

Southwestern University
American Rescue Plan Act (ARP)/HEERF III Grant Student Aid Portion Report
October 8, 2021

On May 11, 2021 the Department released the details regarding the availability of Emergency Financial Aid Grants provided under Section (a)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. These notifications provided information for how Southwestern University could request and utilize these funds. The information provided below is in accordance with the May 13, 2021 notice regarding the requirements for reporting the activity related to the emergency funding.

- 1) Southwestern University signed and returned to the Department the Certification and Agreement on June 2, 2021, in which Southwestern University agreed to use no less than 50% of the funds received under Section(a)(1) of the ARP Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants (a.k.a. HEERF III Grants) to students.
- 2) Southwestern University was notified by the Department that it will receive a total amount **\$1,617,561** of funds under Section (a)(1) of the ARP Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants (a.k.a. HEERF III Grants) to students.
- 3) As of October 8, 2021, Southwestern University has distributed a total of **\$1,542,700** of HEERF III Grants provided under Section(a)(1) of the ARP Act to students.
- 4) There were an estimated total of 1511 students at Southwestern University that were eligible to receive HEERF III Grants under the ARP(a)(1) program.
- 5) As of October 8, 2021, a total of **1511** Southwestern University students have been awarded HEERF III Grants under the ARP(a)(1) program.
- 6) To determine which students may receive HEERF III Grants and the amount of the grants under the ARP(a)(1) program, Southwestern University applied the following methodology below.
 - a) All students who were enrolled at Southwestern University in the Fall 2021 semester or who were participating in an approved study abroad program in the Fall of 2021 were identified.
 - b) Using the students identified in section (a), three tiers of students were identified based on the student's Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) as reported on their 2021-22 FAFSA. Students were assigned to a tier based upon their EFC, and the award amount was determined using the following criteria:

Group	Criteria	HEERF III Award Amount
Tier 1	EFC range: 0 - 5,846	\$1,500
Tier 2	EFC range: 5,847 - 22,600	\$1,100
Tier 3	EFC above 22,600 or FAFSA not filed	\$800

Note: For Tier 1 and Tier 2, the EFC ranges that establish eligibility for a Pell Grant and a Texas Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG), respectively, were utilized to assign students to a tier. Due to restrictions on these grants such as maximum Lifetime Eligibility, number of years a student may receive these funds, fund allocation limits, and (in the case of TEG) Texas residency requirements, some students in Tier 1 and Tier 2 may not have actually received a Pell Grant or TEG in the 21-22 school year

- 7) All Southwestern students were notified of the availability of the HEERF III Grants via an email sent to their SU email accounts. In addition, the HEERF grant announcement to the campus was posted on Southwestern University's Financial Aid Office webpage. The announcement contained guidance and instructions to students regarding HEERF Grant eligibility, how to submit their preference for receiving funds using a Payment Preference Form and, in the case of the Tier 3 students, how to submit an application for HEERF funds.

The text for the campus announcement and a sample email that was sent to students are below.

Text for campus announcement on SU Website:

HIGHER EDUCATION EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (HEERF)

Southwestern University is pleased to announce the availability of emergency grants for students from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III). These funds have been made available through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act., and provides direct emergency financial aid grants to students. In total, the university was allocated \$1,617,561 in HEERF III funding for direct grants to students.

Guidance from the US Department of Education indicates that these funds are intended to assist students with any component of the student’s cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or child care.

The guidance directed Southwestern to prioritize students with the greatest need, and develop policies that help to distribute these funds as widely as possible. In addition, the guidance indicated all students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education during the COVID-19 national emergency are eligible for emergency financial aid grants. This includes international students or other non-US citizens.

At Southwestern, this means that to be eligible for a HEERF III Grant a student must be enrolled (in person or online) at Southwestern in the Fall of 2021 or be participating in an approved study abroad/study away program in the Fall of 2021. New students who enroll at Southwestern in the Spring of 2022 may also be eligible, pending the availability of funding.

What do I need to do to receive a HEERF Grant? Students must complete a Payment Preference Form to indicate how they want their funds paid.

