

Grand Rapids Community College Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act 30-Day Fund Report

May 19, 2020

Acknowledgement of Signed Certification and Agreement

On April 13, 2020, Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Certification and Agreement. An unsigned copy is available for review at the [Office of Postsecondary Education website](#).

The U.S. Department of Education approved the signed agreement on April 22, 2020.

Total Amount of Funds GRCC Will Receive

Based on the initial CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) allocation, GRCC will receive \$6,806,171. At this time, GRCC plans to distribute no less than \$3,403,086 of this funding to eligible students impacted by COVID-19 pandemic-related disruptions of campus operations.

Additionally, GRCC has applied for \$335,870 in funds from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund – Strengthening Institutions Program.

Total Amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants GRCC Has Distributed

\$676,500 was disbursed to eligible students on May 15, 2020. As of May 18th, an additional \$480,000 was scheduled to disburse to students on May 22nd. Disbursements will continue weekly as students continue to submit acceptance forms.

Estimated Total Number of Students Eligible to Receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants

12,622 students were enrolled at GRCC in the Winter 2020 semester. Of these, 8,589 students were enrolled in a degree or certificate program.

At this time, a total of 4,766 students were identified as meeting all of the criteria required for a HEERF grant, as determined based on U.S. Department of Education guidance.

Total Number of Students Who Have Received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant

Funds were disbursed to 1,353 students on May 15th. As of May 18th, disbursements are scheduled for an additional 960 students.

2,313 students submitted the acceptance form on or before May 18, 2020, establishing their eligibility as having incurred expenses as the result of COVID-19-related campus disruptions. The following table shows the number and percentage of students who attested to having an expense within an eligible category:

Expenses	Students	Percentage
Food	1827	79%
Housing	1505	65%
Technology	1523	66%
Health Care	625	27%
Child Care	364	16%
Course Materials	1438	62%

Methods Used to Determine Which GRCC Students Receive a Grant and Grant Amount

Based on current guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, GRCC determined that students who incurred expenses as the result of COVID-19-related campus disruptions and who met all of the following criteria would be eligible for a HEERF grant in the amount of \$500 during GRCC's initial fund disbursement process.

- Was enrolled in a financial aid-eligible GRCC degree or certificate (credit or clock hour) program during the Winter 2020 semester.
- Was enrolled in at least one originally scheduled, face-to-face class on or after March 13, 2020.
- Filed a 2019-20 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with GRCC and was eligible for federal financial aid during the Winter 2020 semester.
- Currently meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements for financial aid recipients.

Funds have been reserved to make additional disbursements to students who are later determined to meet eligibility requirements.

GRCC used the following process to identify students meeting the above eligibility criteria:

- Using data from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), GRCC determined whether a student met the eligibility requirements for Federal Student Aid under the Section 484 of the Higher Education Act.
- GRCC used dates of attendance, course schedules, course delivery mode (online or in-seat), and other student enrollment data necessary to determine whether the student met the requirement of being enrolled in at least one originally scheduled, face-to-face class on or after March 13, 2020.
- GRCC established an acceptance form by which students self-certify what expenses they incurred as the result of COVID-19-related campus disruptions and accept their HEERF grant.

Instructions, Directions, and Guidance Provided to GRCC Students

On May 11 and May 12, 2020, GRCC sent communication to all students about the CARES Act and the eligibility criteria. On May 14, 2020, GRCC sent a communication to the 4,766 students it had determined were eligible for the HEERF grant at that time. That email included instructions about how the student would accept their award and receive their \$500 grant. Copies of each email are included below. Additionally, a frequently asked question document has been posted on GRCC's website at:

www.grcc.edu/coronavirusinformation/studentinformation/caresactemergencyfundsforeligiblestudents

Email Sent to All Students on May 11 and May 12, 2020

(First Name),

The COVID-19 crisis has affected all aspects of our lives, and we know many GRCC students face unexpected and significant financial challenges.

