

**Southwestern University**  
**Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) /HEERF II Grant Report**  
**October 8, 2021 - FINAL REPORT**

On January 14, 2021 the US Department of Education released the details regarding the availability of Emergency Financial Aid Grants provided under Section(a)(1) of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA). This notification 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 April 11, 2020, in which Southwestern University agreed to use no less than 50% of the funds received under Section(a)(1) of the CRRSAA Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants (a.k.a. HEERF II Grants) to students.
- 2) Southwestern University was notified by the Department that it will receive a total amount of **\$606,725** of funds under Section(a)(1) of the CRRSAA Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants (a.k.a. HEERF II Grants) to students.
- 3) As of October 8, 2021, Southwestern University has distributed a total of **\$606,725** of HEERF II Grant funds provided under Section(a)(1) of the CRRSAA Act to students.
- 4) There were an estimated total of 1440 students at Southwestern University that were eligible to receive HEERF II Grants under the CRRSAA (a)(1) program. The estimated total of eligible students that are eligible to receive HEERF Grants under the ARP(a)(1) program is pending determination of the eligibility requirements for the funds.
- 5) As of October 8, 2021, a total of **936** Southwestern University students have been awarded HEERF II Grants under the CRRSAA (a)(1) program.
- 6) To determine which students may receive HEERF II Grants and the amount of the grants under the CRRSAA (a)(1) program, Southwestern University applied the following methodology below.
  - a) All students who were enrolled at Southwestern University in the Spring 2021 semester or who were participating in an approved study abroad program in the Spring of 2021 were identified. Students who were not US Citizens or eligible non-citizens were excluded.
  - 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 2020-21 FAFSA. Students were assigned to a tier based upon their EFC, and the award amount was determined using the following criteria:

Group	Criteria	HEERF II Award Amount
Tier 1	EFC range: 0 - 5711	\$1,000
Tier 2	EFC range: 5712 - 22174	\$750
Tier 3	EFC above 22174 or FAFSA not filed	Variable amounts based upon information provided in an application, number of applicants, and available funds. Individual awards will not exceed \$750

*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 20-21 school year*

- c) US Citizenship and eligible noncitizen status was confirmed for Tier 1 and Tier 2 students using the available FAFSA information and student records. After confirming citizenship status, HEERF II grants were automatically awarded to the Tier 1 and Tier 2 students with no action required from the recipients.
  - d) For Tier 3 students, awards were available via an online application, with a March 19, 2021 deadline for application submission. Applications were reviewed after the deadline and US Citizenship or eligible non-citizen status was confirmed. Individual award amounts, up to a maximum amount of \$750, were determined using information collected on the application.
- 7) All Southwestern students were notified of the availability of the HEERF II Grants via an email sent to their SU email accounts. In addition, the HEERF II 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 II 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 II funds.

The text of the announcement and sample emails are attached.

## Text for HEERF II Campus Announcement on the website

Southwestern University is pleased to announce the availability of emergency grants for students from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). 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 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.

At Southwestern, this means that to be eligible for a HEERF II Grant a student must:

- be enrolled (in person or online) at Southwestern in the Spring of 2021 or have been participating in an approved study abroad/study away program in the Spring of 2021
- be a US Citizen, US Permanent Resident or eligible noncitizen.

**What if a student does not meet the citizenship requirements?** Students who do not meet citizenship requirements above (such as international students or ineligible noncitizens) but who have emergency funding needs may still submit a HEERF application to be considered for emergency grant funding from the Southwestern Emergency Fund.

**What do I need to do to receive a HEERF Grant?** Many students will receive a HEERF Grant without needing to complete an application, but will be required to complete a Payment Preference Form to indicate how they want their funds paid. Some students will need to submit an application to be considered for a HEERF Grant. The chart below will help a student determine what action is required for their HEERF Grant.

Students will be assigned to a tier using the Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) as determined through the 2020-21 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 - 5711	\$1,000	Complete a Payment Preference Form
Tier 2	EFC range: 5712 - 22174	\$750	Complete a Payment Preference Form
Tier 3	EFC above 22174 or FAFSA not filed	Variable amounts, not to exceed \$750.  The actual amount a student receives will be based upon information provided through an application, the number of applicants, and available funds.	Apply for funds using the SU HEERF II Grant Application. Application period is from 3/4/21 through 12pm 3/19/21.

## **How can I confirm which tier that I am assigned to?**

On March 4, 2021 students will be notified of their tier assignment via their SU email account.

For Tier 1 and 2 students, the notification will include the amount they will receive. Instructions for completing the Payment Preference Form will be included.

Tier 3 students will be provided with a link to the application. The application will be open from March 4 - March 19 (12pm), 2021 .