How will I know how much HEERF III funding I can receive? Students will be assigned to a tier using the Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) as determined through the 2021-22 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The amounts awarded in each tier, and application requirements, are as follows:

GROUP	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	AWARD AMOUNT PER STUDENT	ACTION REQUIRED?
Tier 1	EFC range: 0 - 5,846	\$1,500	Complete a Payment Preference Form
Tier 2	EFC range: 5,847 - 22,600	\$1,100	Complete a Payment Preference Form
Tier 3	EFC above 22,600 or FAFSA not filed	\$800	Complete a Payment Preference Form

How can I confirm the amount for which I am eligible?

Beginning September 10, 2021 students will be notified of their award amount via their SU email account. Instructions for completing the Payment Preference Form will be included.

What are the options for receiving funds?

HEERF III Grants may be applied to student accounts with written permission from the student or the student may choose to have their funds sent directly to the same bank account where their student account refunds are sent. Therefore, students must indicate their choice using the Payment Preference Form.

Students may select from the following options:

1. Apply the total award to the SU student account
2. Apply a portion of the award to pay off the SU student account balance and send the remaining amount via echeck using the student account refund direct deposit information on file.
3. Send the total award amount via echeck using the student account refund direct deposit information on file.

When and how will I receive my funds?

Payments made using direct deposit will be sent based on the schedule below.

If the Payment Preference Form is submitted:	The payment will be disbursed:
On or before September 17, 2021	On September 22, 2021
After September 17, 2021	Beginning September 24, 2021, as the Payment Preference Form is received.

For students that do not submit a payment preference form or set up direct deposit, paper checks will be mailed to the student's permanent home address on October 1.

May I apply HEERF funds to my outstanding balance on my SU Student Account?

Yes. You may use these funds to help pay the remaining balance on your student account, using the Payment Preference Form.

Southwestern is pleased to be able to assist students during this challenging time. Questions regarding the HEERF Grants may be directed to the following offices:

Questions regarding general HEERF eligibility and the FAFSA.
SU Financial Aid Office: 512-863-1259 or finaid@southwestern.edu

Questions regarding general HEERF eligibility, direct deposits, and student refunds
SU Business Office: 512-863-1928 or studentaccounts@southwestern.edu

Sample email to students:

SUBJECT: Southwestern University - Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) Award Notice

Dear (student name)

We are pleased to inform you of your eligibility to receive a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) Grant. General information and eligibility criteria for the HEERF III Grant was announced to the Southwestern community and is available on the [SU website](#).

Based on the information we have in our records, we have determined that you are eligible for a HEERF III grant in the amount of \$<amount>.

Here's what you need to do now: To receive your funds as soon as possible you must submit a [Payment Preference Form](#). Since HEERF funds can be applied to your student account or sent directly to your bank account, this form allows you to indicate how you want your funds to be handled. You may choose from the following options:

1. Apply the total award to your SU student account.
2. Apply a portion of the award to pay off the SU student account balance and send the remaining amount via echeck using the student account refund direct deposit information on file.
3. Send the total award amount via echeck using the student account refund direct deposit information on file.

[Go to the Payment Preference Form](#)

The funds will be disbursed in accordance with the option you select. Any funds sent via direct deposit will use the same bank account that we have on record for your student account refunds. To set up direct deposit or check the banking information we have on record, please refer to the [Direct Deposit Setup Instructions](#). Payments made using direct deposit will be sent based on the schedule below.

If the Payment Preference Form is submitted:	The payment will be disbursed:
On or before September 17, 2021	On September 22, 2021
After September 17, 2021	Beginning September 24, 2021, as the Payment Preference Form is received.

For students that do not submit a payment preference form or set up direct deposit, paper checks will be mailed to the student's permanent home address on October 1.

If you have any questions about these funds, you may contact either of the offices below:

SU Financial Aid Office - 512-863-1259 or finaid@southwestern.edu

SU Business Office - 512-863-1928 or studentaccounts@southwestern.edu

Sincerely,

James Gaeta, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services

Brenda Thompson, Associate Vice President of Finance and Accounting, Controller