

**The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act
Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund
Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students**

Reporting for Student Portion of the CARES Act Emergency Relief Fund

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”), March 27, 2020, directs institutions receiving CARES Act funding to submit a report to the Secretary of Education describing the use of funds distributed from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (“HEERF”).

The CARES Act requires institutions to use no less than 50 percent of the HEERF allocation received from the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including eligible expenses under a student’s cost of attendance such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care).

On April 9, 2020, the Department published documents related to the Emergency Financial Aid Grants, including a [letter](#) from Secretary Betsy DeVos, a form [Certification and Agreement](#) for signing and returning by institutions to access the funds, and a list of [institutional allocations](#).

1. An acknowledgement that the institution signed and returned to the Department the Certification and Agreement and the assurance that the institution has used, or intends to use, no less than 50 percent of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.

Santa Rosa Junior College signed and submitted the Certification and Agreement form on Friday April 13, 2020.

2. The total amount of funds that the institution will receive or has received from the Department pursuant to the institution’s Certification and Agreement [for] Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students.

On Monday, April 27, 2020, Santa Rosa Junior College received \$2,971,421 to be distributed as Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students.

3. The total amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants distributed to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act as of the date of submission (i.e., as of the 30-day Report and every 45 days thereafter). **This is being updated to report quarterly as per updated guidance from the Department of Education.**

- **May 6, 2020:** \$238,055
- **May 13, 2020:** \$172,438
- **June 30, 2020:** \$301,137
- **September 30, 2020:** \$317,976
- **December 31, 2020:** \$488,525

- **March 14, 2021:** **\$1,516,750**
- **June 30, 2021:** **\$1,223,500**
- **September 30, 2021** **\$3,310,000**

4. The estimated total number of students at the institution eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and thus eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

- At the passing of the CARES Act on March 27, 2020, we interpreted Cares Act language to include the entire College enrollment of 19,309 students as eligible for an Emergency Financial Aid Grant.
- While HEERF-student share dollars are not Title IV financial aid, The Department of Education’s April 21, 2020 guidance states that students must meet requirements in Section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to receive HEERF emergency grants. That reduced the total number of COS students eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants down to only 4625.
- The Department of Education’s **May 14, 2021 Final Rule** as it relates to HEERF 1, HEERF II, and HEERF III grants, any individual who is or was enrolled at an eligible institution on or after March 13, 2020 is now eligible for HEERF 1, HEERF II, and HEERF III student grants.

5. The total number of students who have received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

- **May 7, 2020:** **480**
- **May 14, 2020:** **347**
- **June 30, 2020:** **601**
- **September 30, 2020:** **451**
- **December 31, 2020:** **371**
- **March 14, 2021** **1,032**
- **June 30, 2021** **1,121**
- **September 30, 2021** **1,890**

6. The method(s) used by the institution to determine which students receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants and how much they would receive under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

Santa Rosa Junior College initially used the following criteria to determine eligibility:

- **Completed COVID-19 Emergency Grant application to include emergency need**
- **Completed a FAFSA application**
- **Title IV eligible under Section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965:**
 - US Citizen or Eligible Non-Citizen
 - Registered with Selective Service (males only)
 - Valid Social Security Number
 - High School Diploma, GED, or completion of high school in an approved home school setting

- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an approved degree or certificate program
- Not be enrolled in elementary or secondary school
- Be making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- Submit Statement of Educational Purpose (if applicable)
- Not be in default on Title IV grants or loans
- Actively enrolled at the time of application and disbursement in a minimum of 3 units

Santa Rosa Junior College took the following steps to efficiently and compliantly deploy the COVID-19 Emergency Grant Funds to students

- April 15, 2020: Created the COVID-19 Emergency Grant application
- April 27, 2020: Deployed COVID-19 Emergency Grant webpage to host all Emergency Grant Fund options to Santa Rosa Junior College students to include the COVID-19 Emergency Grant
- April 27, 2020: Email and text message sent to student notifying them that the COVID19 Emergency Grant opened for applications with eligibility criteria, instructions on how to apply and a timeline of what students can expect throughout the application review process
- May 6, 2020: First disbursement released to students

Students receive an email within 5-7 days from the submission of the COVID-19 Emergency Grant application notifying them we have received their application and it is under review. Once applications are reviewed and an eligibility determination is made, students will receive one of the following titled emails based on eligibility determination:

- Ineligible
- Denied
- Approved

In Spring 2021, with the Department's **May 14, 2021 Final Rule**, awarding criteria was expanded to allow any student, regardless of citizenship status, to qualify for HEERF funding. Students did not need to be in an eligible Title IV status, and allowed for non-credit students to receive emergency funding. The awarding criteria was expanded to allow for any enrolled student (3 unit minimum or exclusively in a non-credit program) to receive an emergency grant if they had a demonstrated need. Grants were awarded in amounts ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for spring. Higher grants were given to students who were Pell eligible and those with dependent children living at home. Additional awards of \$200 each were granted to enrolled students who had utilized the District's Food Distribution Program. These \$200 awards were specifically for students to purchase groceries.

For Fall 2021, students with exceptional need, as identified by an EFC of less than \$5,847, were auto-awarded an Emergency Grant based on the number of units enrolled and whether or not the student reported supporting dependents on the FAFSA or CADAA. Students who were auto-

awarded, were instructed to “accept” or “decline” the award as an attestation to their educational related need due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Students who had not submitted the FAFSA or CADAA, or were ineligible to do so, were provided the opportunity to apply to receive an Emergency Grant. Award amounts ranged from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for the academic term.

- ❖ Disbursements continue to be made on a weekly basis to ensure we are responding expeditiously to students’ emergency needs.