

SSS releases over P19B worth salary loans to nearly 942K members in H1 2019

03 September 2019

The state-run Social Security System (SSS) said Monday it released more than P19.01 billion worth of salary loans to around 942,000 members in the first six months of 2019.

SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Aurora C. Ignacio said loan releases to members from January to June 2019 grew by 8.4 percent from P17.53 billion a year ago to P19.01 billion this year.

Ignacio said the increase in loan releases was due to the rise in the number of member-borrowers from 886,208 in the first half of 2018 to 941,716 for the same period this year.

"Salary loan is one of the most popular loan privileges of SSS. In fact, salary loans represent almost the entire amount of loan releases for the first half of this year," Ignacio said.

Of the total number of borrowers, 846,823 were employed members with a total of P17.67 billion worth of salary loans granted, 75,465 were voluntary members with P1.08 billion worth of loans released, 10,423 were self-employed members with P83.69 million worth of loans granted, and 9,004 OFW-members with P163.07 million worth of loans released.

To qualify for a one-month salary loan, a member must have at least 36 posted monthly contributions, six of which must have been paid within the last 12 months before the month of the loan application. Members who are qualified to receive a two-month salary loan must have at least 72 posted monthly contributions, six of which must have been paid within the last 12 months prior to the month of application.

"Members must be under 65 years old at the time of application and has not been granted any final benefit such as total permanent disability, retirement, and death," Ignacio added.

Interested self-employed and voluntary members may personally submit their salary loan application and other supporting documents at any SSS branch or by using the SSS Self-Service Information Terminals (SSITs) located in selected branch offices nationwide. They may also submit their application online using their My.SSS account on the SSS website, or via smartphone using the SSS Mobile App.

Employed members, on the other hand, should submit their duly-accomplished Salary Loan Application form to their company's Human Resource Department or directly submit their applications online through the My.SSS accounts with employer's validation and certification.

"OFW-members with registered My.SSS accounts may also submit their salary loan application online. Also, they still have the option to visit our SSS Foreign Offices to personally submit their application," said Ignacio.

In case there is no available SSS office in a particular country, OFW members may designate an authorized representative here in the Philippines to submit their application and supporting documents that are duly certified by the Philippine Consulate Embassy.

Qualified members can receive a salary loan as high as twice the average of the borrower's latest 12 posted monthly salary credits (MSC), rounded to the next higher MSC or amount applied for, whichever is lower.

Member-borrowers shall receive their salary loan proceeds through check or credited to their personal bank accounts under SSS-accredited partner banks.

The SSS Chief also appealed to all member-borrowers to religiously pay their monthly amortizations within the agreed-upon payment term to avoid accumulating interest and penalty.

"Salary loan has a corresponding interest rate of 10 percent per annum based on the diminishing principal balance and shall be paid over 24 months or equivalent to two years. In case the borrower fails to pay it on time, SSS shall continue to charge a one percent penalty every month and 10 percent annual interest rate until the loan is fully paid," Ignacio concluded.

"To avoid any inconvenience on your final claims such as retirement or death claims, we are urging the public to pay your obligations on time to avoid incurring higher obligations caused by penalties and interests," she added.

To closely monitor the salary loan application status and payments, member-borrowers may check their My.SSS accounts via SSS website, SSS Mobile App, and SSS Self-Service Information Terminals (SSITs) in selected SSS branches nationwide. They may also call the SSS Hotline at 920-6446 to 55 and local Toll-Free Services at 1-800-10-2255-777 and send appropriate keywords via SMS using the Text-SSS facility.

SSS collects P849 million from housing loans for the first half of 2019

09 September 2019

The state-run Social Security System (SSS) over the weekend said collection from SSS Housing Loan for the first six months of 2019 reached P849.04 million, a 27.58 percent increase from the P665.60 million collected during the same period in 2018.

"We are pleased with the increase in collection from housing loans. With this additional fund, we can help more members who may be having difficulties in acquiring properties or improving their houses. Members may use the Housing Loan for low-cost housing or house repair and improvement. They may also use this loan to purchase a lot and construct a new house. Likewise, they can use the loan to purchase an existing residential unit or construct a new house on their owned lot," SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Aurora C. Ignacio explained.

Under the SSS Housing Loan program, members may avail of the Direct Housing Loan for Workers' Organization Members, Direct Housing Loan Facility for Overseas Filipino Workers, House Repair/Improvement Loan, or Assumption of Mortgage.

The increase in collection was the result of the aggressive collection and foreclosure efforts of the pension fund together with the development of a new billing system for more convenient collection.

