

**Grand Rapids Community College  
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act**

**45-Day Fund Report**

**July 31, 2020**

**Acknowledgments of Signed Certification and Agreement Forms**

- On April 13, 2020, Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) signed the Recipient's Funding Certification and Agreement for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

In doing so, GRCC agreed that no less than 50 percent or \$3,403,086 of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act would be provided as emergency financial aid grants to students.

The U.S. Department of Education provided a Grant Award Notification to GRCC on April 22, 2020.

Additional Certification and Agreement forms signed by GRCC include:

- The Recipient's Funding Certification and Agreement for the Institutional Portion of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. The U.S. Department of Education provided a Grant Award Notification to GRCC on May 6, 2020.
- The Recipient's Certification and Agreement for an Award under Section 18004(a)(2) of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. The U.S. Department of Education provided a Grant Award Notification to GRCC on June 1, 2020.

Unsigned copies of the Certification and Agreement forms are available for review at:  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html>

**Total Amount of Funds GRCC Will Receive**

Based on Grant Award Notifications from the U.S. Department of Education, GRCC will receive \$7,141,320 in Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) under the CARES Act.

These funds include:

- \$3,403,086 in funds for eligible students impacted by COVID-19 pandemic-related disruptions of campus operations.
- \$3,403,085 in institutional funding for costs associated with significant changes to the delivery of instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- \$335,149 in institutional funding from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund – Strengthening Institutions Program to help defray expenses incurred as a result of transition to distance education.

As stated above, GRCC will distribute no less than \$3,403,086 in HEERF to students. Detailed information about the disbursement of HEERF to eligible GRCC students is included within this report.

GRCC understands that it may, but is not required to, use HEERF designated to address institutional costs to provide additional emergency financial aid grants to students for expenses related to COVID-19-related disruption of campus operations.

At this time, GRCC is still determining how the total \$3,738,234 in institutional HEERF will be utilized. No institutional funds have been drawn down as of July 31, 2020.

### **Total Amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants GRCC Has Distributed to Students**

\$2,009,500 was disbursed to eligible students on or before July 31, 2020. At this time, an additional \$27,000 is scheduled to disburse to students on or before August 7, 2020.

### **Estimated Total Number of Students Eligible to Receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants**

12,622 students were enrolled at GRCC in the Winter 2020 semester. Of these, 8,589 students were enrolled in a degree or certificate program. And, of the 8,589 students, 6,553 had a FAFSA on file at GRCC.

Initially, a total of 4,766 students were identified as meeting all of the criteria required for a HEERF grant, as determined based on U.S. Department of Education guidance.

Following fund disbursement to those meeting initial eligibility requirements, GRCC reevaluated the records of the remaining 1,787 students enrolled during Winter semester with a FAFSA on file. This evaluation included assessing if any outstanding FAFSA issues needed to determine HEERF eligibility had been resolved and if the student was meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements. For those enrolled in solely online courses during the Winter 2020 semester, GRCC closely reviewed each student's declared academic program of study to determine if the program could be completed entirely online. If so, GRCC further evaluated if, during the 2019-20 academic year, the student had taken one or more in-person courses required to complete their program of study.

If a student had resolved FAFSA issues, was meeting SAP requirements, and was not pursuing a completely online program of study, they were deemed eligible for HEERF funds. Based on this evaluation process, GRCC determined that 566 of the 1,787 students whose records were subsequently reviewed now meet eligibility requirements.

### **Total Number of Students Who Have Received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant**

Funds were disbursed to 4,019 students as of July 31, 2020. During the week of August 3, disbursements are scheduled for an additional 54 students at this time.

Currently, 4,073 students submitted the acceptance form, establishing their eligibility as having incurred expenses as the result of COVID-19-related campus disruptions. The following table

shows the number and percentage of students who attested to having an expense within an eligible category:

| Expenses         | Students | Percentage |
|------------------|----------|------------|
| Food             | 2935     | 72%        |
| Housing          | 2381     | 58%        |
| Technology       | 2623     | 64%        |
| Health Care      | 1010     | 25%        |
| Child Care       | 596      | 15%        |
| Course Materials | 2542     | 62%        |

### **Methods Used to Determine Which GRCC Students Receive a Grant and Grant Amount**

Based on current guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, GRCC determined that students who incurred expenses as the result of COVID-19-related campus disruptions and who met all of the following criteria would be eligible for a HEERF grant in the amount of \$500 during GRCC's initial and subsequent fund disbursement process.

