

Merrell University Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) Emergency Grants Information

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act:

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed by Congress and signed into law on March 27, 2020. A section of the CARES Act included funding for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). HEERF provides funds to institutions for emergency financial aid grants to students whose lives have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding Provided to Merrell University:

Merrell University received \$45,089 from HEERF on May 27, 2020. The purpose of this funding is to provide emergency financial aid grants to students to help cover 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). The amount received by institutions is primarily based on the number of high-need students enrolled.

Consistent with the Department of Education's April 9, 2020 letter, the University has decided to prioritize students with the greatest need, but at the same time establish a maximum funding threshold for each student to ensure that these funds are distributed as widely as possible.

Eligibility:

In order to be eligible for the first disbursement of HEERF, in the amount of \$400, a student must: 1) have been enrolled as of March 18th, 2020 (prior to the University's temporary closure); and 2) have a 2019-20 FAFSA application completed by June 1, 2020. The first grant disbursement of HEERF will be issued to eligible students no later than June 10, 2020.

In addition, to prioritize students with the greatest need, a second disbursement in the amount of \$1,000 will be issued. In order to be eligible, a student must: 1) meet the eligibility requirements for the first disbursement; 2) be currently attending as of June 15, 2020; and 3) be eligible for a Pell grant during the 2019-20 award year. The second grant disbursement of HEERF will be issued to eligible students no later than June 30, 2020.

If funding remains after eligible students receive the first two disbursements, then the institution will prioritize students who were scheduled to receive a Pell Grant disbursement in a payment period during the 2019-20 award year, but due to the temporary closure were not able to receive the disbursement. The institution will then determine if the student can receive an equal or greater disbursement for the same payment period in the 2020-21 award year. If it is determined that the same payment period would result in a lesser Pell Grant disbursement in the 2020-21 award year, then the student will be considered for another disbursement from HEERF equal or less than the difference of the Pell Grant disbursement in the designated payment period. Providing that the student is still enrolled as of July 1, 2020. Precedence will be given to students who complete the 2020-21 FAFSA prior to July 1, 2020.

Background on Temporary Closure due to Coronavirus:

Merrell University temporarily closed due to COVID-19 on March 21, 2020. Merrell University received approval from state and accrediting agencies to offer Temporary Distance Education (TDE) for all students enrolled beginning on April 22, 2020. The University was able to reopen fully on Tuesday, May 5th.

Questions regarding HEERF or eligibility may be directed to:

Brandi Bax
Merrell University
1753 Woodclift Dr.
Jefferson City, MO 65109
bbax@merrelluniversity.edu
(573) 635-7586

For additional information regarding HEERF please visit:

- ***CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund:***
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html>
- ***FAQs: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund and Emergency Financial Aid Grants under the CARES Act:*** <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/faqs-higher-education-emergency-relief-fund-and-emergency-financial-aid-grants-under-the-cares-act>