



## Budget Model

# Interactive Map: New Data on 2020 CARES Act Stimulus Checks

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**Summary:** This post presents new state-level data on the \$271.4 billion of stimulus checks in the CARES Act as of March 2020, breaking down the 161.9 million payments by amount, method of receipt, and recipient household type.

### Introduction

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides stimulus checks to eligible families and individuals, referred to by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as Economic Impact Payments (EIP). The act provides qualified individuals with a refundable tax credit of up to \$1,200 (\$2,400 for married couples filed jointly), plus \$500 per qualifying dependent child. The rebates start to phase out above \$75,000 of the taxpayer's AGI (\$150,000 for married couples, and \$112,500 for heads of household) at a rate of 5 cents per dollar.

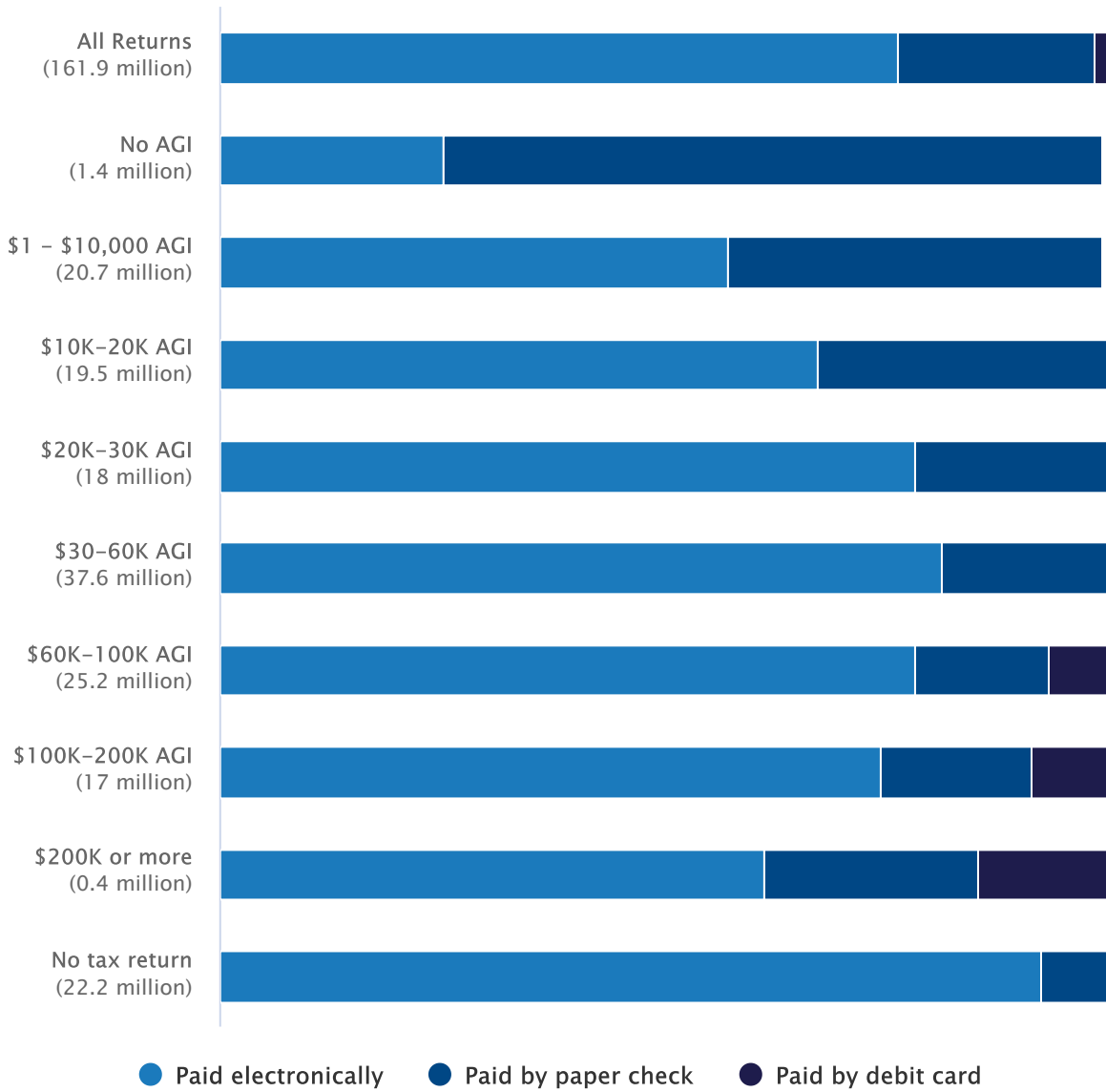
In this blog, we present and analyze [recently-released data](#) on the first round of EIPs, distributed during March of 2020, including distributional outcomes. These data distinguish between payments that were sent electronically, by paper check, or by debit card, and present the amounts and number of payments to individuals with or without qualifying dependents. Apart from national aggregates, the IRS also presents state level data on this first round of EIPs.

