

CARES ACT STUDENT EMAIL NOTICE

From: Dyan Lester
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 10:23 AM
To: ' <sw-students@lists.vccs.edu>
Subject: COVID-19 Student Relief Funds Information
Importance: High

Dear SWCC Eagles:

We hope that your transition to online learning this semester has been successful; we also hope that you are staying safe during these trying times. The federal government has recognized the magnitude of disruption caused by this crisis and has provided funding to help some students offset the financial impact of COVID-19 through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

This message will communicate the eligibility requirements for these funds and will provide instructions on how to receive them.

The Department of Education requires that students be eligible for federal financial aid through Title IV of the Higher Education Act. Other eligibility criteria include:

- US Citizenship
- Student met Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) before 1/13/20
- Student completed all requested documents due to financial aid before 3/13/20
- Student is enrolled for a minimum of 6 credit hours that were not originally all online for Spring 2020 semester
- Student met the specified Expected Family Contribution (EFC) ceiling for the VCCS Cares Funding model.

Students do not need to do anything to receive these funds. Eligibility will be determined from our existing financial aid database and be awarded based on the established criteria.

Once a student is identified as being eligible for an award, the following guidelines apply:

- The HEERF Grant (CARES Funding) is awarded due to COVID-19 for the disruption of campus operations.
- The HEERF Grant is awarded to eligible Pell Grant and need-based students who meet the CARES funding guidelines.
- The HEERF Grant can be used for expenses incurred for food, tuition, housing, course materials, technology, health care, childcare and other unexpected expenses.
- The HEERF Grant will be delivered within the next month, via your selected refund option. If you have not selected any option, you will receive a check to the address that the College has on file.
- **The Department of Education will determine if there are potential tax implications for receiving these funds.**

The College's business office will begin dispersing funds to eligible students once we receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education. We expect that all eligible students will receive funds by May 31. They will be applied via direct deposit or check based upon each student's previously-selected refund option. Instructions for reviewing one's chosen disbursement method can be found in the student refund portal. For more information check the website here: <https://sw.edu/electronic-disbursements/>

These funds are intended to be used to assist with the financial challenges in receiving higher education brought upon by the pandemic. **Recipients are encouraged to use their funds in a manner which will support continuing their education in an online environment.** Students may purchase laptops, obtain internet access, purchase books or other course materials, or pay tuition. These funds may also include costs related to food, housing, health care, childcare, or any other expense the student deems necessary.

Now is an excellent time to register for summer and fall semesters, please call our Advisor Line at 276.964.7300 or email onlineadvisor@sw.edu.

Direct all questions regarding eligibility to financialaid@sw.edu.

Thank you,

Robert Brandon, Ph.D.

Vice President of Academic and Student Services

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"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." - Winston Churchill

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