

**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](#).

The Certification and Agreement directs each institution applying for HEERF 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 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 and provide update 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.

College of the Redwoods signed and submitted the Certification and Agreement form on April 14, 2020. The agency tracking number provided for College of the Redwoods is GRANT13070727

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 April 24, 2020, College of the Redwoods received \$1,252,245, 50% of the total amount of funding allocated to College of the Redwoods, as part of the CARES Act to be distributed as Emergency Financial Aid Grants directly 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).

As of May 15, 2020, \$1,254,052 has been disbursed directly to students via their designated refund preference.

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.

College of the Redwoods, using guidance from the Department of Education and the National Association for Student Financial Aid Administrators, NASFAA, determined that 1,978 students were eligible to receive the Emergency Financial Aid 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.

As of May 15, 2020, 1,978 students received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant.

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.

On May 11, 2020, the College ran a report to select the population of students who met the following criteria:

- Completed a 2019-2020 FAFSA application
- Title IV financial aid eligible
- Enrolled in Spring 2020 classes as of May 11, 2020

College of the Redwoods elected to distribute all of the initial Emergency Financial Aid Grant allocation to students during the Spring 2020 term evenly. The majority of the student population is low income, and in order to have the funds be as accessible as possible, the College elected to provide the same grant amount to all eligible students to ensure that students could cover a variety of their educational costs including new or difficult technology needs, increased or new childcare related expenses, food and housing costs, etc.

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

Upon awarding of the grant on May 11, 2020, students were sent the following email message:

*“Dear Student,
With the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) funding provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, College of the Redwoods will immediately allocate*

\$1,253,418 to emergency grants for eligible students. These grant funds will support the college's ongoing efforts to assist students who are experiencing financial hardships as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that the required changes to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect our communities have hit financially vulnerable students and their families hard. The \$1,253,418 HEERF allocation is an important addition to the college's existing support programs and will be passed directly to students.

We are pleased to inform you that you will be receiving a grant of \$634. This grant is intended to help offset any costs related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including expenses such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care). It will not impact your financial aid eligibility for the 2020-21 academic year, and it does not need to be reported on your FAFSA or Federal Tax Return.

The funds will be sent to BankMobile on Friday, May 15th. We have partnered with BankMobile to distribute the funds to you. If you have not already done so, we recommend that you indicate a refund preference at <https://www.refundselection.com>. You can choose to have your refunds electronically deposited into your already established bank account, or you can set up a new bank account with BankMobile (monthly service fees may apply).

We recognize that this is a challenging time for all in our community, and we at CR hope you are finding a way to safely navigate the ever-changing landscape. Please reach out to us if you are in need of any assistance that our institution may be able to offer, as we remain committed to supporting you through your educational journey.

*Sincerely,
College of the Redwoods"*

The grant information was also made available to students via their Financial Aid Award Letter, viewable in WebAdvisor on May 11, 2020.

As part of the College's regular communication, students who did not have a refund preference defined in BankMobile's system were contacted via phone beginning on May 11, 2020 and encouraged to designate a refund preference to ensure that the students receive all eligible refunds, including the emergency grants, as quickly as possible.

Information was also updated on the College's website to include information about the CARES Act on May 11, 2020.