### National Aggregates

Figure 1 presents distribution methods for the first-round EIPs by AGI group and by filing status. Overall, 76 percent of the payments were made electronically, 22 percent of them were delivered by paper check, and the other 2 percent were delivered by debit card. Tax units with higher AGI were more likely to receive their payments electronically while those with lower AGI tended to receive their payments through paper check. For example, on average 60 percent of the individuals with AGI below \$20,000 received the stimulus payment electronically compared to 80 percent of those in the \$30,000 to 60,000 AGI bracket. Most individuals received the EIP either electronically or by paper check, only a small fraction received it through debit card, and it is highly concentrated on the top AGI group (AGI above \$100,000).

Figure 1. EIP Distribution Method by AGI and by filing status as of March 2020

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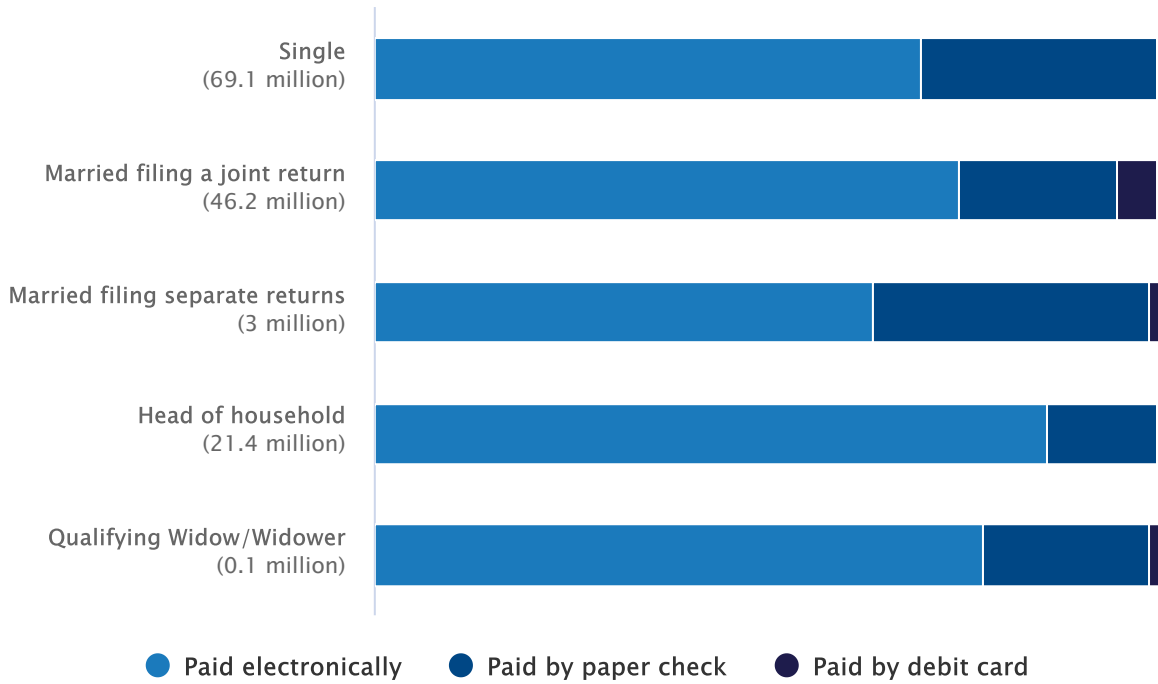
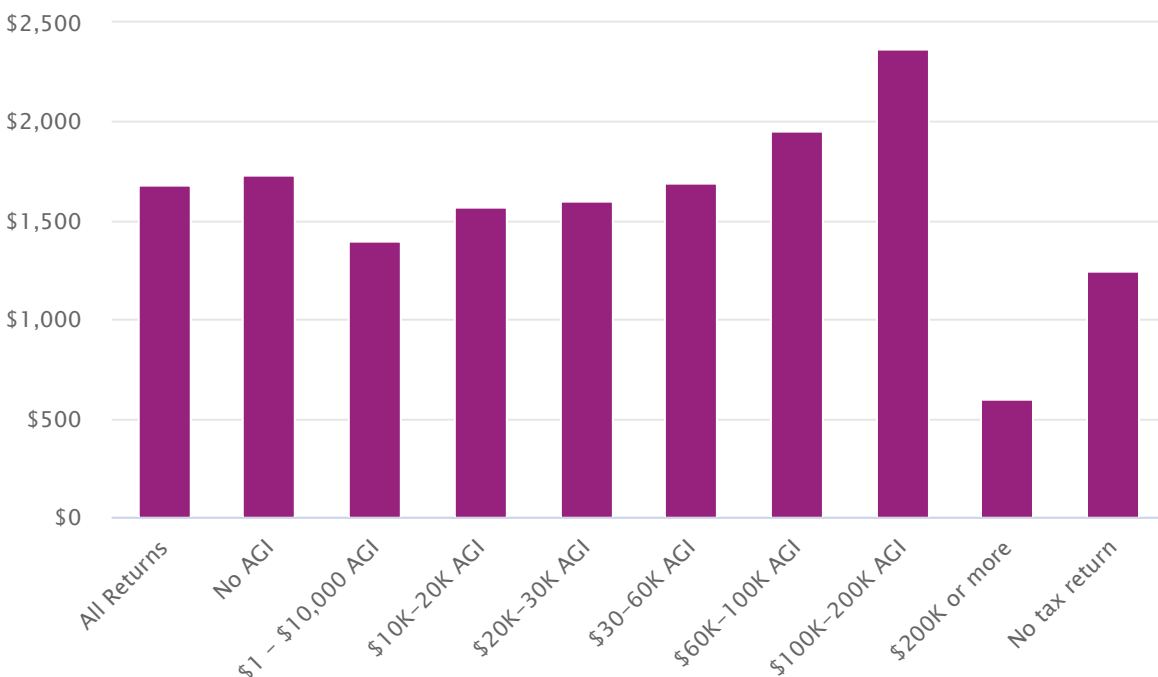