- Was enrolled in a financial aid-eligible GRCC degree or certificate (credit or clock hour) program during the Winter 2020 semester.
- Was enrolled in at least one originally scheduled, face-to-face class on or after March 13, 2020 or was determined to not be pursuing an entirely online program of study.
- Filed a 2019-20 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with GRCC and was eligible for federal financial aid during the Winter 2020 semester.
- Currently meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements for financial aid recipients.

Funds have been reserved to make additional disbursements to students who are later determined to meet eligibility requirements. Students enrolled in the Summer 2020 semester will be evaluated for potential HEERF eligibility after August 7, 2020.

GRCC used the following process to identify students meeting the above eligibility criteria:

- Using data from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), GRCC determined whether a student met the eligibility requirements for Federal Student Aid under the Section 484 of the Higher Education Act.
- GRCC used dates of attendance, course schedules, course delivery mode (online, hybrid, or in-seat), declared programs of study, and other student enrollment data necessary to determine whether the student met the requirement of being enrolled in at

least one originally scheduled, face-to-face class on or after March 13, 2020 or was determined to not be pursuing an entirely online program of study.

- GRCC established an acceptance form by which students self-certify what expenses they incurred as the result of COVID-19-related campus disruptions and accept their HEERF grant.

### **Instructions, Directions, and Guidance Provided to GRCC Students**

On May 11 and May 12, 2020, GRCC sent communication to all students about the CARES Act and the HEERF eligibility criteria. On May 14, 2020, GRCC sent a communication to the 4,766 students who were determined to be eligible for the HEERF grant at that time. That email included instructions about how the student would accept their award and receive their \$500 grant. Follow-up email and text messages were also sent to students on June 4, June 22, and June 23, 2020. Students later identified as being eligible for HEERF received a communication on July 30, 2020. Copies of each communication are included below. Additionally, a frequently asked questions document has been posted on GRCC's website at:

[www.grcc.edu/coronavirusinformation/studentinformation/caresactemergencyfundsforeligiblestudents](http://www.grcc.edu/coronavirusinformation/studentinformation/caresactemergencyfundsforeligiblestudents)

#### Email Sent to All Students on May 11 and May 12, 2020

*(First Name),*

*The COVID-19 crisis has affected all aspects of our lives, and we know many GRCC students face unexpected and significant financial challenges.*

*Soon we will notify students who might be eligible for emergency funding assistance under provisions of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).*

*We estimate more than 4,000 GRCC students will be eligible for emergency grant funding or assistance of up to \$500. This will bring some relief for students and their family members, whose education and lives have been disrupted by this unprecedented public health crisis.*

*We are moving thoughtfully and quickly to provide this assistance to students using guidance from the federal government.*

*If you have not already done so, we encourage you to complete the 2019-20 Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA) at [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov). Our Financial Aid Office is available to help. Email [financialaid@grcc.edu](mailto:financialaid@grcc.edu) or call 616-234-4030.*

*Students must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for CARES Act funding, based on U.S. Education Department guidelines:*

- *Was enrolled in a financial aid-eligible GRCC degree or certificate program during the Winter 2020 semester.*
- *Was enrolled in at least one originally scheduled face-to-face class on or after March 13, 2020.*

- *Filed a 2019-20 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with GRCC and was eligible for federal financial aid during the Winter 2020 semester.*
- *Currently meeting satisfactory academic progress requirements for financial aid recipients. Details are [here](#).*

*NOTE: We have interpreted the Education Department's guidelines for eligibility do not include students who were enrolled exclusively in online programs. We continue to work with the department, asking it to clarify whether students are eligible if they were enrolled exclusively in online classes during the winter semester, but whose programs include in-person classes in other semesters. We recognize the disruption and additional expenses that these students have incurred and have set aside CARES Act funds to issue at a later date to these students if this is allowed.*

