



## **CARES ACT CONSUMER INFORMATION AND DISCLOSURE**

On April 29, 2020 Converse College signed the Recipient’s Funding Certification and Agreement to receive \$663,442 in emergency grant funds for students from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. In compliance with section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act, this is no less than fifty percent of the total appropriation for Converse College. Converse received notification from the U.S. Department of Education on May 20, 2020, that the funds were available. The emergency grants were immediately administered, and grant check processing began on May 22, 2020.

As of July 27, 2020, Converse College has awarded CARES Act Emergency Grants in the amount of \$663,442 to students. Converse College identified 818 students who were potentially eligible based on the guidance that defined an eligible student as “not an online student” and “a student enrolled in postsecondary education,” which subsequently eliminates students in a 100% online education program and those who are in non-degree seeking programs (i.e. dually enrolled high school students, etc.). Further, due to guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education, students must be eligible to receive Title IV aid under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, in order to receive the grant. Verification of Eligibility is through the successful completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which verifies all points of eligibility, as well as satisfactory academic progress (SAP) checked by the College. As of July 5, 2020, Converse has been able to assist 781 students with a CARES Emergency Grant. The remaining students are not eligible, per federal guidance and College policy.

As of July 27, 2020, all CARES Act Emergency Grant funds have been expended and there are no funds remaining.

The emergency grants were expended in the following manner:

- Emergency grants were calculated based on need as defined by the Expected Family Contribution from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) formula, residential status, and student type (Traditional Undergraduate, Converse II, and Graduate)
- A grant in the amount of \$900 was given to all students who are Federal Pell Grant eligible and have been determined to have significant need based on the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) formula.
- A grant ranging from \$100 - \$700 was given to all students who are NOT Federal Pell Grant eligible and have been determined by the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) formula to have less financial need.
- A grant in the amount of \$300 was given to all residential students to aid in the extra expense(s) of traveling back to campus to move out of the residential halls, as well as help to cover the additional expense(s) for housing, food, and technology needs that may have arisen due to the disruption(s) created by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in addition to the initial grants awarded as stated above.
- [A Student Benevolence Emergency Fund Application](#) was created for the Financial Planning Office to use for emergency appeals for students who were enrolled for Spring 2020 and will have difficulty paying for their basic needs of food, housing, and technology as calculated in the Cost of Attendance (COA) calculation beyond the initial grant awarded. These applications will be reviewed as professional judgment requests by the Director of Financial Planning.

*The maximum amount any student **could** receive in CARES Act Emergency Grant funding is \$6,195. This is the 2019-2020 maximum Federal Pell Grant, consistent with the recommendation from the U.S. Department of Education as outlined in the CARES Act. Converse College may not be able to fully fund all emergency requests.*

## **CARES Act FAQ's**

### **Why did I receive a check from the CARES Act Emergency Grant?**

In accordance with the CARES Act, Converse College has been given an appropriation of funds to help students who have been affected by the coronavirus. Converse is grateful to the federal government for providing these funds to aid our students during this difficult time. The CARES Act Emergency Grant provides funds for things such as housing, meals, technology needs, child care, moving expenses, healthcare expenses, and other basic needs to help college students through the financial hardship(s) created by the disruption of the delivery of education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**How did Converse determine the amount of the CARES Emergency Grant awarded?**

The U.S. Department of Education provided guidance based upon the CARES Act legislation that Converse was required to follow when distributing the funds. The disbursements to institutions of higher education from the federal government were calculated based on enrollment and the enrollment of students eligible for Pell grant funds. In accordance with those guidelines, Converse distributed the funds by need as determined by the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) established on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Grants were determined based on EFC, residential status, and the student's status at the College.

**If the CARES Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020, why was there a delay in receiving CARES Act Emergency Grants?**

Once the CARES Act was signed into law, guidance was issued on what schools could expect and how the College could apply for those funds. Converse developed a plan after careful and thoughtful consideration and applied for the funds on April 29, 2020. The funds became available to the College on May 20, 2020.

**Do I have to report to the College how I spent the CARES Emergency Grant?**

No. The CARES Emergency Grant was issued to provide for your basic needs during this pandemic. You do not have to report to the school how the funds were spent. Converse encourages you to be cautious with the expenditure of the grant funds as the economy has not fully reopened and needs are still uncertain. It is highly unlikely that additional grant funding will be received.

**Do I need to provide any additional information to verify I am eligible for the CARES Emergency Grant?**

No. Eligibility was established based on information contained in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). By signing and endorsing your CARES Emergency Grant check, you are verifying that you have had unanticipated expenses directly related to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have not incurred any unanticipated expenses, you should return the check to Converse College.

**I have a balance due to the College. Why did Converse issue the funds to me?**

The CARES Act requires Converse to provide the emergency grant funds directly to students. The institution may not use any portion of that to satisfy any outstanding balances or other

expenses incurred by the student and owed to the College. The Department of Education does note that the student may use his/her CARES Emergency Grant for any expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. Students may use the funds to pay an outstanding balance at Converse.

If you do owe a balance to the College, please contact the Student Billing Office at [studentbilling@converse.edu](mailto:studentbilling@converse.edu) about settling that balance so that you are prepared for the Fall 2020 semester. Our Student Billing staff will evaluate requests for payment arrangements on a case by case basis, subject to approval by the Vice President for Finance and Administration and in cooperation with the Financial Planning Office.

### **I am enrolled in an online program, will I receive a CARES Emergency Grant?**

At institutions that provide both online and ground-based education, those students who were enrolled exclusively in an online program on March 13, 2020, the date of the President's Proclamation "declaring a national emergency concerning the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak," are not eligible for CARES emergency grants (85 Fed. Reg. 15,337 (March 18, 2020)).

The formula provided by Congress for calculating the distribution of funds to institutions excludes students who were exclusively enrolled in distance education courses. Additionally, the CARES emergency grants to students are for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus, and students who were enrolled exclusively in online programs would not have expenses directly related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19.

### **What if I am in need of additional assistance such as food, shelter and other basic needs for the summer term(s)? Will I receive additional funds?**

If you have additional needs not addressed by the initial CARES Emergency Grants, you must complete the [Student Benevolence Fund Application](#) and return the application and any appropriate materials to the Director of Financial Planning at [james.kellam@converse.edu](mailto:james.kellam@converse.edu)

All emergency requests will be evaluated. Funding is limited and Converse may not be able to approve all requests.

### **Will there be additional CARES Emergency Grants for the 2020-2021 academic year?**

We do not know at this time if additional funding will be made available by Congress. In accordance with CARES Act policy, Converse College is issuing immediate grants to students until funding is exhausted.

**Who do I contact if I have questions about the CARES Emergency Grant?**

Questions can be directed to our Director of Financial Planning, J.W. Kellam, by email at [james.kellam@converse.edu](mailto:james.kellam@converse.edu) or by calling 864-596-9019.

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