

What is the CARES Act/HEERF?

The CARES Act established and funded the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) to provide emergency funding to higher education institutions. A portion of each institution's allocation must be awarded to students in the form of emergency financial aid grants ("CARES Act emergency grants") for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the COVID-19 crisis. Students who meet eligibility requirements as set forth by the Department of Education and who demonstrate the greatest need may receive assistance from this fund.

Who is eligible to be considered for a CARES Act emergency grant?

The U.S. Department of Education released guidance on student eligibility and allowable uses of CARES Act emergency grants. Per that guidance, students must meet Title IV eligibility requirements in order to receive a CARES Act emergency grant. As a result, all applicants must have a current FAFSA on file with SWIHA's Financial Aid office, and meet the TitleIV eligibility requirements. If you are eligible to file a FAFSA but have not yet filed and need assistance, please file a FAFSA at studentaid.gov.

What is the Title IV eligibility criteria?

- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a degree or certificate program.
- Not be enrolled in elementary or secondary school.
- For currently enrolled students, be making satisfactory academic progress.
- Not owe an overpayment on Title IV grants or loans.
- Not be in default on a Title IV loan.
- File "as part of the original financial aid application process" a certification that includes: a statement of educational purpose and student's SSN.
- Be a U.S. citizen or national, permanent resident, or other eligible noncitizen.
- Have returned fraudulently obtained Title IV funds if convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to charges.
- Not have fraudulently received Title IV loans in excess of annual or aggregate limits.
- Have repaid Title IV loan amounts in excess of annual or aggregate limits if obtained inadvertently.
- Have Selective Service registration verified.
- Have Social Security Number verified.
- Not have a federal or state conviction for drug possession or sale, with certain time limitations.

How much will each eligible student receive as a CARES Act emergency grant?

Southwest Institute of Healing Arts used Pell eligibility and enrollment status to determine eligibility and grant amounts. Those students who were Pell Grant eligible were issued \$500 and those who were not Pell Grant eligible received \$200.