Figure 2 presents average EIP amount, total payments, and number of payments by AGI group. A total of 161.9 million EIPs were distributed by March 2020. The average EIP was \$1,676, for a total of \$271.4 billion distributed by March 2020. Previously, [PWBM estimated](#) the first round of the EIPs would total \$285 billion for calendar year 2020.

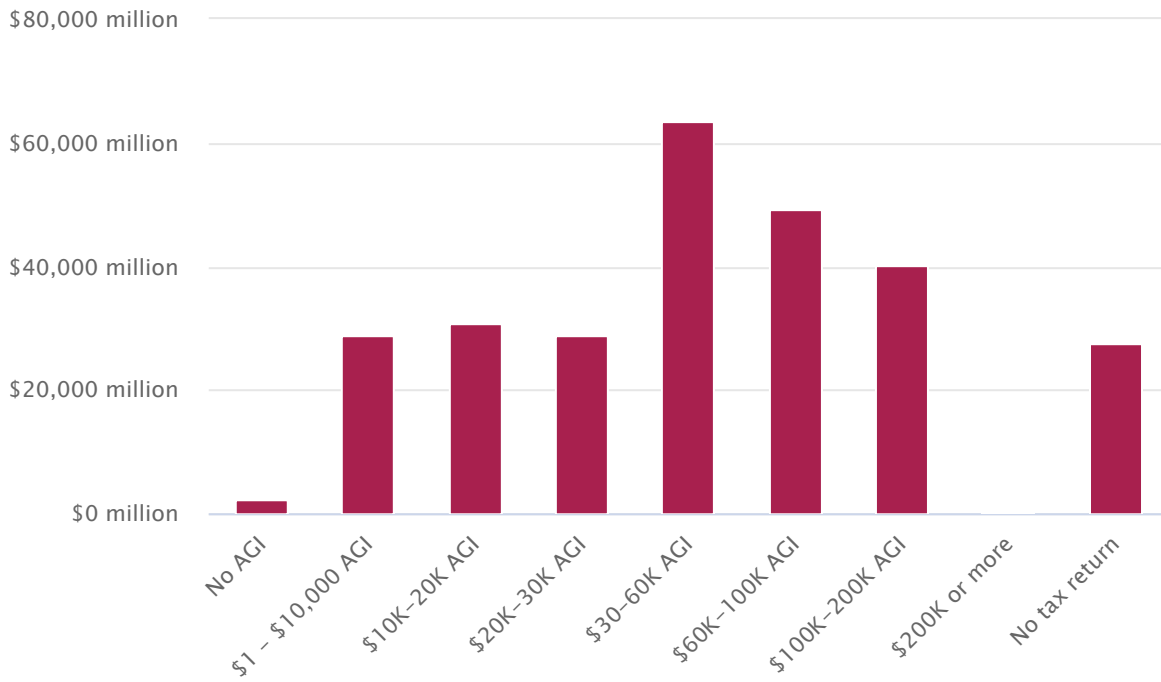
Figure 2. EIP Average and Total Amount and Number of Payments by AGI as of March 2020

