

## **CARES Grant Frequently Asked Questions**

<https://pmi.edu/pdf/covid-19/cares-act-faqs>

### **Q: What is the CARES Grant and Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund?**

**A:** Sections 3504, 18004, and 18008 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), enacted on March 27, 2020, allow higher education institutions to use certain funds allocated by the Department of Education (Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund “HEERF” – CARES Grant) to support students and higher education institutions with expenses and financial needs related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic.

### **Q: Am I eligible to receive the CARES Grant?**

**A:** Students who are or could be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (e.g., Pell Grant, Federal Direct Loans, etc.) are eligible for the CARES Grant, according to U.S. Department of Education guidance provided April 21, 2020. Additionally, the CARES Act requires that the emergency funding goes to students who have incurred additional expenses due to campus disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 global pandemic, such as food, housing, technology, course materials, health care, and child care.

If a student has filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student has demonstrated eligibility to participate in programs under Section 484, the HEA. Students who have not filed a FAFSA but who are eligible to file a FAFSA may also receive the CARES Grant. The criteria to participate in programs under Section 484 of the HEA include but are not limited to the following:

- 1) U.S. citizenship or eligible noncitizen and have a valid Social Security number;
- 2) Must be registered with Selective Service (if the student is male);
- 3) Must have a high school diploma, GED, or completion of high school in an approved homeschool setting;
- 4) Must be meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP);
- 5) May not be in default or have a grant overpayment; and
- 6) May not have been convicted of, or pled nolo contendere or guilty to, a crime involving Title IV funds or for possession or sale of a controlled substance while receiving Title IV funds.

### **Q: Am I required to have a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on file to be eligible for the CARES Grant?**

**A:** Maybe. Students eligible for the CARES Grant must demonstrate their eligibility for Title IV federal student aid. To do so, the Institute requires the student to complete a FAFSA application, meet the other related student eligibility requirements, or to attest to eligibility criteria. In addition, the student must have qualifying expenses and be an active status (Active or on an approved LOA). However, after confirming a student meets these requirements, the Institution retains discretion to request additional documentation to verify eligibility.

**Q: How did the Institute calculate the amount of the CARES Grant?**

**A:** The Institute established award amounts based on the estimated number of eligible students and the total amount of grant funds made available to the Institute. All eligible students will receive equal amounts.

**Q: How will the CARES Grant be disbursed?**

**A:** The Institute will disburse the CARES Grant in two disbursements:

**Disbursement 1:** The Institute used the following criteria to identify the cohort of eligible students:

- 1) An active student who was attending courses on campus as of 03/13/2020, the date the COVID-19 national emergency was declared, and who are active or on an approved leave of absence at the time of application;
- 2) A student with established eligibility for Title IV funds with a valid ISIR with an official EFC on file with the Institute OR can attest to eligibility, and
- 3) A student who has returned a complete Certification and Acknowledgement form that indicates the student has qualifying expenses due to the disruption of campus operations.

**Disbursement 2:** The Institute will make subsequent equal disbursements to all students who received disbursement 1. Disbursement 2 will not require an additional attestation from the student. Disbursement 2 will occur on or before August 3, 2020.

Students applying after August 3, 2020 will receive both disbursements at the same time.

**Q: How much will I receive from the CARES Grant, and when will it be disbursed? A:**

There will be two disbursements of the CARES Grant. The first disbursement will occur on or about June 30, 2020, and the second disbursement will occur on or about July 31, 2020. Each disbursement will be:

\$850.00 (Total of \$1,700.00) for all campuses except;

West Albuquerque, NM, Dillon, MT, Aurora, CO, and Phoenix, AZ will receive \$800 per disbursement (Total of \$1,600.00); and

Each recipient must meet the criteria discussed above to receive the CARES Grant.

**Q: How will I receive the funds?**

**A:** Once the Institute receives the completed Certification and Acknowledgement form and determines the student is eligible, a check will be mailed to the student's address provided, or the funds will be delivered ACH. The delivery method is based on the document on file with the Institution regarding refund/stipend returns. The check must be endorsed by the student and cashed within 90 days of the check's date. If a check is not cashed in 90 days, the check will be

canceled, and the student would need to request a re-issuance of the grant in writing. Reissuance request will be granted based on availability of funds.

**Q: What does the phrase “disruption of campus operations” mean?**

**A:** This refers to any change in the way the Institute operates that resulted from its response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. This includes, but is not limited to, the campus’s closure and the move to online instruction. It also includes the resulting lack of services available to students due to the campus closure.

