



HIGHER EDUCATION EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (HEERF)

ADVANCED CAREER INSTITUTE (ACI) PLAN:

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 COVID-19. These funds are provided by the Secretary of Education to an institution for emergency financial aid grants to students under Sections 18004(a) (1) and 18004(c) of the CARES Act. The CARES Act expressly requires that institutions provide the emergency financial aid grants to students “for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19 (including eligible expenses under a student’s cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare).”

In accordance with the provisions of the CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF), Advanced Career Institute has established and uses written policies and procedures for verifying an applicant’s eligibility for (HEERF) from FAFSA information.

These policies and procedures include:

1. The time period within which an applicant must request funding.
2. Methods used to select recipients and determine award amounts.
3. The method by which the Institution notifies an applicant of the results and approval of funding.
4. The procedures the Institution will follow itself or the procedures the Institution will require from the student

Application Period

Initial Applications for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund will be made available to students’ effective **June 26, 2020 through July 6, 2020**. Students can apply for funding during this period. The second application will be made available to **students July 13, 2020 through July 17, 2020** for students’ who missed the initial application deadline, for student appeals, and/or for students seeking additional funds due to extenuating circumstances as a result of COVID-19.

Procedures

On June 24, 2020, Advanced Career Institute ran a query of its student database to select a population of students who met the following criteria:

- ❖ Enrolled in the Advanced Welding Technology or AG Transportation Programs
- ❖ Completed a FAFSA application
- ❖ Were Title IV financial aid eligible per the April 24, 2020 Department of Education Guidance
- ❖ Were enrolled and attended classes any time between March 13, 2020 and April 30, 2020.

Based on the number of eligible students and the amount of funding received for students through the CARES Act, the institution could afford to award students a \$600 grant. This grant could be used to help students cover the cost of expenses related to campus disruptions caused by the Coronavirus.

All students meeting the above criteria will be notified by email and text messaging regarding the availability of HEERF funds. Students will be directed to an online application through Survey Monkey.

Advanced Career Institute has established a HEERF oversight committee consisting of representatives from the Financial Aid Department, the Finance Department and Executive Management who will review the applications submitted

Completed applications will be sent to ACI's HEERF oversight committee to determine applicants' initial eligibility. Applications that do not meet criteria set forth by this policy will be notified in writing and be given the opportunity to appeal.

The institution will reserve 20% of the "Advanced Funds" portion of the grant for students' who missed the initial application deadline, for student appeals, and/or for students seeking additional funds due to extenuating circumstances as a result of COVID-19.

Selection Process

Applications will be directed to ACI's HEERF oversight committee. Students will be notified that grant request approvals will be on a first come, first served basis. Students can only receive the funding once; however if a student is in need of additional funds, there are no outstanding appeals and there are remaining funds in the reserve, the student may submit a second application for review during the second application period. Students submitting a second application for additional funds due to extenuating circumstances as a result of COVID-19 will be required to provide supporting documentation when submitting their application.

ACI's HEERF oversight committee will review the initial application and determine if the student meets all of the HEERF eligible requirements listed below.

- ❖ Enrolled in the Advanced Welding Technology or AG Transportation Programs
- ❖ Completed a FAFSA application
- ❖ Were Title IV financial aid eligible per the April 24, 2020 Department of Education Guidance
- ❖ Were enrolled and attended classes any time between March 13, 2020 and April 30, 2020
- ❖ Student has a need caused by a COVID-19 related issue and the expenses are related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19 emergency declaration (including eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare).
- ❖ Student has courses that were impacted by COVID-19 crisis after March 13, 2020.

Initial Application Period

Eligible students under the initial application period will be awarded \$600.

Criteria:

Students must have a COVID-19 related issue and the expenses are related to the disruption of campus operations due to the COVID-19 emergency declaration (including eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare).

Examples of these expenses include the following:

- Transportation Issues related to outbreak (lack of public transportation resources)
- Child Care Issues directly caused by COVID – 19 (such as but not limited to day care and school closures)
- Increase in costs related to dependent care related to school closures (including extra food expenses, need for technology related items for dependents online education)
- Increase in general living expenses related to COVID-19 (including but not limited to an increase in grocery and household items due to shortages, increase in utility expenses from working from home or dependents being home)

Second Application Period

Funds disbursements for the second application period will be prioritized in the following order:

1. Appeals
2. Students who missed the initial application deadline
3. Students seeking additional funds due to extenuating circumstances due to COVID-19

Only after the funds for all outstanding appeals and students who missed the initial application deadline have been disbursed will the remainder of the funds be divided evenly amongst all students with extenuating circumstances. (Wording??)

Criteria for the Second Application- Extenuating Circumstances:

- Student or Spouse Laid Off **3/13/20 or later** (would also apply to a dependent student's parent).
 - Documented with separation paperwork from the job or proof of unemployment benefits.
- Homeless or in a transitional living program as of **3/13/20 or later**.
 - Documented by Director of transitional living program or other authority deemed appropriate by the school's program administrator.
- Loss of a spouse (or parent for dependent students) from COVID -19

- Hospitalization expenses for the students, the student's spouse, dependents that have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Inability to take the driving exam and receive a commercial driver's license due to DMV closures.

Notifications

Eligible students must sign an award letter that will be sent to their email address on record to receive the funds. Checks will be mailed once the signed award letter is received to the address given on the student's application to receive the funds.

Notification will include the amount of grant awarded to each student and instructions given to students pertaining to use of funds including food, housing, course materials, technology, health care and childcare. ACI's HEERF oversight committee will maintain records of applications and award communication for each applicant.

Applicants not meeting the award criteria during the first application period (June 26, 2020 through July 6, 2020) will be sent a communication regarding reasons for ineligibility and will be given an opportunity to appeal during the second application period. Checks for the initial application period will be issued on July 10, 2020.

Applicants not meeting the award criteria during the second application period (July 13, 2020 through July 17, 2020) will be sent a communication regarding reasons for ineligibility and will have until July 22, 2020 to appeal. Checks for the second application period will be issued on July 24, 2020.