*Students with questions can send an email to [GRCC\\_cares@grcc.edu](mailto:GRCC_cares@grcc.edu) or call 616-234-4000.*

*We know this assistance will be helpful, but the need is great and will continue to be felt in the weeks and months ahead. There is assistance for students outside of the CARES Act. The safety and wellbeing of our students is a top priority and GRCC has other resources available to help with a variety of challenges.*

*Our Office of Student Life frequently updates the GET HELP website – [grcc.edu/gethelp](http://grcc.edu/gethelp) – listing college and community resources for food and housing insecurity and other challenges.*

*We will continue weekly curbside food distribution through the summer, and we appreciate the support from community partners and our GRCC Student Alliance to provide this assistance.*

*Our Counseling and Career Development team provides assistance with mental wellness and can be reached by email at [counseling@grcc.edu](mailto:counseling@grcc.edu) or by calling 616-234-4130. We know this is a difficult time. But you are not in this alone, and GRCC will assist you in any way we can.*

*Stay Well.*

*Best,*

*President Pink*

#### Email Sent to Eligible Students on May 14, 2020

*(First Name),*

*We are pleased to notify you that you are eligible for emergency funding assistance through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) if you incurred one or more of the following expenses resulting from COVID-19-related campus disruptions:*

- *Food*
- *Housing costs*
- *Course materials*
- *Technology*
- *Healthcare costs*
- *Childcare costs*

The CARES Act guidelines are set by the U.S Department of Education. To view and accept your award, you must take the following actions:

- Log into your [Online Center](#)
- Select the CARES Award Acceptance Form tile
- Review the form, select all expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19 campus disruptions
- Click the award acceptance button
- Click submit
- Confirm your contact information and update it, if necessary, in your Online Center. Click on the Profile tile, then select Address

Your CARES Act funds will be disbursed using the same BankMobile refund method you previously selected for your Winter 2020 Financial Aid refund. If you need to update your refund preferences, you can do so at: <https://bankmobiledisbursements.com/refundchoices/>

Please consider selecting an electronic refund preference as the quickest, most reliable, and safest method. If you have not previously set up a refund preference and need assistance doing so, contact the GRCC Cashier's Office at [cashier@grcc.edu](mailto:cashier@grcc.edu).

If you have questions, the GRCC CARES Team can help. Please review our [CARES Act FAQs](#), send questions to [GRCC\\_CARES@grcc.edu](mailto:GRCC_CARES@grcc.edu) or call (616) 234-4000.

These are difficult times. This assistance will be helpful, but the need will continue to be great as we emerge from the pandemic. GRCC has other resources available to help with a variety of challenges. Our Office of Student Life frequently updates the GET HELP website – [grcc.edu/gethelp](http://grcc.edu/gethelp) – listing college and community resources for food and housing insecurity and other challenges.

We hope this will bring some relief to you and your family during this unprecedented public health crisis.

Stay Well.

Best,

President Pink

Email Sent to Eligible Students on June 4, 2020

(First Name)

In mid-May you received an email from GRCC's President Bill Pink stating you are eligible for \$500 in emergency funding assistance through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

This is a reminder to accept your emergency funds today by taking the following actions:

- Log into your GRCC Online Center

- *Select the CARES Award Acceptance Form tile*
- *Review the form, select all expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19 campus disruptions*
- *Click the award acceptance button*
- *Click submit*
- *Confirm your contact information and update it, if necessary, in your Online Center. Click on the Profile tile, then select Address*

*Your CARES Act funds will be disbursed using the same BankMobile refund method you previously selected for your Winter 2020 financial aid refund. If you need to update your refund preferences, you can do so at: <https://bankmobiledisbursements.com/refundchoices/>*

*If you have questions, the GRCC CARES Team can help. Please review our CARES Act FAQs, send questions to [GRCC\\_CARES@grcc.edu](mailto:GRCC_CARES@grcc.edu) or call (616) 234-4000.*

#### Text Sent to Eligible Students on June 4, 2020

*Hello (first name), This is (first name) from Grand Rapids Community College. Do you intend on accepting your Cares Act Funding? (Please reply Yes or No)*

