

McNeese State University

CARES Act Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students 30 Day Report and 45 Day Update Report

Office of Postsecondary Education

Subject

Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Reporting- Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students Section 18004(e) of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act" or the "Act"), Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281 (March 27, 2020), directs institutions receiving funds under Section 18004 of the Act to submit (in a time and manner required by the Secretary) a report to the Secretary describing the use of funds distributed from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund ("HEERF"). Section 18004(c) of the CARES Act requires institutions to use no less than 50 percent of the funds received from Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students for 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 child care). On April 9, 2020, the Department published documents related to the Emergency Financial Aid Grants, including a letter from Secretary Betsy DeVos, a form Certification and Agreement for signing and returning by institutions to access the funds, and a list of institutional allocations under 18004(a)(1).

The Certification and Agreement directs each institution applying for HEERF funds to comply with Section 18004(e) of the CARES Act and submit an initial report (the "30-day Fund Report") to the Secretary thirty (30) days from the date of the institution's Certification and Agreement to the Department. The Department will provide instructions for providing the required information to the Secretary in the near future. In the meantime, each HEERF participating institution must post the information listed below on the institution's primary website. The Department would like to receive the most current information from the date when the institution received its allocation for emergency financial aid grants to students, and the institution should have received its allocation within a few days after submitting the Certification and Agreement. Accordingly, the following information must appear in a format and location that is easily accessible to the public 30 days after the date when the institution received its allocation under 18004(a)(1) and updated every 45 days thereafter:

1. An acknowledgement that the institution signed and returned to the Department the Certification and Agreement and the assurance that 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.

On April 14, 2020, McNeese State University submitted its signed Certification and Agreement. The institution 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 as required by the agreement.

45 Day Update Report: No updates to report.

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.

McNeese State University has received \$2,728,181 through its G5 account, but these funds have not yet been transferred to institutional accounts.

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On June 2, 2020, McNeese transferred \$1,751,950 from G5 to its institutional accounts and distributed the funds to 2,142 students.

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 submission (i.e., as of the 30-day Report and every 45 days thereafter).

As of May 13, 2020, McNeese State University has not yet distributed any funds to students. The University has invited qualifying students to apply for funds, and the application deadline is May 22, 2020 at 11:00 am. Funds will be distributed to students after the deadline has expired.

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On June 2, 2020, McNeese distributed \$1,751,950 to 2,142 students. McNeese expects to make a second distribution in late July.

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 to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

As of May 7, 2020, McNeese State University has determined that 3,457 students are eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and are eligible to participate in CARES Act funds if they have incurred expenses related to the disruption caused by COVID 19. We anticipate this number increasing due to our encouragement for more students to complete a FAFSA by our May 22, 2020 deadline. (as of May 13, 2020, we are now at 3,625 from either new submitted FAFSA's and/or editing of the report criteria)

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As of June 25, 2020, 3,642 students are now eligible to participate.

5. The total number of students who have received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

As of May 13, 2020, McNeese State University has not yet distributed any funds to students. The University has invited qualifying students to apply for funds. The application deadline is May 22, 2020 at 11:00 am. Funds will be distributed after the deadline has expired.

45 Day Update Report:

On June 2, 2020, McNeese distributed \$1,751,950 to 2,142 students.

6. The method(s) 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.

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McNeese State University researched its records and identified students who meet the required residency and instructional program criteria. The University will use an application process to determine which of these students meet the final two criteria for eligibility, which are:

- 1. Student is eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965**
- 2. Student has incurred expenses as a result of the disruption caused by COVID 19.**

The University will calculate individual student amounts based upon the number of credit hours the student was enrolled in spring 2020 and whether or not the student received a Pell Grant. The number of students who have been determined eligible for the Cares Act Funds will also have a bearing on individual amounts.

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The fund distribution on June 2, 2020 was calculated based upon the above method.

- 7. Any instructions, directions, or guidance provided by the institution to students concerning the Emergency Financial Aid Grants.**

McNeese State University has advised students of the availability of Cares Act Emergency Financial Aid Funds and of the criteria for eligibility. The University has also advised students of the application process and its requirements. The University continues to encourage students to apply.

45 day update report: No updates to report.

***Note:** In preparing the 30-day Fund Report, institutions should use data suppression and other methodologies to comply with, and protect the personally identifiable information from student education records, under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). For example, the Department does not expect institutions to report information about a group of 10 or fewer students. For example, if the total number of eligible students, the total of number of students who received Emergency Financial Aid Grants, or the difference between the two numbers is less than 10, then the institution should not display the number of students or the amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students on publicly available website(s) controlled by the institution.

Institutions that accurately report the information listed above will meet the initial reporting requirements. For subsequent reports and reporting for other related HEERF programs, the Department will notify participating institutions of the Department's preferred reporting method. The Department may choose to collect additional information from institutions in accordance with the reporting requirement stated at Section 18(e) of the CARES Act and the Certification and Agreement.