

Compass College of Cinematic Arts
CARES Act HEER Funds
Quarterly Report for Period Ending: September 30, 2020
Final Report – Student Portion

The CARES Act, which establishes and funds the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF), directs institutions of higher education (“institutions”) to use no less than 50 percent of funds received under Sections 18004(a)(1) and 18004(c) of the CARES Act to provide emergency financial aid grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus.

The CARES Act requires that institutions receiving these funds provide a report to the Secretary of Education describing the use of funds distributed from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. The initial guidance from the Department of Education requires that the 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.

Compass College 30-day Fund Report.

1. Acknowledgement that the institution signed and returned to the Department the Certification and Agreement

Compass College signed and returned to the Department of Education the Funding Certification and Agreement for the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students, which acknowledged that the institution will 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. The Application for the student portion of funds was submitted to Grants.gov on April 17.

2. 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.

Compass College received notification on April 25, 2020 from the Federal Government, as part of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund - Student Aid program, that the college had been awarded the first part of the HEER Funds in the amount of \$93,476, which is half of Section 18004(a)(1) and is designated for the direct payment of grants to students for their expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child-care.

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.

Total awards: \$95,650. This includes the full \$93,476 from the Student portion of the HEER funds and an additional \$2,174 from the Institutional portion of the HEER funds.

- 73 students received a grant of \$1,100 (total of \$80,300)
- 11 students received grants of \$1,350 or \$1,600 (total of \$15,350)

4. The estimated total number of students at the institution eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants

84 students were determined to be eligible to receive grant aid.

5. The total number of students who have received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant

As of September 30, 2020, all 84 students have received their Emergency Financial Aid Grant. Nine of these students received \$1,350 and two received \$1,600. The remaining 73 students received the base amount of \$1,100.

6. The method(s) used by the institution to determine which students receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants and how much they would receive

A team of Compass College staff, which included the Financial Aid Manager, the Director of Finance and Administration, and the Director of Student Affairs, was created to pull together information regarding the CARES Act HEER Funds and to develop a plan for distributing the grant funds. The team researched resources found on the Office of Postsecondary Education's CARES Act [website](#) and the [National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators \(NASFAA\) Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Web Center](#) as well as attending a number of webinars that provided guidance regarding the distribution of HEER funds.

The college recognized that the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus was an unprecedented event that potentially impacted every student and that some students were impacted to a greater degree than others, due to their individual circumstances. The college worked to appropriately identify the impact to students and the resultant need.

The college chose to utilize the funds on the basis of the following principles and guidelines:

1. All students who were enrolled at Compass College on March 13, the date when a national emergency was declared, and were eligible to receive an emergency grant based on Department of Education guidance were considered to receive a grant.
2. All eligible Compass students received a grant of some kind. The college determined that all students incurred expenses related to disruption due to the coronavirus. Expenses included but were not limited to increased housing and utility charges and food expenses as students were in their residences for increased periods of time each day.
3. Compass developed a process to determine the level of the grant that each eligible student received.
 - a. Base grant – \$1,100.00. Given to all eligible students.

- b. Additional grant amount. Students who had a higher level of expense as determined from the information they provided in their response to the *COVID-19 Financial Assistance Request Form* sent to them were given additional grant money in \$250.00 increments (maximum of 2 additional increments)
- c. The base grant and additional increments were determined on the basis of the funds provided to the institution by the CARES Act and the number of students eligible to receive the grants.

Additional disruption that affected the student financially due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and were factors considered in determining the level of the grant a student received included the following:

- Course Materials/Technology
- Food
- Housing
- Healthcare Costs
- Childcare Costs

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

In order to identify the impact to students the college e-mailed all students a Compass College CARES Act COVID-19 Financial Assistance Request Form and sent texts reminding them to respond to the form. The form included the following information:

On March 27, 2020, the Federal Government signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Through the CARES Act, stabilization grants are available to directly aid students to cover expenses they experienced related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including but not limited to expenses such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care).

The grant funds are available to all students who are or could be eligible for federal financial aid, which includes students who would be eligible for federal financial aid if they filed the FAFSA. The college will contact students who have not filed a FAFSA to request information that will allow us to verify their eligibility to receive the grant funds.

In order to help the college determine the level of grant funds a student could be awarded we are providing this form for you to let us know about circumstances and expenses you may have experienced or may be experiencing. These could be, but are not limited to:

1. Having to purchase/upgrade your internet service to accommodate online classes;
2. Having to buy a newer computer in order to manage online classes;
3. Medical costs associated with mental health issues related to COVID-19;
4. Housing challenges (whether you had to move home, have storage costs for leaving things in GR when you moved home, broke a lease in order to move home, etc).

Loss of job or reduction in work hours is not considered a qualifying expense so do not report that information on this form.

