

MAINE MARITIME ACADEMY

A College of Engineering, Management, Science, and Transportation

CARES Act Emergency Relief Fund Final Report

The CARES Act passed by Congress and signed by the President on March 27, 2020 included \$438,284 for Maine Maritime Academy to provide emergency financial aid grants to our students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. The Certification and Agreement was granted on April 27, 2020. A preliminary report was submitted on May 26, 2020 in compliance with Section 18004(e) of the CARES Act. Maine Maritime Academy is submitting the following information to the Secretary for the final reporting period ending June 30, 2020.

HOW GRANTS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO STUDENTS:

Maine Maritime Academy determined that the first priority for funding would be for need-based requests, especially from those who are Pell-eligible. In addition, the Academy has a small group of seniors in the majors tied to an unlimited U.S. Coast Guard license who were required to return to campus in late May to complete course requirements as required under U.S. Coast Guard regulations. We reserved funds from the CARES Act allocation to reimburse these students for travel expenses. Once these funds were disbursed, it was the Academy's intent to divide the remaining funds between all other eligible students who did not already receive a grant. However, need-based requests exceeded the total amount of funding provided by the CARES Act.

To ensure funds were provided to students quickly, a priority deadline for the first round of applications was set for May 20, 2020 (14 days from MMA's initial announcement). Students were informed of the opportunity to apply via an email sent on May 5, 2020, social media posts on both the main Academy Facebook page and the Parent Association Facebook Page and a posting on the Academy's website under both the Financial Aid and COVID-19 Response pages. That posting is linked here: <https://mainemaritime.edu/campus-safety/coronavirus/cares-act-higher-education-emergency-relief-fund/> and included in Attachment D of this report.

The application was posted on-line but accommodations were made to ensure accessibility to the process for those students with limited internet connectivity. The application required students to provide only information that was necessary to informing an award decision, communicating that decision back to the student, and disbursing any approved award, including:

- Name
- Student ID number
- Email, mailing address and phone
- Requested expense(s) and amount(s)

- Brief justification of need including connection of expense(s) for which emergency funding is being requested to disruption of campus operations.

In submitting the application, the student also was required to attest to the following:

- They are Title IV eligible.
- The information provided in their application was complete and accurate.

MMA prioritized applications from Pell Grant recipients first and then other students with need who have been impacted financially by COVID-19 in the above-mentioned categories.

Applications were reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The applications indicated that applications could be received through September 1, 2020; however, they also noted that priority would be given to requests submitted by May 20, 2020 and as funds were limited, funds might not be available to later applicants.

THE AMOUNT OF EACH GRANT AWARDED TO EACH STUDENT:

Please see the attached spreadsheet.

HOW THE AMOUNT OF EACH GRANT WAS CALCULATED:

The Emergency Relief Fund Committee, chaired by the Director of Financial Aid, will review each application and determine the allocation of grants based on the total amount of funds requested as well as the circumstances of each student. The Committee includes the Dean of Student Services and the Student Accounts Manager. In addition to eligibility, priority for student emergency funds was based on:

- The urgency of the situation.
- The student's overall financial picture and level of hardship.

Only students who are or could be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), may receive emergency financial aid grants. If a student has filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student has demonstrated eligibility to participate in programs under Section 484 the HEA. Students who have not filed a FAFSA but who are eligible to file a FAFSA also may receive emergency financial aid grants. As the committee did not have a way to assess need without the FAFSA, applicants for the need-based grants were encouraged to file a FAFSA to be considered. The maximum amount of grant funds allocated to an individual student is capped at \$6000.

185 applications for the funds were received before the end of May 2020. The Emergency Relief Funds Committee met and reviewed all of the applications received by May 14, 2020. The committee prioritized the applications as follows: first, applications from Pell recipients, then applications from those who had financial need but did not receive the federal PELL grant, and then all other applicants.

Each individual application was reviewed based on the student's current financial aid situation, if a refund was currently listed on their student account, and on the individual's situation or extenuating circumstance as described in the application.

The committee analyzed each category the student was requesting funds for and their reason of why they needed it. The committee took loss of work study opportunities, loss of summer co-op earnings, having to travel back to campus to complete a final senior course, unexpected travel arrangements to return home on short notice and other factors into account in determining the final award amounts.

The committee did allocate a few awards larger than the student's request as the members were aware of higher costs associated with a certain category (travel) or if there was a recent death of parent or the student is a ward of the court. Nine applications for grants were not approved by the Committee.