**Q: Which students are not eligible to receive CARES Grant?**

**A:** Based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, issued on April 21, 2020, the following students are not eligible for emergency funds under the CARES Act:

*International and Undocumented Students:* In order to receive the CARES Grant, the Department of Education states students must meet Title IV federal student aid eligibility requirements. Therefore, international and undocumented students are not eligible to receive CARES Grant.

*Distance Education/Online Students:* Students who were enrolled exclusively in online programs on March 13, 2020 (the date the COVID-19 national emergency was declared) are not eligible for CARES Grant, according to the Department of Education’s guidance.

*Non-degree or Non-certificate Seeking Students:* In order to receive the CARES Grant, the Department of Education states students must be pursuing a degree or certificate in a Title IV eligible program. (Programs not Title IV eligible are: *Nursing Assistant/Nurse Aid*)

**Q: What expenses qualify me for the CARES Grant?**

**A:** CARES Grant provides monetary assistance to students whose education has been disrupted due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The U.S. Department of Education has made the emergency grant aid available to students of institutions who need financial support for additional expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, including course materials and technology as well as food, housing, health care, and childcare. For example, because the Institute changed to online courses, a student may have incurred expenses to purchase a web camera, printer, computer software, or faster internet service.

**Q: What do I need to do to participate in the CARES Grant?**

**A:** If a student meets the initial eligibility requirements (active on 3/13/2020), the Institute will email a notification to the student, along with instructions for completing the Certification and Acknowledgement form. The student must review, complete, and electronically sign the form. The completed form confirms the Institute’s assumption that the student had the additional qualifying expenses due to the campus disruptions caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic and could be eligible for Section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

**Q: What do you need to do if you have not received the email providing instructions to complete the Certification and Acknowledgement form?**

**A:** If a student meets the eligibility requirements, but has not received the Certification and Acknowledgement form, he or she should submit a request at <https://pmi.edu/fshelp> to have eligibility reviewed.

**Q: Is a student on an approved leave of absence eligible to receive the CARES Grant?**

**A:** It depends. The student would be eligible if the student was an active student on March 13, 2020, and otherwise eligible, and went on an approved leave of absence because of the COVID19 global pandemic. If a student started a leave of absence before March 13, 2020, the student would not be eligible for the CARES Grant.

**Q: What if I am scheduled to re-enter, but am currently withdrawn, am I eligible? A:**

Maybe. The student must have been active on March 13, 2020 and have withdrawn due to issues related to COVID-19 on or after March 13, 2020. Students should submit a request an inquiry at <https://pmi.edu/fshelp> to have eligibility reviewed.

**Q: I am not financially responsible for the expenses because I am unemployed, and my significant other is responsible for the expenses. Will I be able to receive the grant? A:** If you have incurred additional expenses due to the disruption of campus operations and someone in your household (spouse or parents) pays those expenses, consider yourself financially responsible for those expenses. You may not consider yourself financially responsible for the expenses if someone pays them outside of your household or another entity.

**Q: Does the CARES Grant have to be repaid?**

**A:** No. The CARES Grant does not have to be repaid.

**Q: I am a student who received an emergency financial aid grant under section 3504, 18004, or 18008 of the CARES Act for unexpected expenses, unmet financial need, or expenses related to the disruption of campus operations on account of the COVID-19 pandemic. Is this grant includible in my gross income?**

**A:** No. Emergency financial aid grants under the CARES Act for unexpected expenses, unmet financial need, or expenses related to the disruption of campus operations on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as unexpected expenses for food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, or childcare, are qualified disaster relief payments under section 139 of the Internal Revenue Code. This grant is not included in your gross income.

**Q: I received an emergency financial aid grant under the CARES Act and used some of it to pay for course materials that are now required for online learning because my college or university campus is closed. Can I claim a tuition and fees deduction for the cost of these materials, or treat the cost of these materials as a qualifying education expense for**

**purposes of claiming the American Opportunity Credit or the Lifetime Learning Credit?**

**A:** No. Because the emergency financial aid grant is not includible in your gross income, you cannot claim any deduction or credit for expenses paid with the grant including the tuition and fees deduction, the American Opportunity Credit, or the Lifetime Learning Credit. See section 139(h) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**Q: Where can a student locate additional resources and information related to CARES Grant?**

**A:** Additional CARES Act grant resources and guidance are located on the Office of Postsecondary Education's webpage: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html>.

**Q: Who do I contact if I have additional questions?**

**A:** You may submit an inquiry at <https://pmi.edu/fshelp> or contact your campus financial services staff with additional questions.