Fullerton College CARES/HEERF Emergency Grants Frequently Asked Questions

What is CARES/HEERF and where did the funding for emergency grants come from? The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed by Congress and signed into law on March 27, 2020. One aspect of the act was the creation of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). HEERF provides funds to institutions for emergency financial aid grants to students whose lives have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

How much HEERF funding did Fullerton College receive? Fullerton College has been allocated $4.85 million to provide emergency grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds are intended to help with academically related expenses such as food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare, and childcare that resulted from the disruption in campus operations.

Who is eligible for HEERF Emergency Grants? There are three general eligibility criteria for these funds: 1) students must be currently enrolled in the Spring 2020 semester at Fullerton College; 2) students must be eligible to receive federal financial aid from Fullerton College; and 3) students must not be enrolled in a completely online program as of March 13, 2020. Currently enrolled students who are not eligible for federal HEERF Emergency Grants may be able to receive different emergency grants supported by other sources of funding.

If I am not eligible for the HEERF emergency grants, will the College still help me? Yes. The College is looking for ways to assist as many currently enrolled students during this pandemic as possible. Students who were eligible to file the California Dream Act Application (or have completed an AB 540 document) may receive emergency grants. Those grants will come from other non-federal funds at the College. As long as funds are available, the grants will be the same amounts as the HEERF emergency grants.

Will I receive the emergency grant even if I owe the College money? Yes. If you are eligible for these emergency grants, you will receive the money even if you have current financial holds or owe the campus fees or fines.

Does it matter how many units I am taking in spring 2020? No. Emergency grant amount will be the same for full- and part-time students; however students must be currently enrolled and eligible to receive the funds.

Do I need to apply for the Emergency Grant? Yes. Please complete the application which asks students to certify whether they have incurred $500 in expenses relating to the disruption of campus operations. Students will only be able to complete the application once.

How much emergency grant money will I receive? If students are eligible and have incurred at least $500 in expenses due to the disruption in campus operations, students will receive the maximum award of $500. The amount of HEERF funding that institutions received varied based on the Department of Education's allocation formula. That means the amount of the emergency grants at Fullerton College will not be the same as at other colleges. Each institution had to develop its own strategy for disbursing the funds to eligible students enrolled at their campus.

How will I know if I am awarded? You will receive an award notification via email to your NOCCCD email account. You can also view your award in myGateway.

How will I receive my Emergency Grant? All financial aid disbursements will be made electronically through Bank Mobile. Please refer to the "How Financial Aid Gets to You" on the Financial Aid website: https://financialaid.fullcoll.edu/.

When will I receive my emergency grant? We do not have an exact timeline, but funds will be awarded soon after students are identified as eligible. The application will be open until Friday, May 22nd at 11:59 p.m. and students can continue to apply through that date. Funds will be disbursed until they are exhausted.

Will Financial Aid contact me about my application? If you are awarded, you will be notified via email to your NOCCCD email account. You can also view your award in myGateway. If students are not eligible, the Financial Aid will try to contact students to provide additional insights but given the volume of anticipated requests, the Financial Aid office may not be able to reach students.

How can I use the money? The grant should be used for academically related expenses incurred due to COVID-19. Some examples include expenses related to food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare, and childcare.

What if I need more money than the emergency grant I received? We understand that students have significant needs during this time. The HEERF Emergency Grants are meant to help meet your financial needs. But we know the grants will not be enough money for many students.

I have not applied for FAFSA. Is it too late? Students can complete the 2019-20 FAFSA through June 30, 2020. The 2019-20 FAFSA covers the Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 terms. Completing the FAFSA will allow students to be considered for many kinds of financial aid.

More questions? Please contact the Fullerton College Financial Aid Office if you have any questions.