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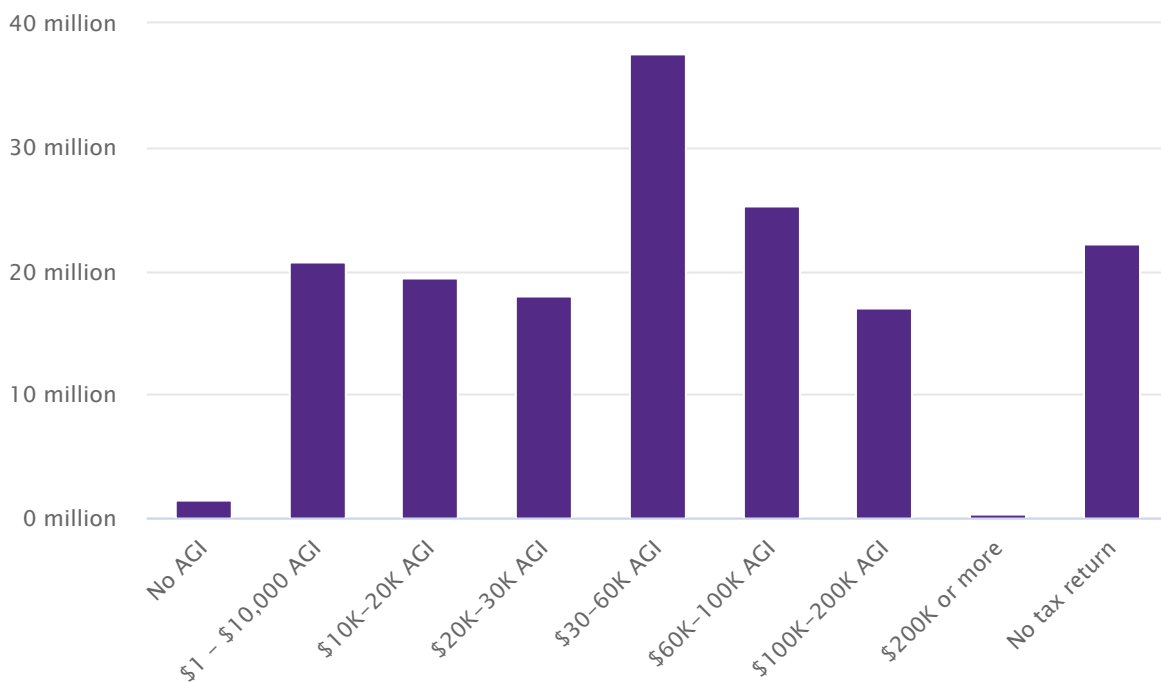
### Average Amount



