



ATTENTION COLLEGE STUDENTS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CARES ACT

The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Securities Act provides funds to public and private sectors, including public and private colleges and universities, affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

How much do colleges and universities receive?

The University of California, California State University, California Community College, nonprofit and for-profit colleges are all expected to receive CARES Act funding. 75% of the funds are awarded based on the number of full-time Pell Grant recipients at the institution (and the other 25% is based on the number of full-time students who are not Pell Grant recipients). The institutional awards vary dramatically, from \$1,001 (Ashford University) to \$44,652,328 (CSU Northridge).

What can colleges and universities spend the funding on?

Colleges and universities must use at least 50% of the federal funds to award emergency financial aid grants directly to students to assist undergraduate or graduate students for expenses and financial need as the result of COVID-19, including things “like course materials and technology as well as food, housing, health care, and childcare.” The other half can be used to cover costs incurred related to the delivery of instruction because of the coronavirus.



How much will students receive?

Colleges and universities get to decide if they divide their allocations equally across their student populations. The actual amount each student can receive will vary greatly, from \$.015 (Ashford University) to \$9,255 (United Education Institute-Huntington Park Campus).

For example, CSU Sacramento is poised to receive \$35,734,362, at least \$17,867,181 of which must go toward emergency grants to students. If divided equally among its 27,144 students, the per-student share would be \$658. And if the funds were allocated to students as they are allocated to colleges (75% for Pell Grant recipients) the 16,839 Pell Grant recipients at CSUS would each receive \$796 (while non Pell Grant recipients would receive \$433). Of course these numbers would increase if colleges choose to allocate more than 50% of these federal dollars to students.

**PUBLIC
ADVOCATES**
MAKING RIGHTS REAL

<https://www.publicadvocates.org/>

What other support does the CARES Act provide students?

WORK STUDY

Colleges may pay students who cannot fulfill their work study requirements because of COVID-19 either all or some of the wages they would have earned.

LOAN REPAYMENTS

Federal loan repayments are suspended through September 30, 2020. This includes a temporary suspension of all involuntary collection of defaulted loans, including wage garnishments and federal interception of government benefits.

PELL GRANT EXTENSIONS

Generally, college students who receive Pell Grants are limited to receive the grant for six years. If a student could not finish their term because of COVID-19, the semester/quarter in which the student left will not apply toward the six year limitation.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A student may take a leave of absence as a result of being affected by COVID-19, without losing their eligibility to aid, even if the student notifies the school after starting the leave, until the institution can resume coursework or can find another placement for the student.

ACT NOW!

Below we suggest points of advocacy you can take to your campus leaders regarding CARES funding:

PRIORITIZE LOW-INCOME STUDENTS:

Ask how your institution is prioritizing students with the highest needs, including the Pell Grant students who generated the majority of the CARES funding.

UNDOCUMENTED AND PART-TIME STUDENTS:

Unfortunately, undocumented students are not eligible for these federal funds. Part-time students are eligible, but did not generate CARES funding. Ask how your campus is supporting these students.

STUDENT INCLUSION:

Ask how students can be involved in the decision-making process including via virtual town-halls and meetings with student leaders.


TRANSPARENCY:

Ask your campus to share its CARES funding expenditure plan on its website and via social media.



For questions or assistance, contact
Magali Kincaid at MKincaid@publicadvocates.org.

PUBLIC
ADVOCATES
MAKING RIGHTS REAL

www.publicadvocates.org
 [@publicadvocates](https://twitter.com/publicadvocates)