

# CARES Act Report

The well-being and health of our students, staff, and faculty are our top priority. To support our students' financial well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic, Wentworth Institute of Technology is providing emergency financial aid grants to eligible undergraduate and graduate students from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. To comply with reporting requirements and to offer transparency to our community, we are providing details about our use of these funds.

On April 14, 2020, Wentworth Institute of Technology signed and returned to the Department of Education the Certification and Agreement for Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding and intends to use no less than 50 percent of the funds received under § 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.

On April 22, 2020 the University was granted \$1,734,786 from the Department pursuant to the institution's Certification and Agreement for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students.

Wentworth began distributing CARES Act funds to eligible students starting the week of May 18, 2020 and completed distributions by the week of June 1, 2020.

## Emergency Financial Aid Grants

Grants distributed to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act as of June 25, 2020:

Total amount of funds the institution was granted for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students: \$1,734,786

Total amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants distributed to students: \$1,734,786

Estimated total number of student eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965: 1,869

Total number of students who have received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant: 1,869

# CARES Act FAQ

## The Federal CARES Act

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides economic relief to eligible 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). Students may use these funds for any of these purposes without the need to account back Wentworth as to actual use of the grant funds.

Wentworth is committed to providing this economic relief money directly to our eligible students in as transparent and expeditious a manner as possible. Undoubtedly, there will be questions regarding who is eligible to receive these funds, how the money will be distributed to students, and how receipt of CARES Act funding may impact a student's other finances. Please review the FAQ items below for additional guidance.

- **What are the eligibility criteria to qualify for CARES Act funding?**

- Based on guidance provided by the Department of Education, students must meet the following eligibility parameters to qualify for CARES Act funds:
  - Be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. (e.g., be eligible to receive federal financial aid funds such as the Pell Grant, Direct Loans, etc.).
  - Not enrolled in an exclusively online program on or prior to March 13, 2020.
  - Be a degree-seeking student enrolled in 1 or more credit hours for the summer 2020 term.
- Wentworth has also deemed the following student's credit hours not to be eligible for CARES Act funds:
  - The credit hours of students registered for COOP 3000, 4699 or 5000 in the summer 2020 term are **not eligible**.
  - The credit hours of undergraduate students who are covered by a dependent or tuition exchange scholarship in the summer 2020 term are **not eligible**.

If the University is uncertain that a student has met all the eligible criteria noted above, Wentworth will make reasonable efforts to determine if the student meets the criteria under the CARES Act in cooperation with such student. If such eligibility is not reasonably confirmed by Wentworth, funds will not be made available under the CARES Act to that student.

- **How will I be notified that I have received my Emergency Grant funds?**

- Eligible students will be sent an email notifying them if they are approved for funding.

- **How do I receive my Emergency Grant funds?**

- The University will automatically issue a grant of \$60.00 per credit hour to each eligible student **and an additional \$23.16 per credit hour for Pell Grant recipients.** If a student's direct deposit record does not exist, funds will be mailed to the student's permanent mailing address.

- **Why did I get this money?**

- The Department of Education has made CARES Act funds available to eligible students who incurred expenses as a result of COVID-19 related disruptions to their campus operations. In recognition that all Wentworth students have been disrupted in terms of their employment, housing and other matters, the University has determined it will grant the monies received under the CARES Act to support all eligible students enrolled in the summer 2020 term for their emergency needs under § 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act at \$60.00 per credit hour. **Based on need the University also provided an additional \$23.16 per credit hour to Pell Grant recipients.**

- **How was the amount I received determined?**

- Wentworth determined that sharing such emergency assistance across the University of its eligible student body was the most equitable method given that COVID-19 has impacted everyone. Each eligible student will receive a grant disbursement of the CARES Act funds which will have the effect of helping with emergency needs. Wentworth is allocating these funds based on the estimated enrolled credit hours after the add/drop date of May 11, 2020 for CPCE students and May 13, 2020 for day undergraduate students for the summer 2020 term on a ratable basis, holding back a small amount for other potential student needs. Based on this, a grant of \$60 per credit hour enrolled this summer term up to 20 credits per eligible student will be awarded. The Student Financial Aid Office determined the allocation of any remaining funds based on the greatest financial need of the eligible students. In the event Wentworth is over allocated, such costs will be bore by the University.

- **I got a payment from Wentworth in connection with this program. Does this mean my Wentworth account balance has been paid off?**

- No. Distribution of CARES Act funds is made directly to students and not applied by the University toward any outstanding balances that may still be owed by the student. As such, receipt of these funds does not indicate the recipient has satisfied their financial obligations to Wentworth for any debts incurred during the summer 2020 term or any terms prior. Please check your current account

balance to determine what you may still owe.

- **Can I use this money to pay off my Wentworth balance?**

- Yes. Wentworth is not authorized to apply CARES Act funds toward any outstanding balances that may still be owed by a student. However, once the funds are received as a refund, students may choose to use the funds to pay off their outstanding account balance.

- **Can Wentworth just apply the funds to my account balance with my approval or permission?**

- No. Federal regulations stipulate that all CARES Act funds must be disbursed directly to the student and may not be applied toward outstanding balances. To use these funds to pay-off an outstanding balance with Wentworth, a student must make a payment to their account through the Student Service Center.

- **Am I eligible to receive CARES Act funds if I have a terminated Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status?**

- No. Guidance issued by the Department of Education indicates that students with a terminated SAP status are not eligible for CARES Act fund distributions.

- **Are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students eligible for CARES Act funds?**

- No. Guidance issued by the Department of Education indicates that students must be eligible to submit a FAFSA in order to qualify for the CARES Act funds. This limits eligibility to U.S. Citizens, Permanent Residents, or other Title IV eligible non-citizens.

- **Are international students eligible for CARES Act funds?**

- No. Guidance issued by the Department of Education indicates that students must be eligible to submit a FAFSA in order to qualify for the CARES Act funds. This limits eligibility to U.S. Citizens, Permanent Residents, or other Title IV eligible non-citizens.

- **Do I have to pay this money back?**

- No. Any funds a student receives from the CARES Act will not need to be repaid.

- **Does this money count against my financial aid package?**

- No. Money from the CARES Act is not considered financial assistance under federal statute, nor Department of Education regulations. As such, these funds will not impact your eligibility for regular financial aid (e.g., grants, scholarships, loans).

- **Is money received from the CARES Act considered taxable income?**

- No. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has announced that emergency financial aid grants under the CARES Act for unexpected expenses, unmet financial need, or expenses related to the disruption of campus operations on account of the COVID-19 pandemic are qualified disaster relief payments under section 139 of the Internal Revenue Code. This grant is not included in your gross income.

- **Who should I contact if I have questions?**

- Contact the Student Service Center at 617-989-4020 or [ssc@wit.edu](mailto:ssc@wit.edu) with questions about CARES Act fund eligibility.