INFORMATION OR DIRECTIONS GIVEN TO STUDENTS ABOUT THE GRANTS:

Maine Maritime Academy communicated the availability of emergency funds and the application process on the MMA website and in an email communication to students. The email was sent to students from the Director of Financial Aid on May 5, 2020. The Academy's website was updated to include information about the application process on both the Financial Aid main page and the COVID-19 response page – this information is linked here: <https://mainemaritime.edu/campus-safety/coronavirus/cares-act-higher-education-emergency-relief-fund/>

After applications were reviewed by MMA's Emergency Relief Fund Committee, the Director of Financial Aid sent an email letter to each applicant informing them of the status of their request. The list of grant amounts and recipients and mailing addresses were sent to the Finance office; checks were sent directly to students beginning May 26, 2020. The final set of checks were mailed June 18, 2020.

A final email, explaining the disbursement process and indicating that all funds had been disbursed, was sent to all students by the Director of Financial Aid on May 29, 2020. The Academy website was also updated with this information which can be viewed here: <https://mainemaritime.edu/campus-safety/coronavirus/5-29-20-cares-act-funding-report-from-kathy-heath/> and in Attachment E.

By May 27, 2020, 185 applications were received. The Emergency Relief Fund Committee met twice and reviewed all of the applications. The committee prioritized the applications: first, applications from Pell recipients, then from those who had financial need but did not receive the federal Pell grant, and then all other applicants.

Each individual application was reviewed based on the student's current financial aid situation, whether a refund was currently listed on their student account, and on the individual's situation or extenuating circumstance as described in the application.

The committee analyzed each category in which each student was requesting funds and their reason for why they needed it. The committee took loss of work study opportunities, loss of summer co-op earnings, having to travel back to campus to complete a final senior course, unexpected travel arrangements to return home on short notice and other factors into account in determining the final award amounts. A total of 176 requests for financial aid grants were approved. Nine requests were denied.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Procedures Regarding Administration of Student Emergency Funds Supported by CARES Act Monies
- B. Grant Disbursement Spreadsheet
- C. Application
- D. Email announcement of availability of CARES Act Funds published on website and sent to students via email on May 5, 2020.

Attachment A:

Procedures Regarding Administration of Student Emergency Funds Supported by CARES Act Monies

The CARES Act passed by Congress and signed by the President on March 27, 2020 included \$438,284 for Maine Maritime Academy to provide emergency financial aid grants to our students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus.

MMA will communicate the availability of emergency funds and the application process on the MMA website, in an email communication to all students and via social media accounts. To ensure funds are provided to students quickly, a priority deadline for the first round of applications has been set for May 20, 2020 (15 days from initial announcement). The application process will be available online but accommodations will be made to ensure accessibility to the process for those students with limited connectivity. The application will require the student only to provide information that is necessary to informing an award decision, communicating that decision back to the student, and disbursing any approved award, including:

- Name
- Student ID number
- Email, mailing address and phone
- Requested expense(s) and amount(s)
- Brief justification of need including connection of expense(s) for which emergency funding is being requested to disruption of campus operations.

In submitting the application, the student must also attest to the following:

- They are Title IV eligible.
- The information provided in their application was complete and accurate.

MMA will prioritize applications from Pell Grant recipients first and then other students with need who have been impacted financially by COVID19 in the above-mentioned categories. Applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Applications may be received through September 1, 2020; however, priority will be given to requests submitted by 5/20/2020 and as funds are limited, funds may not be available to later applicants.

In addition to eligibility, priority for student emergency funds should be based on:

- The urgency of the situation.
- The student's overall financial picture and level of hardship.

The maximum award will not exceed \$6000; however, as the Academy plans to award as many qualified requests as possible, it is likely that most grants will be significantly less than \$6000.

Once need-based grants are disbursed in the initial round, the Academy plans to divide the remaining funds among all other eligible students who did not already receive a grant. Part-time students will receive a smaller grant than full-time students.

Only students who are or could be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), may receive emergency financial aid grants. If a student has filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student has demonstrated eligibility to participate in programs under Section 484 the HEA. Students who have not filed a FAFSA but who are eligible to file a FAFSA also may receive emergency financial aid grants. As the Academy does not have a way to assess need without the FAFSA, applicants will be encouraged to file a FAFSA to be considered. Prior to disbursement of remaining funds to all other eligible students, the Director of Financial Aid will confirm eligibility of each recipient.

The Emergency Relief Fund Committee, chaired by the Director of Financial Aid, will determine the allocation of grants based on the total amount of funds requested as well as the circumstances of each student. The Committee includes the Dean of Student Services and the Student Account Manager.