### Total Amount



### Number of Payments



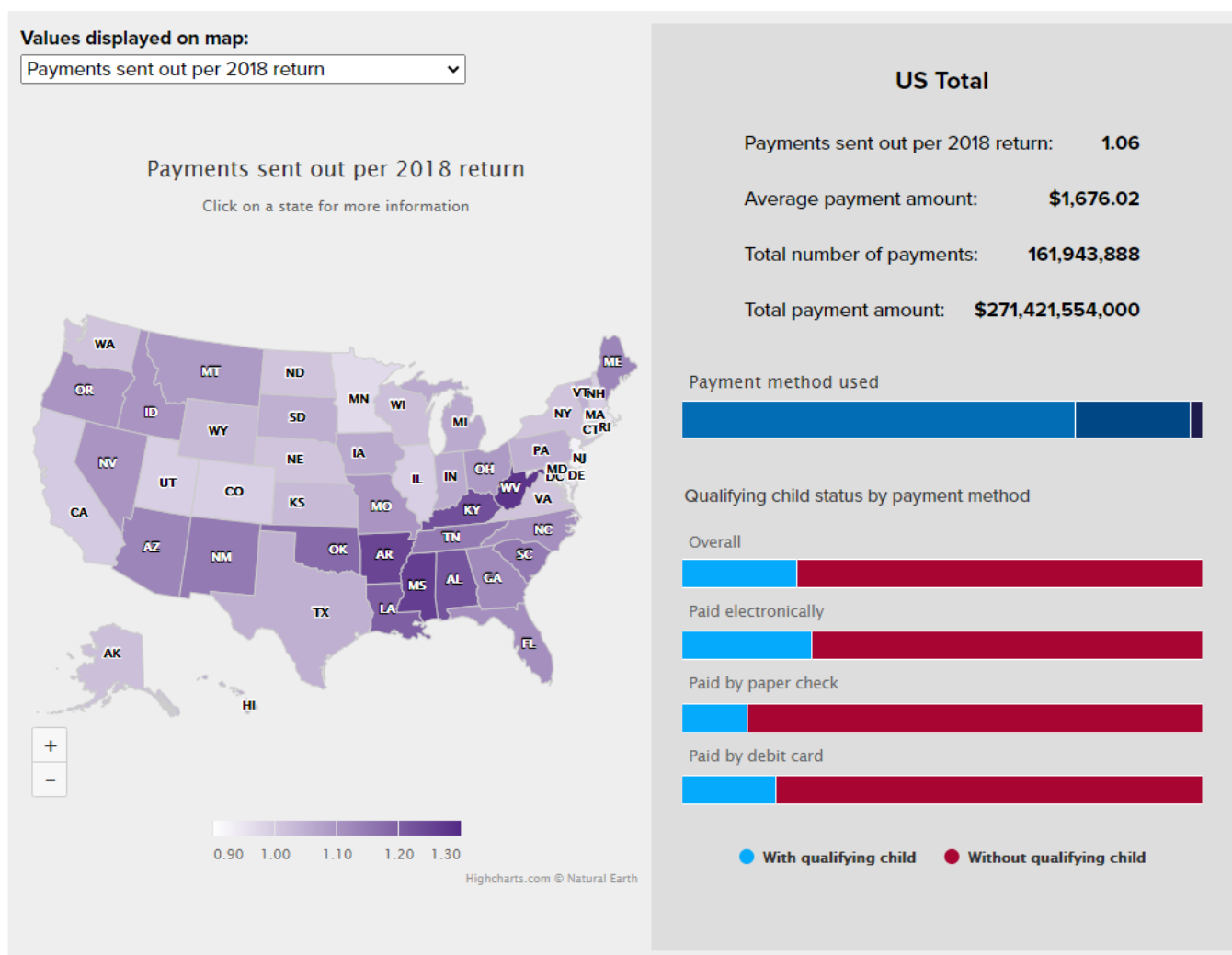
Average payment amount is \$1,395 for those in the \$1 to \$10,000 AGI bracket—as higher-income households are more likely to be married and have children, the average benefit steadily increases with AGI to \$2,366 for those in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 bracket. The average payment decreases to \$597 for those with \$200,000 or more AGI due to the EIP phaseouts.

### Variation by State

The interactive map below provides detailed state-level data on the first-round EIPs: percentage of payments with and without a qualifying child, average payment amount, method of distribution, and the number of payments sent out per 2018 tax return.<sup>1</sup> Most states issued more payments than the number of returns filed in 2018, with exceptions in states like New Jersey, Connecticut, and DC, where fewer stimulus payments were issued compared to the number of tax returns filed in 2018. We did not see much variation across state in terms of the share of individuals with child dependents. However, we do see that a larger share of individual with qualifying dependents received the payment electronically compared to those without qualifying children. This pattern is consistent across all states.

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**\*\*Please view online for interactivity.\*\***



This analysis was conducted by [Xiaoyue Sun](#) and [Victoria Osorio](#). Prepared for the website by [Mariko Paulson](#).

1. Eligibility for the first round of the EIP was based on tax returns filed for Tax Year 2019—or Tax Year 2018, if a Tax Year 2019 return was not filed. We therefore use Tax Year 2018 returns to calculate number of payments per return. ↩