

## ECPI University

### Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) - Policies and Procedures Public notice (updated April 9, 2021 – FINAL NOTICE)

Notices will begin soon regarding HEERF II funding that will be disbursed throughout most of 2021

This public notice is posted on ECPI University's website (<https://www.ecpi.edu/student-consumer-services/HEERF>) in accordance with U.S. Department of Education guidance.

1. ECPI University signed and returned to the U.S. Department of Education the HEERF Certification and Agreement indicating at least 50% of any funding it will use under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act will provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.
2. ECPI University has been authorized to draw up to \$16,762,368 in HEERF funding. At least half (\$8,381,184) of any funds used by the institution will be disbursed directly to eligible students.
3. As of January 10, 2021, ~\$8,000,000 has been disbursed to students (95%).
4. Disbursements were made to every active student on the disbursement dates who met the U.S. Dept. of Education eligibility requirements. ECPI University has approximately 9,500 students enrolled each term.
5. See item 6 for details on counts of eligible students and numbers of students receiving disbursements each term.
6. ECPI University's first goal was to make an initial disbursement to all students who met federal criteria as soon as possible. Students who have not been awarded Title IV financial assistance, or attended online courses only during Spring 2020 are not eligible, consistent with Department of Education directives. New starts who enroll to attend at a ground campus will be eligible when active in courses at the time disbursements are made to students, provided they have also been determined eligible for Title IV federal assistance. In order to support students throughout periods of high COVID impact, disbursements will be allocated each term (module) while funding lasts.
  - a. \$2,732,100, approximately 30% of the minimum allocation to be awarded for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students, was disbursed the week of May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to currently active students for the April term. 6,039 students were determined to be eligible, and 6,039 students received disbursements. Awards were as follows:
    - i. \$500 to 2019-20 Federal Pell Grant Recipients
    - ii. \$300 All Other Eligible Students
    - iii. \$200 Additional to students in university arranged housing and travelled > 50 miles to attend
  - b. \$1,886,450, approximately 23%, was disbursed the week of May 25<sup>th</sup> to currently active students for the May term. 6,412 students were determined to be eligible, and 6,412 students received disbursements. (NOTE: At the time of disbursement, the U.S. Dept of Education provided additional guidance on student eligibility. It is uncertain if that guidance truly expanded eligibility to additional students. ECPI University is not changing disbursement criteria as a result of this guidance). Awards were as follows:
    - i. \$350 to 2019-20 Federal Pell Grant Recipients
    - ii. \$200 All Other Eligible Students
  - c. \$1,808,650, approximately 22%, was disbursed during the week of July 6<sup>th</sup> to currently active students for the June term. 6,300 students were determined to be eligible, and 6,300 students received disbursements. Awards were as follows:
    - i. \$300 to 2019-20 Pell Grant Recipients
    - ii. \$200 to all other eligible students

- d. \$1,494,400, most of the remaining funding available, was disbursed during the week of October 19<sup>th</sup> to currently active students for the October term. 6,045 students were determined to be eligible, and 6,040 (5 opted-out) students received disbursements. Awards were as follows:
    - i. \$300 to Pell Grant recipients at any time in 2020.
    - ii. \$200 to all other eligible students who received any Federal Title IV aid in 2020.
  - e. In December 2020, \$70,550 was disbursed to 270 students from remaining funding for extreme COVID related hardships due to a transition to remote learning, in addition to re-disbursement of recovered and unused prior disbursements.
  - f. A final disbursement totaling \$565,650 was made in March 2021 exhausting the student allocation and using approximately \$175,000 from the institution's funding allocation. 3,771 students were determined to be eligible and received disbursements as follows:
    - i. \$150 to all Pell Grant eligible students.
7. Students have been notified in all communications that any funds they receive must be used for COVID related disruptions they have or will experience in transitioning to online education. Students were advised to keep a record of how these funds are used for eligible educational expenses. Eligible expenses could include:
- a. Improving internet connectivity for a better educational experience
  - b. Acquiring equipment such as modems, routers, and computers to overcome technology barriers education
  - c. Living expenses due to unanticipated job situations in your family (furlough, pay reductions, working fewer hours, job change, etc.)
  - d. Supplies to keep you safe to allow study
  - e. Students were told if they did not anticipate such expenses, to notify the financial aid office. Some students have made such notifications and are not included in student disbursements.

Disbursements will be made by ACH or check depending on whether the student has provided ACH information. Disbursement rosters will be delivered to Wells Fargo to execute disbursements after successfully drawing down funding needed from the U.S. Treasury. A personal email is sent to each recipient with the details for each eligible disbursement, and recorded in the university's Student Information System (SIS). Additionally, these transactions are 'washed' through the student ledgers for tracking and required reporting purposes. Disbursements are being regularly reconciled.