The Director of Financial Aid will send an email letter to all applicants informing them of the status of their request. She will submit to Finance a check request, authorized by the VPSA/EM, with an attached list of student names, ID#s, addresses and amounts, each time the committee reviews a batch of applications. Finance will provide a copy of the check to be attached to the application and kept in the Emergency Grant files.

The Director of Financial Aid will provide the VP for Financial and Institutional Services with a report to submit to the Secretary of Education prior to May 27, 2020 (30 days after we submitted our certification) and every 45 days thereafter. This report will include how the grants were distributed to students, the amount of each grant awarded to each student, and how the amount of each grant was calculated. The VP will add documentation that the Academy has continue to pay employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures to the greatest extent practicable. The Director of Financial Aid will keep documentation of all grant applications and awards for this program for 5 years.

Attachment B:

Available to Department of Education upon request.

Attachment C:

CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Application

The CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund was created to provide relief to students experiencing recent financial hardship related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID 19. The grants are emergency funds for expenses students enrolled for the spring semester on campus at MMA incurred which are directly related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child-care. These expenses must occur on or after March 5th, 2020.

Please note that submitting an application does not guarantee an award.

Students wishing to apply for this grant should complete the on-line application here

Applications may be received through September 1, 2020; however, priority will be given to requests submitted by 5/18/2020 and as funds are limited, funds may not be available to later applicants.

Complete the information below and submit through the online application submission. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and applicants will be notified of decision via MMA student email. Final award amounts will be based on needs and available funding.

Please contact the Director of Financial Aid, Kathy Heath, at Kathy.Heath@mma.edu with any questions regarding this federal grant program or your application.

Name: _____ **Student ID:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

MMA Email: _____ **Contact Number:** _____

Emergency Expense related to disruption of campus operations:

Type of Expense	Dollar Amount Requested
Course Materials/Supplies/Technology	
Housing	
Transportation	
Healthcare	
Food	
Childcare	
Other (Please Specify):	
Total Request Must Be Less Than \$6000	

Please provide a brief justification of need including connection of expense(s) for which emergency funding is being requested to disruption of campus operations:

For students who are not Pell grant recipients, please provide a description of job loss/family business closure or other significant financial impact of the COVID-19 virus.

Agreement:

I certify that, for the purposes of determining eligibility for federal Title IV funds, I:

- Am a U.S. citizen or national, permanent resident, or other eligible noncitizen
- Have a valid Social Security Number
- Have registered for Selective Service (if required)
- Do not have a federal or state conviction for drug possession or sale, with certain time limitations
- Do not owe an overpayment on Title IV grants or loans
- Am not in default on a Title IV loan
- Have repaid Title IV loan amounts in excess of annual or aggregate limits if obtained inadvertently
- Have not fraudulently received Title IV loans in excess of annual or aggregate limits
- Have returned fraudulently obtained Title IV funds if convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to charges

By signing this self-certification, I verify that I meet all of the criteria listed above in order to be considered eligible for federal Title IV eligibility and have incurred expenses directly related to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus, as referenced by the guidance for the CARES Act Higher Education Relief Fund. I also understand that submission of this application does not guarantee that a grant will be awarded nor that the requested amount will be granted.

******SIGNATURE OR CHECKBOX IF ELECTRONIC******

Remember to apply for financial aid for 2020-2021 by completing your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at studentaid.gov.

All funds will be sent via check to the above address.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Attachment D:

5/5/20 | CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund

Dear Students,

The CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund was created to provide relief to students experiencing recent financial hardship related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19. The federal Department of Education has established criteria for the types of expenses that qualify for these funds. The grants are emergency funds for expenses that students enrolled for the spring semester on campus at MMA incurred which are directly related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care. **These expenses must occur on or after March 5th, 2020.**

MMA will prioritize application from Pell Grant recipients first and then other students with need who have been impacted financially by COVID-19 in the above-mentioned categories. Applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that submitting an application does not guarantee an award.

The maximum award cannot exceed \$6,000; however, as we hope to award as many qualified requests as possible, it is likely that most need-based grants will be less than \$1,500.

Only students who are or could be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), may receive emergency financial aid grants. If a student has filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student has demonstrated eligibility to participate in programs under Section 484 the HEA. Students who have not filed a FAFSA but who are eligible to file a FAFSA also may receive emergency financial aid grants. As we do not have a way to assess need without the FAFSA, applicants will be encouraged to file a FAFSA to be considered. Remember to apply for financial aid for 2020-2021 by completing your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at studentaid.gov.