*If YES, then reply:*

*Please visit your GRCC Online Center and click on the tile Cares Award Acceptance Form to move forward with this process.*

*If NO, then reply:*

*Thank you! Have a great evening.*

#### Email Sent to Eligible Students on June 22, 2020

*(First Name),*

*In mid-May you received an email from GRCC's President Bill Pink stating you are eligible for \$500 in emergency funding assistance through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).*

*These federal grant funds are meant to assist you with expenses related to campus disruptions during the winter semester. This grant does not need to be repaid. According to IRS guidelines, the grant is not taxable, and it will not change your current or future financial aid awards.*

*The deadline for accepting these funds is June 30, 2020.*

*Accept your emergency funds today by taking the following actions:*

- *Log into your GRCC Online Center*
- *Select the CARES Award Acceptance Form tile*
- *Review the form, select all expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19 campus disruptions*
- *Click the award acceptance button*
- *Click submit*
- *Confirm your contact information and update it, if necessary, in your Online Center. Click on the Profile tile, then select Address*

*Your CARES Act funds will be disbursed using the same BankMobile refund method you previously selected. If you need to update your refund preferences, you can do so at: <https://bankmobiledisbursements.com/refundchoices/>. If you have not previously set up a refund preference and need assistance doing so, contact the GRCC Cashier's Office at [cashier@grcc.edu](mailto:cashier@grcc.edu).*

*Questions? The GRCC CARES Team can help. Please review our CARES Act FAQs, send questions to [GRCC\\_CARES@grcc.edu](mailto:GRCC_CARES@grcc.edu) or call (616) 234-4000.*

#### Text Sent to Eligible Students on June 23, 2020

*Hello this is a message from Grand Rapids Community College. The deadline to accept your Cares Act grant is June 30. Login to your Online Center. Questions -- email [GRCC\\_Cares@grcc.edu](mailto:GRCC_Cares@grcc.edu) -- please do not reply to this text.*

#### Email Sent to Eligible Students on July 30, 2020

*(First Name),*

*We are pleased to notify you that you are eligible for emergency funding assistance through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). This eligibility is based on your having been enrolled at GRCC for this past winter semester. We have reviewed your account and determined that you now meet the updated criteria as stated on the CARES Act FAQ. Additionally, you are eligible if you incurred one or more of the following expenses resulting from COVID-19-related campus disruptions:*

- Food*
- Housing costs*
- Course materials*
- Technology*
- Healthcare costs*
- Childcare costs*

*The CARES Act guidelines are set by the U.S Department of Education. To view and accept your award, you must take the following actions:*

- Log into your Online Center*
- Select the CARES Award Acceptance Form tile*
- Review the form, select all expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19 campus disruptions*



- *Click the award acceptance button*
- *Click submit*
- *Confirm your contact information and update it, if necessary, in your Online Center. Click on the Profile tile, then select Address*

*Your CARES Act award of \$500 will be disbursed using the same BankMobile refund method you previously selected for your Winter 2020 Financial Aid refund. If you need to update your refund preferences, you can do so at: <https://bankmobiledisbursements.com/refundchoices/>*

*Please consider selecting an electronic refund preference as the quickest, most reliable, and safest method. If you have not previously set up a refund preference and need assistance doing so, contact the GRCC Cashier's Office at [cashier@grcc.edu](mailto:cashier@grcc.edu).*

*The deadline for accepting these CARES Act funds is August 7, 2020.*

*If you have questions, the GRCC CARES Team can help. Please review our CARES Act FAQs, send questions to [GRCC\\_CARES@grcc.edu](mailto:GRCC_CARES@grcc.edu) or call (616) 234-4000.*

*These are difficult times. This assistance will be helpful, but the need will continue to be great as we emerge from the pandemic. GRCC has other resources available to help with a variety of challenges. Our Office of Student Life frequently updates the GET HELP website – [grcc.edu/gethelp](http://grcc.edu/gethelp) – listing college and community resources for food and housing insecurity and other challenges.*

## **Conclusion**

This report documents the status of CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) as of July 31, 2020. Additional reports will be posted on GRCC's website no less than every 45 days.