

Eagles CARES Act Grant Procedures

Identifying and Tracking Eligible Student:

The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) will require the 2019-2020 FAFSA and an online Eagles CARES Act Grant Application for awarding purposes. The Office of Institutional Research identified students who were not enrolled in an exclusively online program as of March 13, 2020. The cohort that was identified as potentially eligible was placed in PeopleSoft student group FAO1. In addition to the student group FAO1, to better track student cohorts, the Office of Financial Aid created two tracking checklists for students: COVID and COVIDA. COVID was assigned to students who were identified as not currently being eligible per the following criteria: international students, exclusively online programs, DACA students, non-degree programs, any certificate programs that did not qualify for Title IV Aid, or had unresolved Title IV issues on their FAFSA. COVIDA was assigned to students who were identified as being eligible per an official FAFSA or students we thought would be eligible to complete a FAFSA. The FAO1 student group and the COVID and COVIDA checklists will be utilized as well during the awarding process.

Awarding Process:

The online Eagles CARES Act Grant Application will be completed by students online. Once students certify they have experienced expenses due to COVID-19 and submit the application, the data will be stored in a table in Peoplesoft. The Eagle App table will be the base for our awarding process. It will be joined with the COVID checklist table, student group table, and the student award table to verify eligibility prior to awarding. The Office of Financial Aid will process an initial \$500 award for each eligible application every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday until the application deadline of June 1, 2020. Starting June 2, 2020, the Office of Financial Aid will pull data on all applications deemed eligible for the Emergency CARES Act Grant Funds and will perform data analysis of the applicants' responses who indicated expenses other than housing, meals, travel, and online learning expenses. Based on responses provided, additional grant funds may be awarded to the students. Applications will be verified again to ensure the students remain eligible to participate in programs under section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Disbursing Process:

Once Eagles CARES Act Grants are awarded to students, they will be disbursed to the students' USM student account. Business Services has set up the Eagles CARES Act Grant to be refundable only. It will not apply to any outstanding balance the student may owe the university as it will be automatically processed as a refund for each student. Similar to the awarding cycle, Business Services will generate refunds every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The refunds will be processed using BankMobile Disbursements according to the students' selected refund preference.