

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
A Graduate School of Education, Health & Psychology

TEACHERS COLLEGE CARES ACT EMERGENCY GRANTS POLICY

The recently enacted federal [CARES Act](#) provided money to colleges and universities for emergency student grants. The purpose of the money is to award emergency financial aid grants to students for specific expenses that are a direct result of the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus. Teachers College will receive \$559,267 under the Federal CARES Act to distribute emergency financial grants to students in a way that prioritizes students with the greatest demonstrated need while ensuring the funds are distributed as widely as possible. Grants must go directly to students and may not be used by Teachers College for the payment of tuition balances or other fees and charges.

ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to receive CARES Act grants?

The following eligibility requirements have been established by the U.S. Department of Education. All of the following must apply:

- You must be a current student in good standing at Teachers College in a degree-granting program.
- You must not have been enrolled exclusively in online courses prior to March 13, 2020.
- You must have a FAFSA on file with Teachers College or complete one by June 30, 2020 at the studentaid.gov website.
- Applicant must affirm that they have financial hardship resulting from COVID-19 and the disruption of campus operations.

Unfortunately, the US Department of Education does not allow CARES Act Emergency funds to be used for students who are not eligible for federal financial aid, including international, DACA, or undocumented students, nor are the funds allowed to be distributed to any student who was

exclusively taking online courses prior to March 13, 2020. If you are ineligible for this reason, you may request assistance through the [Wendy M. Dressel Student Emergency Fund](#) application process.

COVERED EXPENSES

What expenses can be considered for CARES Act Emergency funding?

The following is a list of expenses that can be considered for CARES Act Emergency grant assistance if they were incurred in "direct relation to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus."

- Food
- Housing
- Course materials
- Health care
- Childcare
- Technology-related expenses (such as having to buy a computer when courses were moved online)
- Transportation (such as having to fly home because classes were canceled or having to return from study abroad when the program was canceled)

The CARES Act stipulates that the emergency funds cannot be used to replace a loss of income or to pay for student expenses that are not directly related to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus pandemic.

APPLYING FOR A GRANT

How do I apply for an emergency grant?

Please complete the online [APPLICATION FOR THE CARES ACT](#), the link to which is also found on this webpage.

If I am approved, how much will I receive?

Graduate schools received a limited amount of CARES Act Emergency funds and TC has also set aside a limited amount of institutional funds for those who do not qualify for CARES Act Emergency funding. The College is using information from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine the students with the greatest need. This will help us to prioritize which students will receive the Emergency Financial Aid Grants and how much each student will receive, with the goal of distributing the funds in a fair and equitable manner. Grant amounts will be determined based on the number of applications received and the specific needs presented in the application. It is expected that initial grants will be in amounts of \$550, \$300, or \$150 depending on financial need as shown on the applicant's FAFSA and will be available until the emergency funds are exhausted. Students whose demonstrated financial need falls below a certain level will not receive grants. Some students may have already received Wendy E. Dressel Emergency Grants. In those cases, the amount of the CARES Act Emergency Grant will be reduced by that amount.

How will I receive the grant money?

Our goal is to award the emergency funds as soon as possible, though it will take some time to process the payment. All emergency grants will be processed through student accounts. Emergency grants will be directly deposited into bank accounts for students who are enrolled in the [E Refund Program](#) at TC. Students without direct deposit will receive a check in the mail at the address specified on the application.

OTHER QUESTIONS**What if I owe TC for tuition or other expenses?**

The full amount of the emergency grants will be given directly to the student, and TC will not hold the funds to pay any outstanding balance owed to the College.

Will CARES Act Emergency funds impact current or future financial aid?

No. This funding is not financial aid, it is emergency relief funding from Congress.

Are CARES Act Emergency funds taxable?

The Internal Revenue Service has released a [FAQ](#) which indicates the funds are not taxable since they are "qualified disaster relief payments." Please visit the [FAQ](#) for additional guidance.

What can I do if I am not eligible for CARES Act Emergency funding, but have need?

TC recognizes that the need for student support extends beyond what is allowed through the federal CARES Act and has set aside a limited amount of institutional funds to support international, undocumented, and DACA students as well as any student who was exclusively taking spring semester online courses prior to March 13, 2020. These institutional funds are currently available through the [Wendy M. Dressel Student Emergency Fund](#) application process.

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