This form must be completed and submitted by the end of the day, Tuesday, May 12, 2020, in order to assist the college in determining the level of a possible emergency aid grant. Keep in mind that Compass may ask you for further documentation or additional information.

Any questions may be sent to Lynne Heerema in Financial Aid (lynne.h@compass.edu).

On June 12, 2020, students were sent an email describing the grant aid that they would receive and additional information they needed to provide to receive the grant. In addition, students were provided an FAQ document regarding the CARES Act and grant aid.

Dear Compass Student,

Continued blessings to you during these challenging times. Your education was disrupted and you had to shift to online learning. You were not able to work on projects or shoots. You haven't been able to hang out together in Hollywood Square. In spite of all of this, you are doing amazingly well by learning online and all the faculty and staff at Compass are extremely proud of you. You demonstrated patience and understanding as we transitioned to new ways of delivering instruction and supporting you academically. We are thankful for your resilience.

On March 27, 2020, the Federal Government signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. These grants will aid our students to cover expenses they experienced related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including but not limited to expenses such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care).

All Compass students enrolled as of March 13, 2020 have experienced expenses due to COVID-19. The college therefore plans to disburse the grants in the following way. All eligible students will receive a base amount of \$1,100. Some students will receive a larger grant disbursement (increments of \$250) due to additional expenses experienced as reported on the COVID-19 Financial Assistance Request Form. According to the information we received, your grant amount is (insert \$\$ amount).

We understand that your expenses may exceed the grant amount. If you or your parent(s) income has been impacted by job reduction or loss, you are encouraged to reach out to the Financial Aid Office at finaid@compass.edu. The Financial Aid Office will continue to work with you and your family throughout the upcoming academic year, though additional financial aid is not guaranteed.

While we encourage you to use this grant to offset your past and continuing expenses related to COVID-19, there are no specific requirements for its use. You may use the grant to pay

outstanding tuition bills, replenish your savings, or share with others if you don't find yourself in significant need. For tax planning purposes, the IRS has ruled that these grants are not to be included in your gross income when filing your 2020 tax return.

To ensure your check reaches you as quickly as possible, please reply to this email with your current address. Your check will not be mailed until we have a confirmed address for you.

All the best to you. May God continue to bless and protect you, your friends, and your family.

Lynne Heerema
Financial Aid Office

Compass College CARES Act Grant FAQs

1. Will all Compass College students receive a CARES Act grant?
 - All eligible students enrolled at Compass College on March 13, 2020, the date that a national emergency was declared, will receive a grant. Only students who are or could be eligible to participate in Title IV federal student aid programs may receive emergency financial aid grants. If a student has filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student has demonstrated eligibility. Students who have not filed a FAFSA but who are eligible to file a FAFSA also may receive emergency financial aid grants. The criteria to participate in Title IV programs include but are not limited to the following: U.S. citizenship or eligible noncitizen; a valid Social Security number; registration with Selective Service (if the student is male); not in default on a Federal Student Loan; and a high school diploma, GED, or completion of high school in an approved homeschool setting.) Documentation to verify eligibility will be required for all non-FAFSA filers.
2. When and how will I receive my grant?
 - Eligible students will receive a check for the amount of the grant sent to the address that the student has provided. The check will be sent within one week of the receipt of the address.
3. Do I need to have expenses up to the amount of my grant?
 - No. This is not a requirement. We have estimated overall expenses of students due to the disruption caused by COVID-19. Determination of the grant amount was based on estimated expenses and need. The grant covers past, current, and potential future expenses as well. Students may share their grant with others if they wish.
4. What can emergency financial aid grants provided by the CARES Act be used for?

- Emergency financial aid grants to students can be used 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).
5. Do I have to repay the emergency financial aid grant I received from my university through the CARES Act?
- No. The funds provided by the CARES Act are grants, so they do not need to be repaid.
6. Is this grant includible in my 2020 gross income?
- No. According to the Internal Revenue Service, “Emergency financial aid grants under the CARES Act for unexpected expenses, unmet financial need, or expenses related to the disruption of campus operations on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as unexpected expenses for food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, or childcare, are qualified disaster relief payments under section 139.” This grant is not includible in your 2020 gross income.

On June 19, 2020, a text message was sent to all students who had not responded to the above email. This text was sent to 46 students.

Check your Compass email and find the email with the subject line of CARES Act HEERF grant. This email tells you how you can get free money to help with your expenses related to COVID-19. This is good for you! :-) As always, let me know if you have questions or concerns. ~Lynne from Compass

On June 26, 2020, phone calls were made to all students who had not responded. Another text was sent on July 10, 2020 to those who had not responded. Finally, a paper letter was mailed to all remaining students on July 23, 2020.