

HEERF III – ARP Awarding Plan and Process

Overview

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) is authorized by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), Public Law 117-2, signed into law on March 11, 2021, providing \$39.6 billion in support to institutions of higher education to serve students and ensure learning continues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ARP funds are in addition to funds authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA), Public Law 116-260, and the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Public Law 116-136. Emergency funds available to institutions and their students under all emergency funds total \$76.2 billion.

HEERF III Student Emergency Grants can be used by a student for any of the following Eligible expenses:

- Any component of a student's cost of attendance
- Emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as: tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental) and childcare.

Students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education during the COVID-19 national emergency are eligible for emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether they completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or are eligible for Title IV. As under the CRRSAA, institutions are directed with the ARP funds to prioritize students with exceptional need, such as students who receive Pell Grants or are undergraduates with extraordinary financial circumstances in awarding emergency financial aid grants to students.

Beyond Pell eligibility, other types of exceptional need could include students who may be eligible for other federal or state need-based aid or have faced significant unexpected expenses, such as the loss of employment (either for themselves or their families), reduced income, or food or housing insecurity. In addition, the CRRSAA and ARP explicitly state that emergency financial aid grants to students may be provided to students exclusively enrolled in distance education.

International students may also receive HEERF III. However, institutions must ensure that funds go to students who have exceptional need. The Department of Education encourages institutions to prioritize domestic students, especially undergraduates, in allocating this funding. This includes citizens, permanent residents, refugees, asylum seekers, DACA recipients, other DREAMers, and similar undocumented students.

Communication plan (Round 1)

- 8/12/2021 Special Circumstance email to all FAFSA Filers
- 8/13/2021 First Message – All students undergraduates with EFC = 0 will receive an email with single use link to apply for HEERFIII – ARP grant
- 8/18/2021 Second message – Application sent to all students VIA the UMSL WIDE distribution list.

The time of the day the messages will be sent has not been set.

Prioritization of students with Exceptional Need

- Students with EFC = zero will get increased amount
- Students with EFC = zero will get head start on application
 - Early messaging
 - Single use links in emails

Awarding Methodology

- Any student enrolled in the Fall semester is eligible
- Must have exceptional need for a component of the UMSL cost of attendance and/or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as; tuition, fees, food, housing, health care (including mental), child care, transportation or other expenses.
- Tiered Funding
 - EFC = 0 \$2500
 - EFC <= 12,000 \$1500
 - EFC > 12,000 \$500
 - Unable to determine \$500
- On a first come basis for fully completed applications only
- Students will be asked if they want the full amount refunded or if they want to use the funds to pay any unpaid charges

Timeline for Phases

- Phase 1 - Complete disbursement of approximately 50% of the total student portion (Total student portion = \$10,821,309.00) by approximately 9/1/2021
- Phase 2 - Complete disbursement of remaining funds by 2/1/2022 via a separate application opening near the end of the year.