University of Southern Maine

CARES Act Funding Under Section 18004(a)(1) – Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund 50% for Student Aid

45-Day Report

Sponsor: U.S. Department of Education

Award Number: P425E203250

Award Amount: $2,308,123


Report Date: 7/13/2020

Source and Purpose of Funds

The University of Southern Maine (USM) received the above award from the CARES Act passed by Congress on March 27, 2020, to provide emergency financial aid grants to eligible students for their expenses related to the disruption of our campus operations due to coronavirus.

On April 22, 2020, USM submitted the required Certification and Agreement to the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE) committing to use these funds to provide emergency aid directly to our eligible students.

Eligibility Requirements

Consistent with the guidance from the U.S. DOE, eligible students include all students who were enrolled at USM on March 13, 2020, and are eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), with the following exceptions:

- Non-degree seeking students
- International or DACA students
- Employees receiving UMS Employee Tuition benefits
- Early College students
- Students enrolled in exclusively online programs as of March 13, 2020.

Students who did not have a FAFSA on file with the university were able to complete a self-certification form, attesting under the penalty of perjury to meeting the requirements of Section 484 of the HEA.

Distribution Plan

Of USM's $2.3 million award, $35,481 was automatically allocated to the University of Maine School of Law (“Maine Law”), a separate and distinct part of USM. Maine Law's distribution plan and disbursement amounts are addressed in a separate section below.
Consistent with the other institutions within the University of Maine System, of which USM is a part, and in acknowledgement that every one of our students experienced disruption when COVID-19 forced all courses to be transitioned to online delivery, USM will automatically distribute approximately 85 percent of these funds to all eligible students. Award amounts will be tiered as follows based on the number of credit hours in which the student is enrolled as of March 13, 2020:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 5.99</td>
<td>$170</td>
<td>$270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 11.99</td>
<td>$270</td>
<td>$370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12+</td>
<td>$370</td>
<td>$370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining approximately 15 percent of the CARES student aid is being made available by application to eligible students who self-identify with additional need as a result of the disruption to campus operations caused by COVID-19. As we communicated to our students on May 4, 2020, eligible students were allowed to apply for those funds via a [webform](#).

USM will supplement its emergency grant funds with a portion of CARES dollars intended for institutional relief and as part of the Strengthening Institutions Program.

All distributions to students will be made via direct deposit or check. Because the IRS considers the CARES student funds as a “qualified disaster relief payment,” they are not considered taxable income.

### Disbursements To-Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution Type</th>
<th>Number of Eligible Students</th>
<th>Number of Students To Which Aid Has Been Distributed</th>
<th>Total Amount of Aid That Has Been Distributed</th>
<th>Amount of Funds Remaining for Disbursement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automatic</td>
<td>5,692</td>
<td>4,930</td>
<td>$1,720,060</td>
<td>$243,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>5,692</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>$308,912</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,692</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,028,972</td>
<td>$243,670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of students have yet to self-certify their eligibility which has created an undisbursed portion of the automatic payments.

### Maine Law’s Distribution Plan

Maine Law received $35,481 from the total USM award and automatically distributed $150 per student to all eligible students. Maine Law also supplemented its student funds with funds from the institutional portion of the CARES Act. These funds have been used to award emergency grants to students on a case-by-case basis.
**Law School Disbursements To-Date**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution Type</th>
<th>Number of Eligible Students</th>
<th>Number of Students To Which Aid Has Been Distributed</th>
<th>Total Amount of Aid That Has Been Distributed</th>
<th>Amount of Funds Remaining for Disbursement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automatic</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>$31,800</td>
<td>$3,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>238</td>
<td></td>
<td>$31,800</td>
<td>$3,681</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communications to Students**

Below are all communications from the University of Maine System or USM to students concerning the emergency financial aid grants provided through the CARES Act.

- [https://www.maine.edu/health-advisory/community-guidance/students/](https://www.maine.edu/health-advisory/community-guidance/students/)
- [https://usm.maine.edu/president/coronavirus](https://usm.maine.edu/president/coronavirus)