

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

Shasta College's Reporting for Student Portion of the CARES Act Emergency Relief Fund (March 31, 2021)

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 I ("HEERF I").

The CARES Act requires institutions to use no less than 50 percent of the HEERF I 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](#).

The Certification and Agreement directs each institution applying for HEERF I funds to comply with Section 18004(e) of the CARES Act and submit an initial report (the "30-day Fund Report") to the Secretary thirty (30) days from the date of the institution's Certification and Agreement to the Department.

The Department of Education will provide instructions for providing the required information to the Secretary in the near future. In the meantime, each HEERF I participating institution must post the information listed below on the institution's primary website. The Department would like to receive the most current information from the date when the institution received its allocation for emergency financial aid grants to students, and the institution should have received its allocation within a few days after submitting the Certification and Agreement. Accordingly, the following information must appear in a format and location that is easily accessible to the public 30 days after the date when the institution received its allocation under and updated every 45 days thereafter:

- 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.**

Shasta College signed and submitted the Certification and Agreement form on Thursday April 17, 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.**

Shasta College received \$1,836,637 under Section 18004(a)(1) for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students in April 2020.

Shasta College received an additional \$182,433 under Section 18004(a)(2) in August 2020; (\$91,216 of those funds were designated for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students). In

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March 2021, the Institutional Portion of those funds were approved by campus leadership to be used for Student Emergency Funds.

In March 2021, Shasta College received an additional \$374,845 under Section 18004(a)(2).

Total CARES Act/HEERF I funds received for Student Emergency Grants as of March 31, 2021: \$2,394,408

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.

As of March 31, 2021, \$2,206,540 has been distributed:

- \$1,836,637 has been distributed from Section 18004(a)(1).
- \$370,396 has been distributed from Section 18004(a)(2).

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/HEERF I.

- At the passing of the CARES Act on March 27, 2020, we interpreted Cares Act language to include students who received a California College Promise Grant, resulting in approximately 7,000 students would be eligible for HEERF I funds.
- 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 Title IV financial aid eligibility requirements in order to receive HEERF I emergency grants. That reduced the total number of Shasta College students eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants down to only 2,763.

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/HEERF I.

- As of March 31, 2021 a total of 2,632 unduplicated students have received funds. Some students have received multiple CARES Act/HEERF I awards.

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/HEERF I.

On May 6, 2020, the College ran an initial report to select the population of students who met the following criteria:

- Were Title IV financial aid eligible, as determined by the following:
 - Completed a 2019-20 FAFSA application
 - Completed their financial aid file (i.e., turned in any required verification documents)

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- Had any amount of financial need
- Were enrolled in at least 3 units at the end of the term Spring 2020.
- Students who were already fully enrolled in online classes between January 13 – May 13, 2020 (start of the spring 2020 term and the date the President declared the Coronavirus a national emergency) were removed from this list, per Department of Education guidance issued on April 21, 2020.
- 2,726 were determined to be initially eligible.
- The College opted to distribute the HEERF I funds equally among eligible students: \$673.75 per student was the initial award amount based on the initial number of eligible students.

On May 19, 2020, the College updated the May 6, 2020 list to determine which students were still enrolled in at least 3 units as of May 15, 2020 (the last day of Spring 2020 term). As of that date, 2,571 were still eligible for the funding, and funds were disbursed on May 29, 2020 (\$673.75 to each student).

On May 29, 2020, we communicated with the 155 students who were initially eligible for CARES funding based on Spring 2020 enrollment and encouraged them to enroll in at least 3 units for Summer 2020. At Census (June 17, 20), we verified enrollment and on June 25, 2020, we disbursed CARES funds to 37 students from this group. An additional four students who should have been funded in the initial group but were not due to clerical error were also funded. All 41 students received \$673.75 each.

On June 29, 2020, our campus leadership approved granting CARES Emergency Financial Aid Grants to undocumented students, based on the injunction delivered by the United States District Court Northern District of California on June 18, 2020. Our eligibility criteria to award to undocumented students mirrored our eligibility criteria for Title IV eligible students, with the exception that we used the California DREAM Act Application as the financial aid application instead of the FAFSA. On July 16, 2020, an additional 19 students were awarded with this criterion, and one additional Title IV student was also awarded who should have been awarded in Spring 2020.

On August 6, 2020, campus leadership approved a plan for disbursing the remaining \$63,327 in Section 18004(a)(1) CARES funds in Fall 2020; this plan also included an additional \$91,216 in CARES Emergency Financial Aid Grant funds that were approved through the Section 18004(a)(2) application process. The student population that were eligible included:

- 2,632 students who had been awarded CARES grants as of August 18, 2020
- 115 who were originally eligible in Spring 2020, but who dropped all classes in Spring 2020, and did not take classes in Summer 2020

In preparing this plan, we found that many of these students were not registered for classes for Fall 2020, and we recognized that the emotional and financial toll of the pandemic have negatively impacted their ability to continue their studies. CARES Emergency Financial Aid Grants will be disbursed to these students if they:

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- Submit a 2020-21 FAFSA or California DREAM Act Application, and complete their financial aid file
- Have any amount of financial need
- Are enrolled in at least three units of coursework on August 31, 2020 (Shasta College's Fall 2020 Census)

Using these criteria, we were able to award 1,300 students \$118.50 each on September 25, 2020.

On November 24, 2020, we awarded the final \$493 from the 18004(a)(2) funds to a student who had received CARES Act funds in Spring 2020 and Fall 2020; this student had exhausted her Lifetime Eligibility for Pell Grant and was starting the nursing program. This award allowed her to purchase required equipment for the nursing program.

In early March 2021, campus leadership approved using the Institutional portion of the Fall 2020 portion of 18000(a)(2) funds (\$91,710) for Student Emergency Grants. Additionally, they approved using 50% of the new March 2021 18000(a)(2) funds we received (\$187,422) for Student Emergency Grants. Using the same criteria as from September 25, 2020 disbursement, we disbursed \$396/each to 705 students on March 26, 2021.

7. Any instructions, directions, or guidance provided by the institution to students concerning the Emergency Financial Aid Grants.

Communications made to students prior to December 31, 2020 were included in reports dated May 18, 2020, July 1, 2020, August 18, 2020, October 1, 2020, and December 2020. The following communication was sent to students in March 2021:

Subject Line: March 2021 CARES Act Emergency Student Fund award notification

Dear First Name Last Name,

The CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund was signed into law on March 27, 2020. You have been identified as a student who is qualified to receive a Spring 2021 CARES emergency grant to help cover your "Cost of Attendance expenses" related to the disruption of campus operations due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Cost of Attendance expenses include food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care.

You are scheduled to receive a CARES grant of \$396.00 for Spring 2021. This will appear on your 2020-21 financial aid award letter with the code "COVID" and is called "COVID CARES Funding."

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These funds will be disbursed on Friday, March 26, 2021, through regular Shasta College Financial Aid disbursement methods (BankMobile). For details about disbursement, visit www.shastacollege.edu/fa (Disbursement Schedule).

The California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) legal counsel indicated that although these funds provide cash assistance to students, they are intended to defray costs related to the current public health emergency and are not "income maintenance." Therefore, CARES HEERF funds should not be considered a "public benefit" for public charge purposes. If you are concerned about potential public charge consequences, please consult with an immigration attorney.

If you have additional questions, contact the Shasta College Financial Aid Office at financialaid@shastacollege.edu or 530-242-7650.

Sincerely,

*Shasta College Financial Aid
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