



FAQs about the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund

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 the end of March 2020. One aspect of the act was the creation of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). HEERF provides funds to institutions for emergency grants to students whose lives have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit the HEERF Emergency Grants website at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html> to learn more.

What can the HEERF funds be used for?

Funds are intended to help students with academically related expenses such as food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare, and childcare.

Are all of the funds being distributed immediately and how much grant money will a student receive?

Initially, all eligible students who **complete and submit** their online Acknowledgment Form (<https://forms.gle/UPXdXKUz3ceoQxYU6>) will receive \$736.29.

Additional Grant Funds have also been reserved for documented expenses beyond the initial Emergency Financial Aid Grant Funds. These additional funds will be made available on a case-by-case basis based on the student's demonstrated financial needs. Within the next few days, Carolina Christian will begin sending emails to eligible students at their Carolina Christian email address. It will contain information on how they may apply for additional Grant Funds.

Also, we know that many students' financial needs will extend beyond the current semester, so depending upon availability of remaining funds after the above disbursements have been made, additional resources may be distributed to enrolled and qualifying students in the fall. The federal government has allowed up to a year to distribute the grant funds for this reason.

Who is eligible for HEERF emergency grants?

For the purpose of this program an enrolled student must meet the following guideline:

- A student must qualify for federal aid through an application of aid in the given award year.
- A student must have been enrolled in a degree program for Spring 2020 term.
- Those students must have remained enrolled during a session or course.
- Those students must have been actively engaged in classroom learning. Classroom learning is defined by the participation in weekly discussions and submission of weekly assignments in the session and/or course.
- If a student withdraws from the current term or course they would not qualify for aid.

Specifically, for each program the following criteria must have been met.

- Doctoral students are not eligible for the initial disbursements as they do not meet the qualification guidelines set forth by the Department of Education. Doctoral students may, however, apply for additional assistance at a later date. More information regarding how to apply for additional funding will be provided in the coming weeks.



- A master student that has applied for federal aid in the given year and actively engaged in classroom learning by turning in class assignments, attending class prior to shut down, and participated in teleconference calls for class discussion.
- A undergraduate student that has applied for federal aid in the given year, returned to classes in the 2nd session of the spring 2020 term and have been actively engaged in classroom learning by turning in class assignments, attending class prior to shut down, and participating in classroom forums (teleconference, video conference, google classroom participation, etc.).

Does a student need to fill out an application to receive CARES/HEERF emergency grants?

Yes, per guidance from the US Department of Education, Carolina Christian requires that **students must complete an online Acknowledgment Form** (<https://forms.gle/UPXdXKUz3ceoQxYU6>) in order to receive the initial disbursement of \$736.29.

Additional disbursements will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the student's demonstrated financial needs. More information regarding the additional funding will be provided in the coming weeks.

Will students receive the emergency grant even if they owe their college money (for tuition, etc.)?

Yes. If a student is eligible for an emergency grant, then they will receive the money even if they have current financial holds or owe the campus fees or fines.

How will a student know if they are going to receive an emergency grant?

Eligible students will receive an email from Carolina Christian at their school's email address. Also, students who have provided us with their mobile numbers for texting should receive a text advising them to check their emails, etc.

How will a student receive their emergency grant funds?

Emergency grants will be disbursed to students by check. The checks will be mailed to the student's address provided in their online Acknowledgment Form (<https://forms.gle/UPXdXKUz3ceoQxYU6>).

When will students receive their emergency grant?

Disbursement of the initial Grant Funds will be made per the following schedule.

Students who submit their completed Acknowledgment Form (<https://forms.gle/UPXdXKUz3ceoQxYU6>):

- By 5:00 PM, Thursday, May 21, 2020 --
Their checks will be mailed Tuesday, May 26, 2020.
Please allow 5 to 10 days for mailing.
- After May 21, but by 5:00 PM, Thursday, May 28, 2020 --
Their checks will be mailed Monday, June 1, 2020.
Please allow 5 to 10 days for mailing.

NOTE: Your check will mail to the address you provide when you complete your Acknowledgment Form. Please be sure it is current and correct.



How can a student use emergency grant money?

The grant should be used for academic-related expenses incurred due to COVID-19. Examples include expenses related to food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare, and childcare.

Is the CARES Act Emergency Grant part of my gross income for tax purposes?

No. Please visit the IRS CARES Act website or contact the IRS for more guidance.

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/faqs-higher-education-emergency-relief-fund-and-emergency-financial-aid-grants-under-the-cares-act>

Do the funds need to be repaid?

No. This is a grant, not a loan. The funds are given to students in need, to use towards basic or academic needs.

Can this funding reduce my financial aid?

No. These funds are exempt from the maximum financial aid amount students may receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

Carolina Christian is here to serve you during this unprecedented time. If you have questions or need assistance, please feel free to email the Director of Administrative Services at frontoffice@carolina.edu.