After need-based grants have been disbursed, the Academy will disburse the remaining funds among all students who are eligible to receive a grant and who have not already received a need-based grant. Please note: The Department of Education has advised us that these emergency grants will likely be considered taxable income.

Students wishing to apply for this grant should complete the online application.

If a student does not have internet access to complete an application online, they should contact Kathy Heath, Director of Financial Aid, at 207-326-2339 to request that a paper copy of the application be mailed to them. The Emergency Relief Fund Committee, chaired by the Director of Financial Aid, will determine the allocation of grants based on the total amount of funds requested as well as the circumstances of each student. Applications may be received through September 1, 2020; however, priority will be given to requests submitted by May 20, 2020, and as funds are limited, funds may not be available to later applicants.

In addition to eligibility, priority for student emergency funds should be based on:

- The urgency of the situation

- The student's overall financial picture and level of hardship

Complete the application and submit online. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and applicants will be notified of decision via MMA student email. Final award amounts will be based on need and available funding.

To meet CARES Act requirements, colleges must report how grants were distributed, how award amounts were calculated and any instruction/directions given to students.

Please contact the Director of Financial Aid, Kathy Heath, at Kathy.Heath@mma.edu with any questions regarding this federal grant program or your application.

Sincerely,

Kathy Heath
Director of Financial Aid

5/29/20 | CARES Act Funding Report from Kathy Heath

Dear Students,

As you know, the CARES Act passed by Congress and signed by the President on March 27, 2020 included \$438,284 for Maine Maritime Academy to provide emergency financial aid grants to our students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. I'm writing to report on how the funds were distributed.

HOW GRANTS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO STUDENTS:

Maine Maritime Academy determined that the first priority for funding would be for need-based requests, especially from those who are Pell-eligible. In addition, the Academy has a small group of seniors in the majors tied to an unlimited U.S. Coast Guard license who were required to return to campus in late May to complete course requirements as required under U.S. Coast Guard regulations. We reserved funds from the CARES Act allocation to reimburse these students for travel expenses. It was the Academy's intent, once these funds were disbursed, to divide any remaining funds between all other eligible students who did not already receive a grant. However, need-based requests exceeded the total amount of funding provided by the CARES Act.

To ensure funds were provided to students quickly, a priority deadline for the first round of applications was set for May 20, 2020 (14 days from MMA's initial announcement). Students were informed of the opportunity to apply via an email sent on May 5, 2020; social media posts on both the main Academy Facebook page and the Parent Association Facebook Page; and a posting on the Academy's website under both the Financial Aid and COVID-19 Response pages.

The Emergency Relief Fund Committee, chaired by the Director of Financial Aid, reviewed each application and determined the allocation of grants based on the total amount of funds requested as well as the circumstances of each student. The Committee included the Dean of Student Services and the Student Accounts Manager. In addition to eligibility, priority for student emergency funds were based on:

- The urgency of the situation
- The student's overall financial picture and level of hardship

Only students who are or could be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), may receive emergency financial aid grants. If a student has filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student has demonstrated eligibility to participate in programs under Section 484 the HEA. Students who had not filed a FAFSA

but who were eligible to file a FAFSA also could receive emergency financial aid grants. As the committee did not have a way to assess need without the FAFSA, applicants for the need-based grants were encouraged to file a FAFSA to be considered. A total of 953 students enrolled in MMA at the time of the transition to remote learning in March of 2020 were eligible to request/receive an emergency financial aid grant. The maximum amount of grant funds allocated to an individual student was capped at \$6,000. Awards ranged from \$500 to \$6,000.

By May 27, 2020, 185 applications were received. The Emergency Relief Fund Committee met and reviewed all of the applications. The committee prioritized the applications: first, applications from Pell recipients, then from those who had financial need but did not receive the federal Pell grant, and then all other applicants.

Each individual application was reviewed based on the student's current financial aid situation, whether a refund was currently listed on their student account, and on the individual's situation or extenuating circumstance as described in the application.

The committee analyzed each category the student was requesting funds for and their reason for why they needed it. The committee took loss of work study opportunities, loss of summer co-op earnings, having to travel back to campus to complete a final senior course, unexpected travel arrangements to return home on short notice and other factors into account in determining the final award amounts. A total of 176 requests for financial aid grants were approved. The award amounts did vary from the request in some cases. Nine requests were denied. Students were notified by email regarding the response to their application and checks were sent directly to students beginning May 21, 2020.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding the CARES Act fund distribution.

Sincerely,

Kathy Heath
Director of Financial Aid