

CARES ACT Report
October 4, 2020 UPDATE

Section 18004(e) of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act” or the “Act”) directs institutions receiving funds under the Act to submit (in a time and manner required by the U. S. Secretary of Education) a report describing the use of funds distributed from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. In accordance with Department of Education guidance, Berry College’s initial report to the Secretary of Education was published on the college’s website on May 22, 2020. Follow-up updates were published on July 6 and August 20, 2020.

This report is being provided to meet the quarterly federal reporting requirement.

The CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) provides direct emergency assistance to students to cover 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). Professional judgement was used to reason that all students would incur additional expenses related to cost of attendance and remote online instruction exceeding amounts of grants.

To achieve the request from the Secretary of Education in her letter dated April 9, 2020, the Berry College strategy to distribute HEERF emphasized the financial need of families and the desire to balance grants to the neediest students while also distributing the funds as broadly as possible.

1. Berry College signed and returned to the Department of Education the Certification and Agreement on April 22, 2020. Through this agreement, Berry College confirmed to the Department of Education that we intend to use no less than 50% of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide emergency financial aid grants to students.
2. Berry College received a disbursement of \$794,906 from the Department of Education corresponding to the 50% of the funds received under Section 18004(a) (1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.
3. As of this report, \$727,099 has been distributed directly to students in the form of emergency financial aid grants. The remaining funds are allocated for additional qualified students and/or students who appeal and are eligible for additional funds to meet emergency expenses as allowed by the CARES Act.
4. The college carefully reviewed all enrolled students and only considered those eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in the Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 for an emergency financial aid grant under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act. Approximately 1,600 enrolled students met the Section 484 criteria and 973 have been awarded an emergency financial aid grant.
5. To ensure emergency grants went to the students with greatest need and distribute the funds to as many students as possible, the college determined that students with an EFC on the 2019 – 2020 FAFSA greater than \$25,000 were not eligible to receive a grant. The college distributed the funds weighted by student need as determined by three factors: estimated family income from

the 2019 – 2020 FAFSA, student work income, and level of student debt. Using this distribution strategy, the average grant distributed to eligible students was \$725 with a range of \$250 to \$1,300.

6. No additional messages were sent to students regarding the CARES Act during this reporting period. Students who had not received a grant but qualified during this awarding period received the same message outlined in the May 22, 2020 report.