## **What are the options for receiving funds?**

HEERF II 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?**

Tier 1 and 2 students: The HEERF Grant notification email will contain a link to the Payment Preference Form that must be completed before payment can be made. Payment Preference Forms that are submitted by March 8, 2021 will have grant payments released on March 12, 2021 in accordance with the student's direction on the Payment Preference Form. Future disbursements will be made on Wednesdays and Fridays of each week as Payment Preference Forms are received and direct deposit information is set up. If the student does not complete the Payment Preference Form or set up direct deposit by March 15, the payment will be automatically sent to the student either by direct deposit using the student account refund direct deposit information on file or by paper check to the student's permanent home address on March 19, 2021. Students who have not yet set up direct deposit are encouraged to do so as soon as possible by following the instructions for setting up direct deposit.

Tier 3 students: Applications for Tier 3 students will be reviewed as they are received. Grant payments for approved applicants will occur beginning March 17, 2021. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the application period, with the last notifications and grant payments occurring no later than April 2, 2021. Notifications will be sent to student's SU email accounts. Those who do not meet the citizenship requirements for HEERF funds will be automatically considered for a grant from the Southwestern Emergency Fund, and will be notified of the outcome of that review via their SU email account. Funds will be disbursed via direct deposit or paper check no later than April 2, 2021. Students who have not yet set up direct deposit should do so as soon as possible.

## **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. Tier 1 and 2 students will receive instructions on how to do this in their notification email. Tier 3 students can indicate on the HEERF application if they wish to apply funds to their account.

More details about the HEERF Grants may be found in the Frequently Asked Questions page.

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](mailto:finaid@southwestern.edu)

Questions regarding general HEERF eligibility, direct deposits, and student refunds

SU Business Office: 512-863-1928 or [studentaccounts@southwestern.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@southwestern.edu)

## **Sample notification email to Tier 1 and Tier 2 Students WITH direct deposit**

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

Dear (student name)

We are pleased to inform you of your eligibility to receive a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) Grant. General information and eligibility criteria for the HEERF II 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 will receive a grant in the amount indicated below.

(insert award name and amount here)

In order to complete the processing of your grant funds 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.

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. Students who submit their Payment Preference Form by March 8, 2021 will have their funds disbursed by March 12, 2021. Forms received after March 8, 2021 will be processed as they are received. If you do not respond by March 15, 2021, your funds will be sent to your bank account on record on March 19.

We understand the challenges that many students face due to the ongoing pandemic and are pleased to be able to provide you this assistance during this time. 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](mailto:finaid@southwestern.edu)

SU Business Office - 512-863-1928 or [studentaccounts@southwestern.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@southwestern.edu)

Sincerely,

James Gaeta, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services

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

**Sample email to Tier 1 and 2 students WITHOUT direct deposit:**

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

Dear (student name)

We are pleased to inform you of your eligibility to receive a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) Grant. General information and eligibility criteria for the HEERF II 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 will receive a grant in the amount indicated below.

(insert award name and amount here)

In order to complete the processing of your grant funds 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.

**YOUR STUDENT ACCOUNT IS CURRENTLY NOT SET UP FOR ELECTRONIC REFUNDS.** If you choose Option 2 or 3, your payment will be delayed unless you set this up immediately. To set up electronic refunds, go to your Self Service account and select "Banking Information" and enter your information so that SU can send your HEERF grant electronically to your bank account as soon as possible. Information about signing up for direct deposit is available on our [Student Account Refunds](#) page.

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. Students who submit their Payment Preference Form by March 8, 2021 will have their funds disbursed by March 12, 2021. Forms received after March 8, 2021 will be processed as they are received. If you do not respond by March 15, 2021, your funds will be sent to your bank account on record on March 19, 2021. If you do not set up your direct deposit information by March 30, 2021 a paper check will be mailed to your permanent home address. If you need to change your permanent home address, please complete the [Registrar's address change form](#).

We understand the challenges that many students face due to the ongoing pandemic and are pleased to be able to provide you this assistance during this time. 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](mailto:finaid@southwestern.edu)

SU Business Office - 512-863-1928 or [studentaccounts@southwestern.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@southwestern.edu)

Sincerely,

James Gaeta, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services

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

## **Sample Follow-up Email - Tier 1 and 2 students**

SUBJECT: REMINDER: ACTION REQUIRED TO RECEIVE HEERF II GRANT

Dear (student name)

On March 4, 2021 you received an email to your SU Email account notifying you about your eligibility to receive a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) Grant. The title of this email was "SUBJECT: Southwestern University - Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) Notice." **In order to complete the processing of your grant funds you must submit a [Payment Preference Form](#) and direct deposit information if indicated in your notification email.**

Since HEERF funds can be applied to your student account or sent directly to your bank account, the Payment Preference 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.

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. Payments will be processed after the payment preference forms are completed. If you do not respond, your funds will be sent to your bank account on record on March 19.

