



DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

COMPLIANCE UPDATE

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HIGHER EDUCATION EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND PROGRAMS

A [Federal Register Notice](#) was issued by the USDE May 14, 2021: Eligibility to Receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Programs. The emergency grants provide support for vulnerable students, monitor and suppress the coronavirus, and re-engage students whose education was disrupted by the pandemic.

The Federal Register Notice includes new guidance on the third round of HEERF grants authorized by the [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#). Eligible institutions receiving HEERF fund allocations are public, non-profit and proprietary institutions. Any individual who is or was enrolled at an eligible institution on or after March 13, 2020 is now eligible for HEERF I, II and III funds. A student is not required to be Title IV eligible or be in a Title IV eligible program to receive HEERF funds. Completing a FAFSA is not required for these students. Eligible students include:

- Citizens,
- Permanent residents,
- Refugees,
- Asylum seekers,
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals recipients
- Other DREAMers,
- International students, and
- Undocumented students.

Funds must go to students who have exceptional need. Institutions are encouraged to prioritize domestic undergraduate students.

Institutions are expected to participate in direct outreach to notify students about the opportunity for professional judgment adjustments, because of changes in a student's circumstance. Direct outreach includes active engagement with students. Passive notification, such as posting a notice to the institution's website, is not sufficient.