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Date of Last Update: September 15, 2020

### Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Reporting- Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students

Section 18004(e) of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act” or the “Act”), Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281 (March 27, 2020), directs institutions receiving funds under Section 18004 of the Act to submit (in a time and manner required by the Secretary) a report to the Secretary describing the use of funds distributed from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (“HEERF”). Section 18004(c) of the CARES Act requires institutions to use no less than 50 percent of the funds received from Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including eligible expenses under a student’s cost of attendance such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care). On April 9, 2020, the Department published documents related to the Emergency Financial Aid Grants, including a letter from Secretary Betsy DeVos, a form Certification and Agreement for signing and returning by institutions to access the funds, and a list of institutional allocations under 18004(a)(1).

The Certification and Agreement directs each institution applying for HEERF funds to comply with Section 18004(e) of the CARES Act and submit an initial report (the “30-day Fund Report”) to the Secretary thirty (30) days from the date of the institution’s Certification and Agreement to the Department. The Department will provide instructions for providing the required information to the Secretary in the near future. In the meantime, each HEERF participating institution must post the information listed below on the institution’s primary website. The Department would like to receive the most current information from the date when the institution received its allocation for emergency financial aid grants to students, and the institution should have received its allocation within a few days after submitting the Certification and Agreement. Accordingly, the following information is being provided to comply with the “30-day Fund Report” and will be periodically updated at minimum, every 45 days thereafter:

1. Sunstate Academy and Jones Technical Institute acknowledges that they have signed and returned to the Department the Certification and Agreement and provides assurance that it intends to use no less than 50 percent of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provider Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.
2. The total amount of funds that the institution has received from the Department pursuant to the institution’s Certification and Agreement for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students is as follows:

Sunstate Academy/Jones Technical Institute OPE ID #02524000: \$407,389

3. The total amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants distributed to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES act as of June 12, 2020 is as follows:

Sunstate Academy/Jones Technical Institute OPE ID #02524000: \$407,389

4. The estimated total number of students at the institution eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the higher Education Act of 1965 and thus eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act is as follows:

Sunstate Academy/Jones Technical Institute OPE ID #02524000: 452 students

5. The total number of students who have received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act is as follows:

Sunstate Academy/Jones Technical Institute OPE ID #02524000: 452 students

As of August 13, 2020, all checks issued have been negotiated; leaving our CARES bank account with a zero balance.

6. The method used by the institution to determine which students receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants and how much they would receive under section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act is as follows:

### **Distribution of Student Grants under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Policy and Procedures**

#### **Preamble**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides emergency assistance and health care response for individuals, families, and businesses affected by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. The CARES Act includes the provision of approximately \$12.56 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. Institutions of higher education are to receive an allocated share of this fund under a formula based on student enrollment described in the Act and to be administered by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. The CARES Act requires, in part, that “Institutions of higher education shall use no less than 50 percent of such funds to provide emergency financial aid grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including eligible expenses under a student’s cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care).”

As announced by the Secretary, the institution is to receive \$407,389 for the purposes of making emergency financial aid grants to its students. This document sets forth the institution's plan for allocating, disbursing and accounting for the Grant Fund.

Just as COVID-19 does not discriminate on the basis of socioeconomic status, Sunstate Academy and Jones Technical Institute recognize that a wide array of individuals and industries have been adversely impacted by COVID-19. The institution recognizes that our students' lives have been severely disrupted by coronavirus. Many are facing financial challenges and struggling to make ends meet. The institution also recognizes that student financial records previously submitted to the institution are dated and may not reflect a student's current circumstances. In order to provide financial relief to as many students as possible, the institution will distribute emergency financial aid grants from the Grant Fund equally to all students who were actively enrolled as of April 22, 2020, under the terms more fully described below.

### **Allocation of Grant Funds Formula**

The total allocation of the Grant Funds will be split equally between all eligible students currently enrolled in a Title IV eligible program. In accordance with guidance published by the U.S. Department of Education, student grants will be distributed only to students who are Title IV eligible. An eligible currently enrolled student includes any student that has not been withdrawn, to include students progressing via temporary distance education. Students who are on an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) due to issues related to COVID-19 that began on or after March 13, 2020 are considered actively enrolled and are eligible to receive the grants. The currently attending student roster will be determined by taking a census of the student body as of April 22, 2020.

### **Awarding Policy**

The institution will prepare a roster of eligible currently enrolled students as of April 22, 2020. The student grant award amount for each eligible student will be determined by dividing (i) the amount of the Grant Fund by (ii) the total number of eligible students.

The student grant award amount for each student will be disbursed in two equal payments to cover the affected time period. Each disbursement will be processed in the sequence listed below:

1. First Disbursement Date: May 13, 2020
2. Second Disbursement Date: June 12, 2020

The rationale for two disbursements is to encourage proper use of funds and to sustain the student body through the affected term/period of enrollment disrupted by COVID-19. Students who withdraw or are terminated from the institution after the First Disbursement Date but before the Second Disbursement Date will not be eligible to receive their second disbursement.

### **Awarding Procedures**

The institution's Director of Compliance will oversee the awarding and currently enrolled student census. The Financial Services departments will request checks for each student through the normal check requesting procedures.

The total allocation of the Grant Fund will be transferred to a separate, dedicated account. When the individual student disbursement checks are requested and produced by the accounting department, the funds will then be transferred to the Student Funds Account so that students may cash or deposit to their personal accounts.

