

HEERF II Funding Report

Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), 2021

On December 27, 2020, the President signed the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA). This new law gives the U.S. Department of Education approximately \$22.7 billion to distribute to institutions of higher education in order to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus through the HEERF. The CRRSAA requires that institutions receiving funding under section 314(a)(1) provide the “same amount” of funding in financial aid grants to students that it was required to provide under its original Student Aid Portion (CFDA 84.425E) allocation amount, as listed on the CARES Act Section 18004(a)(1) allocation table.

Unlike the CARES Act, the CRRSAA requires that institutions prioritize students with exceptional need, such as students who receive Pell Grants, in awarding financial aid grants to students. Financial aid grants for students may be used for any component of the student’s cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or child-care. The college has the discretion to determine the amount of each individual emergency financial aid grant consistent with all applicable laws including non-discrimination laws. The process of awarding and disbursing HEERF II was handled manually due to these funds not being part of financial aid and not meeting rules set up for financial aid packaging in Colleague. There were not any compliance requirements dependent on computerized information systems.

The HEERF II policy of distribution of grants to students was approved by the Sr. Vice President of Administration and Finance. The awarding of HEERF II funds is handled by the Financial Aid Office and funds being disbursed to students is handled by the Student Accounts Office with oversight by the AVP Finance/Controller.

CRRSAA/HEERF II Funding Section 314(a)(1) | Student Portion

June 30, 2021

1. An acknowledgement that the institution signed and returned to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) the Certification and Agreement and the assurance that the institution has used the applicable amount of funds designated under CRRSAA to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students.

Institutions who received HEERF I grant funds under the CARES Act were not required to apply for the HEERF II or HEERF II grants. Piedmont University received its HEERF II Grant Award Notification on January 19, 2021. In keeping with the terms of acceptance of these

funds, Piedmont University used no less than **\$883,161** to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants directly to students.

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 under the CRRSAA.

Piedmont University received **\$883,161** in HEERF II aid from the Department of Education.

3. The total amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants distributed to students under the CRRSAA as of the date of submission (i.e., as of the initial report and every calendar quarter thereafter).

On March 25, 2021, Piedmont University awarded HEERF II funds to students that were registered for spring semester 2021 as February 14, 2021. Total amount awarded in HEERF II funds for spring semester was **\$884,800** to **918** students.

As of June 30, 2021, a total of **917** students received a HEERF II grant disbursement totaling **\$883,900**. One student declined the HEERF II grant award.

4. The estimated total number of students at the institution that are eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under the CRRSAA.

As of June 30, 2021, the total number of students eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants for spring semester 2021 was estimated to be **918** students.

5. The total number of students who have received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant to students under the CRRSAA.

As of June 30, 2021, the total number of students who have received/awarded HEERF II Emergency Financial Aid grants for spring semester 2021 were **917** 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 the CRRSAA.

Eligibility criteria for automatic funding for HEERF II (Spring 2021 Semester) at Piedmont University:

Tier distribution of HEERF funds to specific groups of students by financial need based on a valid 2020-2021 FAFSA expected family contribution (EFC). Student criteria included all undergraduate students that completed a 2020-2021 FAFSA who were enrolled at least 6 hours on or after February 14, 2021, which had expected family contributions (EFC) less than \$40,500 with these exclusions:

- **Dual Enrolled Students**
- **Transient Students**
- **DACA, International Students and Non-US Citizens** – Must be U.S. Citizen or Eligible Non-citizen
- **Undergraduate Students with EFCs greater than \$40,500 or no FAFSA**
- **Graduate Students**
- **Students with incomplete verification on 2020-2021 FAFSA (if applicable)**

The Federal HEERF II Emergency Grant requires the University to prioritize a greater portion of funding to undergraduate students that exhibit exceptional need. “Exceptional need” is defined as demonstrating via the FAFSA an expected family contribution (EFC) number within the Pell eligible range. For HEERF II awards, an EFC of less than 5,712 demonstrated exceptional need. Students were prioritized for these funds based on a valid 2020-2021 FAFSA and need calculation from the Department of Education. HEERF II Grants ranged from \$800 to \$1,050 depending on EFC.

HEERF II Emergency Grants were processed through the Student Accounts Office and were directly refunded to eligible students unless authorization was given by the student. Any outstanding balance was the financial responsibility of the student.

Students were requested to complete an authorization form found at: [HEERF II Authorization Form](#). With this acknowledgement, students confirmed HEERF II Grant funds:

- Do not have to be repaid.
- Will not be automatically applied to student account balances unless authorized by student.
- May be reported as income on their 2021 1098-T IRS Form.
- Disbursement will be deposited to their bank account via direct deposit authorization.

Eligible students were recommended to setup a direct deposit profile to obtain funding as quickly as possible.

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

All pertinent information available to students regarding HEERF II/CRRSAA Emergency Financial Aid Grants is posted at the following link: <https://www.piedmont.edu/piedmont-together/cares-act/> . Further guidance will be posted at the link once Piedmont University administration has determined the methodology to distribute Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students for fall semester 2021.

**Piedmont University will continue to monitor Department guidance and update reporting and distribution of funds accordingly.*