Soon we will notify students who might be eligible for emergency funding assistance under provisions of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

We estimate more than 4,000 GRCC students will be eligible for emergency grant funding or assistance of up to \$500. This will bring some relief for students and their family members, whose education and lives have been disrupted by this unprecedented public health crisis.

We are moving thoughtfully and quickly to provide this assistance to students using guidance from the federal government.

If you have not already done so, we encourage you to complete the 2019-20 Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA) at fafsa.gov. Our Financial Aid Office is available to help. Email financialaid@grcc.edu or call 616-234-4030.

Students must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for CARES Act funding, based on U.S. Education Department guidelines:

- *Was enrolled in a financial aid-eligible GRCC degree or certificate program during the Winter 2020 semester.*
- *Was enrolled in at least one originally scheduled face-to-face class on or after March 13, 2020.*
- *Filed a 2019-20 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with GRCC and was eligible for federal financial aid during the Winter 2020 semester.*
- *Currently meeting satisfactory academic progress requirements for financial aid recipients. Details are [here](#).*

NOTE: We have interpreted the Education Department's guidelines for eligibility do not include students who were enrolled exclusively in online programs. We continue to work with the department, asking it to clarify whether students are eligible if they were enrolled exclusively in online classes during the winter semester, but whose programs include in-person classes in

other semesters. We recognize the disruption and additional expenses that these students have incurred and have set aside CARES Act funds to issue at a later date to these students if this is allowed.

Students with questions can send an email to GRCC_cares@grcc.edu or call 616-234-4000.

We know this assistance will be helpful, but the need is great and will continue to be felt in the weeks and months ahead. There is assistance for students outside of the CARES Act. The safety and wellbeing of our students is a top priority and GRCC has other resources available to help with a variety of challenges.

Our Office of Student Life frequently updates the GET HELP website – grcc.edu/gethelp – listing college and community resources for food and housing insecurity and other challenges.

We will continue weekly curbside food distribution through the summer, and we appreciate the support from community partners and our GRCC Student Alliance to provide this assistance.

Our Counseling and Career Development team provides assistance with mental wellness and can be reached by email at counseling@grcc.edu or by calling 616-234-4130. We know this is a difficult time. But you are not in this alone, and GRCC will assist you in any way we can.

Stay Well.

Best,

President Pink

Email Sent to Eligible Students on May 14, 2020

(First Name),

We are pleased to notify you that you are eligible for emergency funding assistance through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) if you incurred one or more of the following expenses resulting from COVID-19-related campus disruptions:

- *Food*
- *Housing costs*
- *Course materials*
- *Technology*
- *Healthcare costs*
- *Childcare costs*

The CARES Act guidelines are set by the U.S Department of Education. To view and accept your award, you must take the following actions:

- *Log into your [Online Center](#)*
- *Select the CARES Award Acceptance Form tile*

- *Review the form, select all expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19 campus disruptions*
- *Click the award acceptance button*
- *Click submit*
- *Confirm your contact information and update it, if necessary, in your Online Center. Click on the Profile tile, then select Address*

Your CARES Act funds will be disbursed using the same BankMobile refund method you previously selected for your Winter 2020 Financial Aid refund. If you need to update your refund preferences, you can do so at: <https://bankmobiledisbursements.com/refundchoices/>

Please consider selecting an electronic refund preference as the quickest, most reliable, and safest method. If you have not previously set up a refund preference and need assistance doing so, contact the GRCC Cashier's Office at cashier@grcc.edu.

If you have questions, the GRCC CARES Team can help. Please review our [CARES Act FAQs](#), send questions to GRCC_CARES@grcc.edu or call (616) 234-4000.

These are difficult times. This assistance will be helpful, but the need will continue to be great as we emerge from the pandemic. GRCC has other resources available to help with a variety of challenges. Our Office of Student Life frequently updates the GET HELP website – grcc.edu/gethelp – listing college and community resources for food and housing insecurity and other challenges.

We hope this will bring some relief to you and your family during this unprecedented public health crisis.

Stay Well.

Best,

President Pink

Conclusion

This report documents the status of CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) as of May 18, 2020. Hereafter, additional reports will be posted on GRCC's website every 45 days.