



CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Summary and Recommendations for Distribution of Funds to Students

The US Department of Education (ED) [announced](#) details related to the CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) on April 9, 2020, including information about the [allocations](#), a [letter](#) to college and university presidents, and the institutional application [process](#). Additional information for students was provided on April 21, 2020 through a Frequently Asked Questions [document](#).

The portion of HEERF allocated to UNMC for distribution to students who have experienced a financial hardship due to the disruption of campus operations by the COVID-19 pandemic is \$647,837.

Following review of the ED guidance and consideration of how best to meet the needs of UNMC students, the following recommendations were created for guiding the distribution of funds to students. The three methods allow for immediate funding of needs already identified by UNMC personnel, future funding of needs not yet known as the pandemic continues to impact the educational pursuits of students, and an application process through which students can demonstrate qualifying need for funding consideration.

| METHOD | PLAN | USE OF FUNDS | SELECTION METHOD |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---|---|
| Current Identified Need | \$159,091 | Expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19 (including eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, or childcare). | Title IV eligible students known to have experienced a direct, negative financial impact as a result of the campus disruption. Award amounts will vary. |
| Near Future Identified Need | \$326,787 | Expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19 (including eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, or childcare). | Title IV eligible students known to have experienced a direct, negative financial impact as a result of the campus disruption, recognizing some disruption has not yet occurred for which students will need assistance. Award amounts will vary. |
| Emergency Assistance Application | \$161,959 | Expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19 (including eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance, such as course materials, technology, health care, or childcare). | Applicants must be Title IV eligible students. Must demonstrate qualifying financial need. Application process with review by committee. Award amounts will vary. |
| TOTAL | 647,837 | | |

In order to qualify to receive a portion of these funds, students must be eligible for Title IV funding from ED. To verify funding eligibility, either a 2019-2020 FAFSA or a 2020-2021 FAFSA must be on file in the UNMC Financial Aid Office. The criteria to be eligible for Title IV funding include, but are not limited to: U.S. citizenship or eligible noncitizen; a valid Social Security number; registration with Selective Service (if the student is male); and a high school diploma, GED, or completion of high school in an approved homeschool setting. It should be noted that students who were enrolled exclusively in an online program on March 13, 2020, are not eligible to receive grants from these funds. Additionally, the ED guidance excludes international students and those in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program from receiving this grant funding.

UNMC will distribute funds in accordance with ED guidance via direct deposit or check, neither of which will be encumbered by any balance on the student's account. Students receiving funding from either category for identified need will also be eligible to apply for additional funds from the emergency assistance category. Students receiving a grant will be notified via email.

UNMC will be responsible to report to the Secretary of Education the following: how grants were distributed to students, how the amount of each grant was calculated, and any instructions or directions that the institution gave to students about the grant.