

CARES ACT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The CARES Act, signed into law by President Trump on March 27, 2020, provides broad-based economic relief in response to the COVID-19 national pandemic. As part of the CARES Act, Institutions of higher education have been provided funds to assist them and their students. Below are the answers to some frequently asked questions.

What is the CARES Act?

The CARES Act is federal legislation which provides a variety of financial support to individuals and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The CARES Act established and funded the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) to provide emergency financial aid grants. One part of this federal program allocates money to Illinois Valley Community College, and a portion of that allocation will be awarded to students who are experiencing expenses due to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus.

Who is eligible for a HEERF Grant?

Students who were 1) enrolled in Spring 2020 courses, 2) have completed a 2019-2020 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and 3) meet basic eligibility criteria (see below) for Federal Title IV Financial Aid can be considered for these funds. Student must:

- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a degree, certificate or other recognized educational credential;
- Not be enrolled in elementary or secondary school;
- Have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Be maintaining satisfactory academic progress (SAP);
- Not owe an overpayment (refund) on Title IV grants;
- Not be in default on a Title IV loan;
- Be a U.S citizen or national, a permanent resident, or an eligible noncitizen;
- Have returned any fraudulently obtained Title IV funds, if the student is convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to charges;
- Not have fraudulently received Title IV loans in excess of annual or aggregate limits;
- Have repaid any Title IV loan overpayment amounts in excess of annual or aggregate limits, if obtained inadvertently;
- If you are male, have registered for Selective Service;
- Have a valid SSN, except for residents of the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau; and
- Not have a federal or state conviction for drug possession or sale, with certain time limitations.

Who is not eligible for these funds?

Unfortunately, the CARES Act does not allow these funds to be used for international students, DACA students, or students who do not have a FAFSA on file for the 2019/2020 academic year, and are therefore not Title IV eligible. However, emergency funds may be available for these students through the IVCC Foundation.

Do I have to repay a HEERF Grant?

The Federal Emergency Aid Grant funds are designed to be a grant, not a loan. Therefore, repayment is not required.

Would this funding reduce my financial aid?

No, this fund does not negate nor replace financial aid, and it is a one-time grant.

How much money is available for each applicant?

The amount of HEERF funding that institutions received varied based on the Department of Education's allocation formula. That means the amount of the emergency grants at IVCC will not be the same as at other colleges. Each institution had to develop its own strategy for disbursing the funds to eligible students enrolled at their campus. Please be aware that these funds are limited and are not guaranteed.

How can I use the money?

The grant should be used for academically related expenses incurred due to COVID-19. Some examples include expenses related to food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare, and childcare.

Can I apply funds I received from the HEERF grant to outstanding charges on my student account?

No, these funds cannot be applied by the college directly toward outstanding student account balances. The full amount of the funding you receive will be disbursed to you. You can then make a payment on your IVCC account.

Will I receive the HEERF grant even if I owe IVCC money?

Yes. If you are eligible for these emergency grants, you will receive the money even if you have current financial holds or owe IVCC money.

Taxation of CARES Act funding

The IRS has issued guidance that grants issued under the CARES Act are not included in your gross income. Please visit <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/faqs-higher-education-emergency-relief-fund-and-emergency-financial-aid-grants-under-the-cares-act> for more information

Who do I contact if I have questions?

For questions, email financialaid@IVCC.edu.