### **Disbursement Procedures**

Prior to the First Disbursement Date, the institution will make every reasonable effort to contact all eligible students to notify them of the emergency financial aid grant to which they are entitled. Included with this notice will be an attestation statement to be signed by the student wherein the student shall acknowledge that the emergency grant funds will be used to cover expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child-care. This notice and acknowledgment statement will be sent to the student's email address on record with the institution. Students will complete the acknowledgment statement via DocuSign or send a signed copy of the statement to the institution.

No grant checks will be disbursed to any otherwise eligible student who fails to or refuses to sign the acknowledgment statement.

Once the emergency student grant checks are printed, the Financial Services teams will notify all students of the availability of their funding. Students may request to pick up their checks at the institution, otherwise the institution will mail the check to the address listed on the student's attestation statement. The institution will provide instructions for those students choosing to pick up the check at the institution which will include available pick-up times as well as safe social distancing requirements. In addition to the emergency grant fund checks, the students will receive an instruction letter from the institution in the form attached as Exhibit B.

### **Direct Point of Contacts**

The following individuals at each campus are responsible for answering questions from students and family members regarding student emergency grants under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund:

- Aimee Hammond, Vice President – ahammond@sunstate.edu
- Dixie Radar, Business Officer – dradar@sunstate.edu
- Lori Stowers, Director of Compliance – lstowers@sunstate.edu

### **Accounting & Recordkeeping**

The Financial Services teams, including Campus Directors, Business Officers and Financial Aid Officers at each campus will be responsible for the administration of the Emergency Financial Aid Grants. All disbursements will be overseen by the Executive Management team including the President, Vice President and the Director of Compliance.

The institution's Director of Compliance is responsible for all accounting and recordkeeping associated with the administration of the student emergency grants. The

Director of Compliance shall maintain an Excel spreadsheet to track all disbursements by student. The Director of Compliance shall also be responsible for completing all reports that must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education as required by the CARES Act and any future guidance from the Department.

### **Grants of Unclaimed Funds**

It is the institution's intention that the entire Grant Fund will be disbursed to all eligible students equally in the manner set forth above. However, the institution recognizes that there may be some amounts allocated to students that do not ultimately get disbursed as intended. For example, the institution may not be able to timely locate an eligible student on an approved leave of absence. It is possible that an eligible student may decline the grant funds or refuse to sign the attestation statement.

In the event that there is any amount remaining from the Grant Fund as of July 31, 2020, the institution will disburse such remaining funds via additional emergency need-based grants. The institution will send an email to all eligible students informing them of the availability of additional grants. The email will include an application form to be completed by students seeking to be considered for an additional emergency need-based grant.

A committee consisting of the Institution's President, Vice President and Director of Compliance will decide which students shall receive an additional emergency need-based grant and the amount of such grant. The maximum amount of any additional emergency need-based grant shall not exceed \$1,000.00, and there is no minimum dollar amount. The committee will consider the information to be provided on the student's grant application as well as information already on record with the institution such as the student's dependency status, family size, expected family contribution, unmet financial need, program length, satisfactory academic progress, and expected completion date.

7. The institution will provide the following instructions, directions or guidance to its students concerning the Emergency Financial Aid Grants:
  - a. Attestation Statement: Prior to distribution, each student will receive and be obligated to sign and return the following attestation statement:

**Student Grants under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund**  
**Attestation**

**Student Name:**

**ID #**

**Current Mailing Address:**

**Phone Number**

**Email Address**

**Amount of Award: \$**

**Date:**

I accept the grant award provided to me from funding made available to my institution under the CARES Act.

I certify the following:

- All information provided in this Attestation is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- I am eligible for Title IV Federal Financial Aid.
- I understand that any money awarded from this grant is to be used for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. These expenses include eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance in the calculation of Federal Financial Aid, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care. The money I am receiving is intended to cover my expenses related to the disruption of campus operations.
- I understand that the grant award listed above will be distributed to me in two equal installments scheduled to be paid on or about May 13, 2020 and June 12, 2020, and that if I withdraw or my enrollment is terminated before the second disbursement date I will not be eligible to receive the second disbursement.

I understand that if I choose to have my grant check mailed to me it will be mailed to the address listed above. I will immediately notify the institution if at any time my address changes. I further understand that if the institution is unable to locate me and/or distribute any part of my grant award after making reasonable efforts that I will forfeit such funds and that the institution may use those funds to make additional grants to other students.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

- b. Notification Letter: Eligible students will receive the following notification letter with their receipt of emergency financial aid grant checks:

May 13, 2020

Student Name:

Current Mailing Address:

Re: Student Emergency Relief Grant

Dear Student,

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides emergency assistance for students who are in need of financial support for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus pandemic. Under the CARES Act, the institution has received grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education for the purposes of making emergency financial aid grants to its students.

Enclosed please find an emergency financial aid grant check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_. This is a grant, which means that this amount does not need to be repaid. Your acceptance of these grant funds is conditioned upon your agreement to use the funds for the purposes allowed under the CARES Act and as agreed upon by you in the attestation statement that you previously provided to the institution. In particular, you understand that the money awarded from this grant is to be used for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. These expenses include eligible expenses under a student's cost of attendance in the calculation of Federal Financial Aid, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare. The money you are receiving is intended to cover your expenses related to the disruption of campus operations.

We hope that you and your family and friends are safe and healthy. We are working on plans to allow students and staff to safely and responsibly return to our campus, and we will keep you informed as this situation continues to develop. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,