"In line with the intensified collection efforts of the SSS' Housing and Acquired Assets Management Department, 3,669 billing letters were sent to housing loan mortgagors or borrowers from January to July 2019. This is to remind them of their housing loan obligations, and prevent incurring penalties and foreclosure of their property," Ignacio said.

Of these, 1,379 mortgagors already made payments in response to the billing letters sent to them. This collection initiative allows validation of payment records and reconciliation of accounts of member-borrowers.

"The housing loan may be paid in multiples of five years to a maximum period of 30 years at an annual rate ranging from eight percent for properties worth up to P450,000 to 11 percent per annum for properties worth P1.5 million to P2 million. SSS also sells foreclosed properties at affordable rates and convenient terms," Ignacio added.

While collection increased, the amount of housing loan releases during the first half of the year decreased by 49.26 percent from P4.08 million released in 2018 to P2.07 million this year.

To qualify for the loan, a member-borrower must be a member of a registered workers' organization or an OFW with at least 36 months contribution and 24 continuous contributions in the period prior to application. The member must be 60 years old and below at the time of application and has not been previously granted an SSS housing loan or any final SSS benefit. The member's loan payment must be updated.

"Many members are having difficulties in paying steep house rental fees or are living in houses in poor condition. Thus, we encourage our members to take advantage of the Housing Loan program, where they may borrow up to P2 million to buy their own home or improve the condition of their current house," Ignacio said.

SSS maternity benefit claims up by 15%, reaching over 180K in H1 2019

29 August 2019

The state-run Social Security System (SSS) granted over 180,000 maternity benefit claims in the first six months of 2019, a 15 percent increase as compared to the same period last year.

SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Aurora C. Ignacio said that the pension fund expects that this number will continue to grow through the year. "This year we are expecting around 360,000 maternity benefit claims. This is 10 percent higher than the actual claims recorded the previous year," Ignacio said.

The SSS' maternity benefit disbursements also increased by 23 percent from P3.37 billion in the first semester of 2018 to P4.13 billion in the first half of the year. The increase can be attributed to the growth in the number of beneficiaries as well as the implementation of Republic Acts No. 11199 and 11210 or the Social Security Act of 2018 and the 105-day Expanded Maternity Leave Law (EMLL), respectively.

Under the SS Act of 2018, the SSS contribution rate and monthly salary credit were increased starting in April 2019, thereby also raising the amount of benefit that a member may receive.

On the other hand, the EMLL pushed the compensable period for maternity benefit from 60 or 78 days to 105 days covering child delivery, miscarriage, and emergency termination of pregnancy starting March 11, 2019.

Pursuant to the EMLL, qualified members may receive from SSS a cash benefit equivalent to 100 percent of their average daily salary credit multiplied by 105 days for live childbirth, regardless of the mode of delivery. An additional 15 days of paid leave is given to a solo parent under the applicable provisions of Republic Act No. 8972 or Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000.

For miscarriage and emergency termination of pregnancy, the member will receive an amount equivalent to 100 percent of her average daily salary credit multiplied by 60 days.

Female members with expected delivery date on January 2020 onwards, may receive a maximum maternity benefit of P70,000, given that they are paying their contributions under the new maximum monthly salary credit of P20,000.

"The SSS is glad to assist its female members and their families during pregnancy. This benefit will provide them with the financial means to support themselves and their newborn babies before returning to work. We hope that through these enhancements, they will be able to regain their health and overall wellness," Ignacio said.

To qualify for the maternity benefit, a female member must have paid at least three monthly contributions within the 12-month period before the semester of childbirth or miscarriage. She must have notified her employer about her pregnancy and the probable date of her childbirth if she is employed, or to the SSS if she is self-employed (SE), voluntary member (VM), overseas Filipino workers (OFW), non-working spouse (NWS) or member separated from employment.

"We advise our members to religiously pay their monthly contributions to qualify for the short-term benefits, such as maternity, sickness, and disability. Their payments, using Payment Reference Number, are posted immediately in our system to avoid any delay in claiming their benefits," she said.

Members may conveniently notify SSS through our e-channels, such as My.SSS at the SSS website, via SSS Mobile App which is downloadable for free on Google Play Store and the Apple Store, and through our Self-Service Information Terminal which can be found in selected SSS branches.

Through these e-channels, members may also conveniently check their records, the status of their benefits including the maternity benefit, and the documentary requirements for its programs, and other services.

"We encourage our members to download the SSS Mobile App, especially our pregnant members. We recognize the hassle to go to our branches. Through this app, they may submit and check their maternity notifications conveniently," Ignacio said.
