



American  
Jewish  
University

July 27, 2020

Dear AJU Community,

We are pleased to announce that American Jewish University has received funding to assist our students through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed by US Congress on March 27, 2020.

AJU officially signed and returned the certification and agreement and used 50% of the total \$111,218.00 funding to provide emergency financial aid grants directly to students. The other half was used to assist the university with financial loss and additional expenses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On April 9, 2020, the Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, released a letter to college and university presidents detailing the funding available from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The letter indicates, "...each institution may develop its own system and process for determining how to allocate these funds, which may include distributing the funds to all students or only to students who demonstrate significant need... With that said, I would like to encourage the leadership of each institution to prioritize your students with the greatest need, but at the same time consider establishing a maximum funding threshold for each student to ensure that these funds are distributed as widely as possible."

On April 21, 2020, the Department of Education issued additional guidance for this funding. This document reflects the AJU understanding of this guidance.

**Campuses are making myriad decisions about COVID-19 and therefore need flexibility as they develop their local emergency grant funding to meet the needs of their students. In general, the plans should reflect the following principles:**

- Efficient Delivery: Campuses should prioritize delivery in Spring 2020.
- Equity: Campuses may provide broad-based support (e.g., a base award to all students), but are also encouraged to provide additional support to groups that may require additional assistance (e.g., low-income, parenting students).
- Direct Emergency Grant Payments: The Department's guidance is clear that funds should be delivered directly to students, not to pay for past due bills, to reimburse prior expenditures by the campus (e.g., to pay back the campus for purchased laptops), or to replace lost wages.

- Beyond the Cost of Attendance: The Department also has made it clear that this funding can be made available to students without regard to the normal total cost of attendance limits. Nor will it impact future financial aid allocations.

**Campuses are encouraged to take the following considerations, among others, into account as they consider how to deploy the federal funds in conjunction with their own institutional financial aid:**

- The Department has limited the awards to students eligible for Title IV financial aid authorized under the Higher Education Act. Undocumented students and international students are not eligible for support using these federal dollars.
- Undergraduate and Graduate students must have filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be considered.
- Campuses are also encouraged to consider targeting particularly vulnerable populations for additional support, e.g., student parents, former foster youth, disabled students, and formerly incarcerated students.
- Both graduate students and undergraduate students facing financial challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Using the federal criteria and guidance, AJU established a group for the disbursement of funds who determined:**

- All AJU students have been impacted by COVID-19
- Funding should go to all eligible full time students
- Dollar amounts awarded are set on available funds and the number of students
- All funds will be disbursed to the eligible full time students who filed a FAFSA application

**Awards will be provided to students who meet all of the following eligibility criteria:**

- Title IV aid eligible
- Currently enrolled full time
- Is a U.S. Citizen or an eligible non-citizen

***Using these principles and based on the available funds, AJU has allocated an equal amount of \$573.29 to 97 eligible students for distribution.***

***The Accounting Office disbursed funds the week of May 11, 2020.***

CARES Act funding from the U.S. Department of Education is specifically designated to assist students with economic hardships related to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are meant to help students with expenses incurred during the Spring semester

associated with the transition to online learning, housing, food and utilities, medical expenses, child care, technology, or other resources needed for online coursework.

This grant does not need to be listed as part of your income on your 2020 tax return.

- Since these funds can only be used for specific costs incurred as a result of the COVID-19 campus disruption, they will not affect future financial aid eligibility. These costs include food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare.

***If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Financial Aid at [financialaid@aju.edu](mailto:financialaid@aju.edu).***