General information and eligibility criteria for the HEERF II Grant was announced to the Southwestern community at this same time and is also available on the [SU website](#). 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](mailto:finaid@southwestern.edu)

SU Business Office - 512-863-1928 or [studentaccounts@southwestern.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@southwestern.edu)

Sincerely,

James Gaeta, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services

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



## **Sample Email to Tier 3 Students**

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

Dear (student name)

We are pleased to inform you of your eligibility to apply for a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) Grant. General information and eligibility criteria for the HEERF II 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 assigned to the Tier 3 group. Students in Tier 3 who want to be considered for HEERF II funds must submit a [HEERF II Application](#). Students in Tier 3 may receive up to \$750 in HEERF II funds, depending on the information provided in the application. After applications are reviewed, students will receive an email notification to their SU account with the specific HEERF II grant award amount..

The funds will be disbursed in accordance with the payment option you select in your application. Any funds sent via direct deposit will use the same bank account that we have on record for your student account refunds. Students who submit their HEERF II application by March 10, 2021 will have their funds disbursed by March 17, 2021. Applications received after March 10, 2021 will be processed as they are received. The HEERF II application will be open until March 26, 2021, which is the deadline to submit an application.

If you are choosing to have your funds sent to your bank account, you must have direct deposit information set up for your student account. To set this up, go to your Self Service account and select "Banking Information" and enter your information. This should be done immediately in order to get funds to you as quickly as possible. Detailed instructions for setting up your direct deposit are available on our [Student Account Refunds](#) page.

If you do not set up your direct deposit information by March 30, a paper check will be mailed to your permanent home address by April 2, 2021. If you need to change your permanent home address, please complete the [Registrar's address change form](#).

We understand the challenges that many students face due to the ongoing pandemic and are pleased to be able to provide this opportunity to students during this time. 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](mailto:finaid@southwestern.edu)

SU Business Office - 512-863-1928 or [studentaccounts@southwestern.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@southwestern.edu)

Sincerely,

James Gaeta, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services

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

## **Sample TIER 3 Email - Application Completed**

SUBJECT: HEERF II Application Received & Payment Update

Dear (student name)

**Thank you for submitting your completed HEERF II Application. Although we originally planned to disburse the first funds by March 17, 2021, due to the high volume of applications received the payment date has been delayed until March 26, 2021. If you are signed up for direct deposit, there is nothing else that you need to do right now.**

The funds will be disbursed in accordance with the payment option you select in your application. Any funds sent via direct deposit will use the same bank account that we have on record for your student account refunds. If you are choosing to have your funds sent to your bank account, you must have direct deposit information set up for your student account. To set this up, go to your Self Service account and select "Banking Information" and enter your information. This should be done immediately in order to get funds to you as quickly as possible. Detailed instructions for setting up your direct deposit are available on our [Student Account Refunds](#) page.

If you do not set up your direct deposit information by 12:00 pm (noon) on March 25, 2021, a paper check will be mailed to your permanent home address by April 2, 2021. If you need to change your permanent home address, please complete the [Registrar's address change form](#).

We understand the delay in the payment date may be disappointing and apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. 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](mailto:finaid@southwestern.edu)

SU Business Office - 512-863-1928 or [studentaccounts@southwestern.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@southwestern.edu)

Sincerely,

James Gaeta, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services

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

## **Sample TIER 3 Email - Application Not Submitted**

SUBJECT: HEERF II Application Deadline CHANGED to March 19

Dear (student name)

On March 4, 2021 you received an email to your SU Email account notifying you that you were assigned to Tier 3 and your eligibility to apply for a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) Grant. The title of this email was "Southwestern University - Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) Notice." Information about HEERF II Grants is also available on the [SU Website](#).

**As of today, we have not received a completed HEERF II Application from you. Due to the high volume of applications received to date, the deadline to submit the application has been changed from March 26 to noon on March 19, 2021 in order to have sufficient time for processing. If you plan to submit a HEERF II Grant application, please do so as soon as possible but no later than noon on March 19.**

The funds will be disbursed by the end of March in accordance with the payment option you select in your application. Any funds sent via direct deposit will use the same bank account that we have on record for your student account refunds. If you are choosing to have your funds sent to your bank account, you must have direct deposit information set up for your student account. To set this up, go to your Self Service account and select "Banking Information" and enter your information. This should be done immediately in order to get funds to you as quickly as possible. Detailed instructions for setting up your direct deposit are available on our [Student Account Refunds](#) page.

Applicants who are approved for HEERF II Grant who do not set up direct deposit information by March 25, 2021 will have a paper check mailed to their permanent home address by April 2, 2021. If you need to change your permanent home address, please complete the [Registrar's address change form](#).

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](mailto:finaid@southwestern.edu)

SU Business Office - 512-863-1928 or [studentaccounts@southwestern.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@southwestern.edu)

Sincerely,

James Gaeta, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services

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