

September 30, 2020

Austin College CARES Act Student Aid Reporting Information (Updated September 30, 2020)

Award No. P425E204096

Introduction

On March 27, 2020, the President of the United States signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (H.R. 748), to provide emergency relief funds to organizations and individuals affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF), found in Section 18004 of the CARES Act, provides funding to institutions of higher education “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.” This report provides details on the first award Austin College received under the HEERF, the funds for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.

Acknowledgement of Funding and Certification

Austin College signed and returned the U.S. Department of Education’s Certification and Agreement for these funds on May 4, 2020, and we received our grant award notification on May 11, 2020. In keeping with the terms of the certification, Austin College will use no less than 50 percent of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants directly to students.

Award

Austin College will receive a total of \$1,342,606 under Section 18004(a)(1) of the HEERF, of which at least \$671,303 will be provided directly to students impacted by campus disruptions due to the novel coronavirus.

Funds Awarded to Date

As of September 30, 2020, Austin College has awarded \$564,000 in direct grants to students.

Student Eligibility

Austin College has an estimate of 954 students 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. As of September 30, 2020 Austin College has distributed Emergency Financial Aid Grants to 564 students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

Methods Used to Determine Student Eligibility and Emergency Financial Aid Grant Amounts

The funds were made available to students who were eligible for Title IV federal aid and could not continue to occupy their on campus room, nor access the dining services for 70% of the Spring 2020 semester due to COVID-19. Title IV eligibility is determined by way of the FAFSA application.

Based on the above criteria, 556 students were automatically eligible to receive a \$1,000 Emergency Financial Aid Grant.

Instructions/Directions Given to Students Concerning Emergency Financial Aid Grants

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Email sent on May 15, 2020 to Eligible Students

All of us at Austin College recognize that the COVID-19 global pandemic has drastically altered the lives of everyone in our community this spring. As you navigate through this difficult time, we are pleased to inform you of your eligibility to receive a \$1,000.00 emergency financial aid grant for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. We hope this tax-free emergency grant will be helpful to you.

In order to receive this grant, please take the following actions by May 31:

<https://etcentral.austincollege.edu/#/form/47>

Best wishes for a healthy and safe summer and we look forward to seeing you back here this fall.

Sincerely,

Laurie Coulter
Associate Vice President of Institutional Enrollment If

you have questions call us at 903-813-2008.

Screen Shot of Form

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The screenshot shows the Austin College logo on the left and the title "Spring 2020 COVID-19 Disruption" on the right. Below the header, there are three input fields: "Name", "Austin College ID Number", and "Date". The "Date" field contains the value "5/19/2020". Below the fields is a paragraph of text: "Please complete and submit this form to let us know how you would like your grant funds disbursed." This is followed by a checkbox and a paragraph explaining the purpose of the funds: "I understand that these funds are to be used to cover expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus. Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to items such as: food, housing, course materials, technology, health care and child care. These funds are provided through Austin College from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and are tax-free." Below this is a section titled "Please disburse my grant funds by: (check one)" with two radio button options: "E-Check (Direct Deposit). Sign up for direct deposit of your grant on WebHopper using Direct Deposit Accounts Payable link. You will receive an email notification at the time of payment" and "Please issue a paper check to the mailing address indicated below." The word "OR" is centered between the two options.

Text Message Reminder June 1

On June 1, 2020, eligible students who have yet to complete the online form were sent a reminder via text message that read:

First Name - reminder request your emergency grant from Austin College
<https://etcentral.austincollege.edu/#/form/47>

Email Reminder June 11

The following email was sent to 91 students who had not completed the online form on June 11, 2020

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Smart. Resilient. Good to Each Other.
WE ARE 'ROONATION.



██████

This is your second reminder that you are eligible to receive a \$1,000.00 emergency financial aid grant for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. We hope this tax-free emergency grant will be helpful to you.

In order to receive this grant, please submit the following form by Wednesday, June 17:

<https://etcentral.austincollege.edu/#/form/47>

Text Message Reminder July 7

A second text message reminder was sent to 72 students who had not completed the online form on July 7, 2020.

██████ - 3rd reminder request your \$1,000
emergency grant from Austin College
<https://etcentral.austincollege.edu/#/form/47>