

## Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Report – Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students

Originally Posted July 9, 2021

Revised August 11, 2021\*

Arizona College (OPE ID: 031150) received education stabilization funds under Section 18004(a)(1) of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”), Public Law No: 116-136. This Fund Report applies to the student portion received under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund that is designated exclusively for emergency financial aid grants to students.

The institution appreciates that Congress and the President have made these critical funds available for eligible students who have expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus pandemic. We take receipt of these federal funds seriously and are distributing them in accordance with the CARES Act and implementing guidance.

The institution is making the below information available for transparency purposes and in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education’s (“Department”) Electronic Announcement of May 6, 2020.<sup>1</sup> For questions or concerns regarding this Fund Report, please contact Edna Thelusma, VP of Financial Aid, at ethelusma@arizonacollege.edu.

1. The institution signed and returned to the Department the Certification and Agreement [for] Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students. 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.
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 is \$3,684,644. This reflects the grand total from two awards: \$1,832,654 for the first and \$1,851,990 for the second.
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 this Fund Report is \$2,374,404. This represents \$1,832,654 from the first award and \$541,750 of the second award.
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 under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act, as of the date of this Fund Report is 5,161.
5. The total number of students who have received an emergency financial aid grant under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act as of the date of this Fund Report is 2,493. 1,951 students under the first award and 542 students under the second award.
6. The methods 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 are provided at Attachment A.
7. Any instructions, directions, or guidance provided by the institution to students concerning the emergency financial aid grants are provided at Attachment B.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/050620HigherEdEmergencyReliefFundRptg>

## **Attachment A**

Arizona College used the following methods to determine which students receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants and how much they would receive under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act:

The CARES Act provides institutions with significant discretion on how to award this emergency assistance to students. This means that Arizona College was able to develop its own system and process for determining how to allocate these funds, which included distributing the funds to all eligible students who requested assistance.

Eligible students are students that have experienced a financial emergency related to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus and that meet all eligibility criteria outlined by the U.S. Department of Education.

Eligible students who were enrolled on March 20 and in an Active, Leave of Absence or Standard Period of Non-Enrollment were automatically awarded \$875 in Care Act Funds. The College sent each student a form via DocuSign, where students could attest that they incurred expenses due to the disruption of COVID-19 and would use the grants to cover those expenses.

Students who subsequently withdrew after March 20, and before disbursement of the grant are not eligible.

Arizona College and the Department of Education's goal is "...to get money in the hands of students in need as quickly as possible." We believe this method is the fastest and most efficient method to accomplish that goal.

After this first disbursement of funds, the college developed an application for students who have exceptional needs. This application is available to all students in an active status even if they enrolled after the initial COVID disruption. Students are eligible for up to \$1,500 once their application has been approved.

For the second award, Arizona College continued to utilize the application process prioritizing students with exceptional need based on whether their EFC fell into the Pell eligibility range. Non-Pell eligible students are considered as well. Students are eligible to apply for up to \$1,000 in funding to cover expenses allowable within their cost of attendance.

## **Attachment B**

The first rounds of disbursements were associated with the following Instructions:

Students are instructed to:

1. Look for an email titled "Please DocuSign: CARES Act Direct Deposit Enrollment Form." The email will be sent from Matt Calhoun via DocuSign. This email will contain a link that you will need to click to access your personal Direct Deposit Enrollment Form.
2. On the form, check the box to Accept or Decline your CARES funds.
3. Then complete the Direct Deposit form at the bottom of the DocuSign form. This will allow us to deposit the funds directly to your bank account.
4. Click Submit to send your completed form to Arizona College for processing.

The forms are processed as they are received. We understand the hardship this outbreak has caused for many of you and how important these funds are to you and your families. Please do not delay in completing this form.

Please remember, funds awarded may only be used for eligible 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 childcare.

The second round of disbursements were associated with the following Instructions:

Students wishing to apply for addition CARES funds should see their Executive Director of Academic Operations or Dean to obtain the Student Application for Emergency Aid. Students are eligible to apply for up to \$1,500 in funding to cover expenses associated with the disruption of COVID.

For the second award, an announcement was posted on the Canvas website to notify students of the availability of the grant and direction to apply with the Financial Aid Department.

**Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriate Act (CRRSAA) Grant Notice**  

Students,

Arizona College has been awarded funding through the recently passed, Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriate Act (CRRSAA). Students who have been impacted by COVID and are experiencing financial hardship are welcome to apply for a grant under this program. As required by the regulations, students with exceptional need will be prioritized as recipients of this grant. Arizona College has defined exceptional need as students who are Pell-eligible. Non-Pell-eligible students may apply and will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

If you have been impacted by COVID and believe that you have exceptional need, please contact your campus Financial Aid Department to discuss your circumstances and apply. Note, applications are processed regularly throughout the year and it can take up to three weeks to receive approval depending on when the application is received.

 **Edna Thelusma** | Vice President of Financial Aid  
Arizona College of Nursing  
O 602-759-2290 | E [ethelusma@arizonacollege.edu](mailto:ethelusma@arizonacollege.edu)  
2510 W. Dunlap Ave, Suite 290, Phoenix, AZ 85021 | [arizonacollege.edu](http://arizonacollege.edu) 

This is a message from Arizona College

\*A typo in the total students reported in item 4 was noticed and corrected.