

## **SUNY Old Westbury CARES Act Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is the CARES/Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) provided by the federal government?**

Congress passed a stimulus bill in April which provided approximately \$14 billion to colleges and universities. The CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act authorizes institutions to award emergency financial grants to eligible students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the Coronavirus. A section of the CARES Act established the HEERF.

### **2. How were the CARES Act Grant funds allocated to Colleges and Universities?**

The amount of funds allocated to each school was determined by a formula written in the CARES Act. This formula significantly weighs the number of full-time students who are eligible for Federal Pell Grants, as well as the total number of students who were not previously enrolled full-time online.

### **3. What expenses will the CARES Act Grant cover?**

For an expense to be eligible, it must be related to the disruption of campus operations and incurred for food, housing, course materials, technology and computer, health care, dependent care, transportation, and other related costs. Funding constraints may limit the number and size of awards. Priority will be given to high need students with limited available resources.

### **4. When will the CARES Act Grants be available to students?**

Old Westbury has applied for funding from the federal CARES Act and received acknowledgement from the US Department of Education (USDOE) that our application is in order. Once we receive the funding, we will begin distributing grants to students based on an application process. Potential recipients will be notified via their OW email account.

### **5. How can I apply for the CARES Act Grant?**

To receive a Grant, eligible students must submit an online form (Application for CARES Act Emergency Grant) that collects the minimum certification and attestation requirements that are established in the CARES Act. On this application, students certify that they have already incurred, or will incur, expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to Coronavirus. Students also attest that they have already spent, or will spend, the amount of the Grant on allowable expenses.

### **6. Who is eligible for the CARES Act Grants?**

Students who have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 disruption, have incurred unexpected costs associated with their enrollment at SUNY Old Westbury, and meet the requirements for Title IV aid including Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Students who meet basic eligibility criteria for federal financial aid and who have the greatest financial need will be considered for these funds. Priority will be given to high need students with limited available resources.

The Office of Financial Aid will use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) data to determine your eligibility. If you are eligible to file a FAFSA but have not yet filed for 2019-20 and need assistance, please file a FAFSA at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov).

These funds can be awarded to undergraduate and graduate students pursuing degree programs, enrolled at Old Westbury during the spring 2020 semester. Non-matriculated students or students enrolled in distance-only degree programs are not eligible.

## **7. How will the amount of each CARES Act Grant be determined?**

Old Westbury will award CARES Emergency Grants according to methods consistent with U.S. Department of Education regulations and SUNY guidance. A larger percentage of the funds will be given to Pell recipients with the higher awards to those with the lowest EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) derived from the 2019-20 FAFSA.

## **8. Why didn't I receive a CARES Act Grant?**

Under U.S. Department of Education rules for the program, students who are not eligible for federal financial aid programs are not eligible for federal CARES Act Grants. If you are eligible for federal aid, but did not receive a CARES Act Grant, you should notify the Financial Aid Office for a review of your situation by submitting a request via your Old Westbury email. Please contact us at [financialaid@oldwestbury.edu](mailto:financialaid@oldwestbury.edu)

In general, you probably didn't receive a CARES Act Grant because you may not have appeared to meet the criteria of greatest financial need. However, we know that many families' income is in flux or there may be additional expenses associated due to the pandemic. Please contact the Office of Financial Aid at [financialaid@oldwestbury.edu](mailto:financialaid@oldwestbury.edu)

## **9. Are CARES Act Grants available for DACA and Undocumented students?**

Unfortunately, the U.S. Department of Education does not allow CARES funding to provide grants to DACA and Undocumented students.

## **10. Are CARES Act Grants available for international students?**

Unfortunately, under U.S. Department of Education rules for the program, international students are not eligible for the federal CARES funds.

For Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under Section 18004 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act go to: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/heerfstudentfaqs.pdf>

**WE WILL PERIODICALLY UPDATE THESE FAQs  
AS MORE INFORMATION ON THE CARES ACT BECOME AVAILABLE.**