the IRS on the dedicated CTC hotline.

Susan asks, how long does it generally take for someone to receive a check? You know, that is basically a function of the postal service, like any check in the mail. I think typically checks arrive within I think five days or so. But the checks all go in the mail the day before the payments hit bank accounts. So they're all in the mail. It's just a question of how long it takes for the postal service to get there. If someone moves, if someone was receiving paper check but they're going to move, they can go into the IRS portal, that portal I talked about, put in that new information for the check, or put in mailing address information so that the check is directed to that new location. They could also sign up to switch to have their payments direct deposit instead of paper check through that information portal again.

Really good question from Robert asking, my customer had a baby in June of 2021, how does she apply for the Child Tax Credit? It's a question we get a lot, kids born this year. Those families need help. Key message for those families is they are eligible for the 2021 Child Tax Credit. Doesn't matter when they had the kid during the year. They're eligible for the credit. And

they should plan to claim the child when they file their taxes next year. Claim the child when you file your taxes next year. That's a young kid so you get the higher credit amount. It's \$3,600 that you're eligible for, for that young child.

We also get questions, okay, what about the advanced payments this year? And the answer there is the IRS is working on that. So that's new additional functionality, being able to add a kid during the year. And the IRS has worked very hard to stand up these monthly payments. They're making payments to 60 million kids every month now. They've developed that information portal, that update portal. And they're continuing to build out the functionality to that portal to allow for kids to be added. But to the extent you're advising clients and customers, my advice now would be just make sure the foolproof way of ensuring that they get their benefit is just make sure that they are aware that they should claim the child on their taxes next year.

We have a question from Sue. Do you know what will happen with families who can claim children, it's sometimes unclear one year to the next, or filers who file early and claim children they shouldn't have? It's [inaudible] we hear a lot. Again, the advice to give clients is if they're eligible to claim the credit, they should file their taxes next year. And that is the tried and true way of making sure that you get the payments -- that our client gets the payments that they're due.

We have a great question from Richard about, okay, so if you sign up now for payments, do you get the whole amount? Do you get the same amount as you would have gotten in July? Is the monthly payment amount the same? How does that exactly work? As Deirdre [inaudible] by signing up for advanced payments, you get the first half of the credit this year. And no matter when you sign up, you'll get that same amount. So if you were in the program since July, then let's say you have one young kid, each payment is \$300. If you're in the -- if you sign up now and you end up for October, November, December, so [inaudible] for three months, then each payment is -- instead of six months, it's three months, so each payment is twice as high, it'd be \$600. So it's averaged into the payments that are made over the course of the year.

What happens to a check if mailed to an old address that wasn't updated? Number one, I would advise your client to definitely go in and update their address. And then beyond that, there are processes the IRS has in place, what they call payment tracing. And that information is available on the IRS website.

Sid Alvarado: Mike, we have time for about one or two more questions.

Mike Schmidt: Oh, great. Okay. I think I'm getting to the end here, so that works well. Appreciate it. Thank you. We have a question here that says, if a custodial parent has allowed another individual to claim the child as a dependent on their tax return, does this negate eligibility to receive the CTC? If that other individual has claimed the child in the past, then that individual will be receiving advanced payments. But as I said before, if an individual is eligible and wants to receive the CTC, they should file their taxes and claim the child next year. The fact that someone else may have received advanced payments this year does not negate that, their ability to claim the credit, if in fact they are eligible.

And let's see if there are any new questions here. Baby born in November 2021, again no matter what, baby born any time this year, they're eligible for the credit. The IRS is working on functionality to allow families to update their information, add kids during the year. But at a minimum people should plan on filing their taxes next year and claiming the kid on their taxes.

So a lot of really good questions, shows a really great -- asking all the right questions here. And so really appreciate the engagement and really appreciate your assistance helping us get out the word.

Sid Alvarado: Thank you so much, Mike and Deirdre, for all of the information that you have provided to the housing counselors here.

Deirdre Schifeling: Thank you for having us.

Sid Alvarado: Next we have one more polling question. So if you would get your Mentimeter ready. If you grab your cell phones or you can put it in your browser or other device. We have one last question that we would like to ask everyone here. And that question is, after this presentation, I plan to -- and you can check all that apply. There are quite a few options here. Are you going to check out the portals on the Advanced Child Tax Credit? Are you going to encourage your clients to check out the Advanced Child Tax Credit? Are you going to be reviewing resources, which we have some additional resources for you. There's been quite a few resources that have been mentioned already.

So we'd just like to get some feedback from you so we can take this back. So the code here is 27 56 915. We've already placed that in the chat box for you. And it looks like quite a few of you have already had the opportunity to chime in. So thank you so much for that.

Mike Schmidt: And Sid, there are a couple other -- I just looked at the chat and there are a couple of questions that are so important and so good that if it's okay, I'll just take 30 seconds to answer them.

Sid Alvarado: Sure.

Mike Schmidt: So the first one is about HUD income limits. Does this count as income? This doesn't count as income for any federal benefit programs. HUD, it's housing program, rental, if it's SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, SSI, doesn't count as income for any of those programs. So that's a common source of hesitancy. And I think one where we can give families a lot of comfort that it won't affect their other benefits.

The second has to do with ITIN filers. So are ITIN filers eligible? ITIN filers are eligible to claim the Child Tax Credit. These are filers with individual taxpayer identification numbers. They are eligible to claim the credit. However the child they are claiming must have a valid SSN. So if you have an ITIN filer, a child with an SSN, they are eligible to claim the credit. Back to you, Sid. Thanks.

Sid Alvarado: Thanks, Mike. Okay. So everyone has had the opportunity it looks like to chime in on that last question there. And now we'd like to go over some resources that were mentioned already, and maybe one or two additional. You have the links to these in the presentation, which we've already discussed, the presentation being available within 7 to 10 days on HUD Exchange. But the resources that we want to leave you with is the Child Tax Credit Portal, which you have an opportunity to kind of see that and hear about that. The Child Tax Credit Resource Page, the Advance Child Tax Credit information on that. Lots of questions that you all had today, you may possibly find the answer to additional questions that you may have within the FAQs. We also provided a non-filer tool because we did discuss that today. And also some information on simplified tax filing.

And as always, if you have questions after the presentation, don't hesitate to reach out to the Office of Housing Counseling at the email, which is housing.counseling@hud.gov. And then in addition to that, lots of information you'll find on HUD Exchange for housing counselors. And then information in general for the housing counseling community as a whole. We have the Bridge Newsletter that does presents itself quarterly, where you'll find out about the wonderful things that housing counseling agencies are doing across the country. And now I'd like to hand it back over to Stephanie.

Stephanie Williams: Thank you, Sid. And a very, very big thank you to you, Deirdre, and to Mike for answering a lot of questions. And also to Ted for helping us to coordinate this and for running the slides. Once again, we were very happy to partner with you all, White House and Treasury, to present this information to the housing counseling agencies who attended. And our trainings are also recorded, so we're very hopeful that people will tune in and listen to the archived session. I always think it's a good sign when the chat box has a lot of questions coming through. It shows that people want to dig a little deeper and find the information helpful and informative. So thank you so much for taking the time to answer all those questions.

I also want to give a big thank you to the team here at HUD to help to put this program together, along with our training partners at ICF. So thank you all. Please take a look at the resources that Sid has shared. And share this information as widely as you can with your housing counseling clients. Have a good rest of the day.

Mike Schmidt: Thank you. Thanks Stephanie. Thanks Sid. Thanks everyone.

Deirdre Schifeling: Thank you.

Stephanie Williams: Thank you.

(END)