

# **EPF withdrawal will help tide things over**

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“For online application, the approval was faster than the conventional method at the counters. The threat of Covid-19 is still around and we should take a safer approach by getting things done virtually. It also requires less paperwork for both applicants and EPF staff.”

**Teh Kee Sin, 55, businessman in Johor**



"The announcement to allow us to take out our savings is appreciated. Since early this year, my family has been impacted by the movement control order. My combined salary with my hubby was greatly reduced. We need the extra cash to tide us through especially for our children's higher education. I am glad I can apply online."

**Chang Chew Pui, 52, bank clerk in Sandakan**



"The withdrawal flexibility allowed under the expanded scope of the i-Sinar programme will help members tide over a period of zero income while they continue to provide for their families and take care of their financial commitments. However, these individuals must use the flexibility wisely and

responsibly and only as a last resort as these savings are their safety net when they retire. The withdrawals, apart from being used to cover their basic family or individual necessities, could be used to start their own small businesses or help the self-employed keep their businesses running including settling payments and other financial commitments. Some could also use the savings towards gaining a second educational qualification if the savings in their Account 2 is insufficient to cover the cost."

**Tan Sri Soh Thian Lai, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers president**



"The i-Sinar programme covers some eight million members whose livelihoods have been affected, and it is an empathetic move by the government in acknowledging the hardship faced by this group of people. More funds in the hands of members mean an increase in their disposal income. That will surely boost their consumption spending and help stimulate the country's economy. However, contributors should be careful in withdrawing their funds just because the facility is there. They should be mindful that it is always better to enlarge their kitty for the future."

**Prof Datuk Dr John Antony Xavier, Asian Institute of Medicine, Science and Technology (AIMST) university vice-chancellor**



"At least there is an opening for people who lost their jobs or had salary cuts to get some money from their EPF. This will help many of us overcome our emergency financial needs. It is not for buying luxury things but we need it to tide us through until we get something going for ourselves."

**Hishamarlya Abd Samad, 44, retrenched hotel managerial staff in Kota Kinabalu**



"EPF contributors should only withdraw from their accounts for emergency purposes or for secure investments that enhance their livelihood. What they withdraw to spend now will mean a much lower amount available when they retire, especially given the compounding effect of long-term savings and EPF's positive inflation-adjusted returns."

**Dr Yeah Kim Leng, Professor of Economics at Sunway University Business School**



"The online application for i-Lestari was so fast. I am sure the i-Sinar will be fast too. To be able to get it approved in just two weeks is very good to those who really need the extra cash."

**K. Loges, 31, customer care senior officer in Penang**



"EPF's online service is so easy and efficient. It is in line with the government's effort to break the Covid-

19 chain of infection. Those who want to apply can do it from the comfort of their own home."

**Bella Abdullah, 23, customer service officer in Penang**



"In the event employees withdraw from their EPF account, they should make good use of the money and try to also look for other forms of investment. What is important is for the government to continue assisting employers to keep their workers and to help them create jobs as well."

**Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan, Malaysian Employers Federation executive director**



"It was hassle-free to apply for the i-Lestari. It's good that EPF is making things easier for the people. The instruction is straightforward and it only took a few minutes to file the application online. Those who need funds should grab this opportunity."

**Vincent D'Silva, 57, English lecturer in Johor**



"Since it will reduce the people's retirement savings, the funds have to be quickly replenished. For now, we are giving priority to the immediate problems of deteriorating consumer welfare and economic recession against future social security problems. The 'balancing' decision has to be made by the EPF, Finance Ministry and Human Resources Ministry."

**Emeritus Professor Datuk Dr Zakariah Abdul Rashid, economist**



"The i-Sinar programme does help to lighten the employers' responsibility in caring for workers' welfare. However, this programme has to be conducted carefully in terms of its application and approval processes as EPF contributions are meant to be used when workers retire."