

What is ARP/HEERF III and where did the funding for financial aid grants come from?

The U.S. Department of Education provided \$39.6 billion through the American Relief Plan (ARP) Act. One aspect of the act was creating the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III). HEERF III allocates funds to institutions to distribute financial aid grants to students to provide them with some relief from the economic fallout related to the COVID-19 pandemic. [Visit the USV Virtual Center for HEERF III grants and other important information.](#)

How much HEERF III funding did USV receive?

The University of Silicon Valley has been allocated \$244,362 to provide some additional relief from the economic fallout related to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing financial aid grants to students. These funds are intended to help with any component of a student's cost of attendance such as tuition, food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare, and childcare. Our allocation was determined by the U.S. Department of Education based on the number of Pell Grant-eligible and non-Pell Grant students enrolled at USV. Given the weighting, Congress clearly intends the funds to go to students with the most financial need as determined through the financial aid application process.

Who is eligible for HEERF III grants?

Students enrolled in certificate or degree programs as of July 6, 2021 (USV's 2021 Mid-Summer census date) may be eligible to receive grant funding. This includes undergraduate and graduate students. Priority will be given to students with the most financial need as determined by the 2020/2021 or 2021/2022 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). Eligibility will be based on the applicable FAFSA® results and the student's Summer 2021 enrollment status.

Does it matter how many credits students are taking in Summer 2021?

Yes. HEERF III grant award amounts for students who are attending less than full-time will be lower than the amount for students attending full-time.

Enrollment status is classified as:

- Full-Time: Undergraduates – 12 or more credits / Graduate – 6 or more credits
- 3/4 Time: Undergraduates – 9 to 11 credits / Graduates – 4 to 5 credits
- Half-Time: Undergraduates – 6 to 8 credits / Graduates – 3 credits
- Less Than Half-Time: Undergraduates – less than 6 credits / Graduates – less than 3 credits

Do students have to fill out a FAFSA® to receive the HEERF III grant funds?

No. While eligibility is based on the 2020/2021 or 2021/2022 FAFSA® calculation formula, students who have not completed the FAFSA® may be eligible to receive a grant. It is important to reiterate that our allocation was primarily based on the number of Pell Grant-eligible students currently attending USV. Those students who show the highest financial need as determined through the FAFSA® formula will receive the largest amount. Eligible students who have lower financial need will still receive a grant, but the amount will be lower. Students who have not completed a FAFSA® will receive the lowest amount.

How much HEERF III grant money will students receive?

While specific award amounts and disbursement strategies will differ across students, the priority will be to provide the most HEERF III funding to student populations with the highest financial need as established by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). Grant amounts vary by student based on the results of their 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 FAFSA® and their Summer 2021 Trimester enrollment status. The highest grant amount will be for students who are eligible for the Federal Pell Grant as determined by the applicable FAFSA®. Students who are not eligible for Pell Grants, but still have eligibility for other types of federal student aid, based on their FAFSA® will be the next group awarded. Finally, students who have not completed a FAFSA® will be the third group awarded. HEERF III grant award amounts for students who are attending less than full time will be lower than the amount for students attending full-time.

The chart below outlines the amounts for how the funds will be distributed to all eligible students:

Student Group	Enrollment Status				Total Students by Group
	Full-Time	3/4 Time	Half-Time	Less Than Half-Time	
Pell Eligible (FAFSA®)	\$754.00	\$656.00	\$558.00	\$459.00	198
Not Pell Eligible (FAFSA®)	\$566.00	\$492.00	\$418.00	\$345.00	176
No FAFSA®	\$377.00	\$327.00	\$279.00	\$230.00	49

How do eligible students apply for HEERF III grant funds?

USV created a simple online form to be completed by students who are eligible to apply for HEERF III grant funding. The link to the online form will be sent to eligible students via their university email address to be completed and submitted.

When will students know if their request for HEERF III grant funds has been approved?

USV will begin the review and approval process the week of August 2nd. We anticipate the review and approval of applications may take approximately 5 business days. Students will receive an email notification when the disbursement of funds is processed.

How will students receive the HEERF III grant funds?

HEERF III grant funds will be paid directly to students via a check mailed to the address listed on the request form. Therefore, it is imperative the students include their current address on the application for where they want the funds to be sent.

Will students receive HEERF III grant funds even if they owe USV money?

Yes. Students who are eligible for HEERF III grant funds will receive the money even if they have current financial holds or have an outstanding balance with USV.

How can students use the money?

The HEERF III grant funds should be used for to help with any component of a student’s cost of attendance. This includes tuition, food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare, and childcare.

Is the money from the HEERF III grants considered taxable income?

No. The grant funding students receive for unexpected expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic qualify as disaster relief payments under the IRS tax code. This grant funding will not be included as part of your gross income for 2021.

Must the grant funds be reported as part of earnings when a student completes their Financial Aid Application for the 2021/2022 or 2022/2023 school year?

No. The grant funding students receive for unexpected expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic are not considered income and therefore, this grant does not need to be included when reporting income on the financial aid application for the 2021/2022 or 2022/2023 school year.

What if students need more money than the HEERF III grant funds received?

We understand that many students are experiencing extreme financial distress right now. The HEERF III grants are meant to help supplement student’s financial needs. We know that for many of you, the grants are not enough. However, USV only received a limited amount of funds to be disbursed to students.

Are students who received prior HEERF funds eligible to receive HEERF III funds?

Students who received CARES Act or HEERF III funds may also be eligible for HEERF III funds. All eligible students will be notified.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

Questions related to the HEERF III grants can be emailed to: HEERF@usv.edu.