

\$300 checks to start going out to island retirees

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Local retirees whose annual income is less than \$20,000 will start receiving \$300 checks from the commonwealth this week as part of Gov. Fortuño's \$500 million local economic stimulus package, Interim Treasury Secretary Blanca Alvarez said Monday.

These retirees also qualified for a \$250 federal check under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"We decided to include an additional

\$300 because this is the group that has been hardest hit by the recession, Fortuño said prior to handing out the first group of checks to a group of local retirees.

This week Treasury has mailed out 25,928 local stimulus checks to local retirees — totaling nearly \$8.1 million.

"With this bonus we thank the work of thousands of retirees who dedicated their lives to honorably serving our people. I trust in that this money will help them pay for medicine, pay off bills or for their enjoyment. We will continue fighting so that you and all families in Puerto Rico regain the road to progress,"

Fortuño said.

Alvarez also had good news for working individuals who file taxes, but who have yet to receive their \$300 check in direct federal stimulus that was slated to arrive no later than Oct. 30.

"This week we also are sending out 20,000 of these checks," Alvarez said. Treasury will begin making this payout to people who are self-employed or work for the federal government.

Self-employed people who have not made their estimated tax payments for the upcoming tax year won't receive checks as they are being sent out in accordance

to these payments, the Treasury secretary said.

Those who are still awaiting this payment are either in the above mentioned groups — as public employees were the first to receive the stimulus check, followed by private sector employees — or people who have moved during the past year, Alvarez said.

"We have confronted problems with the standardization of addresses," said Alvarez, adding that Treasury is updating its address database by comparing addresses with those listed on water and electricity bills.

11-3-09