

CARES Act Relief Aid

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I know if I am eligible for the CARES Act Relief Fund?

Students must meet the basic eligibility [criteria](#) for receiving federal financial aid in order to be considered for CARES Act Relief aid. Based on the conditions established by the U.S. Department of Education, the following groups of students are ineligible to receive CARES Act Relief Aid: (a) Dual enrollment students; (b) Students enrolled in a 100% online degree program on or before March 13, 2020; and (c) Students who are not U.S. citizens or [eligible noncitizens](#).

2. I have heard that other universities are not using the same method (i.e. application, documentation, etc.) as ULM to award CARES Act funds. Why is ULM using a different method to verify and award eligible students?

Each university has developed its own plan to distribute CARES Act funds in a way that meets federal requirements. ULM students who meet the basic eligibility [criteria](#) will receive an initial \$300 in CARES Act Relief Aid. ULM is then requesting students who have incurred additional expenses to submit an [application](#) and provide supporting documentation. The goal of this two-step process is to ensure that those students with the greatest cost/expense are able to receive a higher level of support. Documents or some other evidence are needed to support the expenses/losses noted in the student's application. We have made the uploading process very simple. On the application page we have posted examples of what students can use for supporting documentation.

3. How will the university determine how much aid I will be awarded?

Students who meet the basic eligibility [criteria](#) for receiving federal financial aid will be eligible to receive \$300 in CARES Act Relief aid, assuming the conditions below are met:

- a) If the student has filled out a 2019-2020 FAFSA and qualifies for the CARES Act grant, the \$300 grant will be disbursed to them without any action needed.
- b) If a student has not filled out a 2019-2020 FAFSA but can attest that he/she meets federal financial aid [criteria](#), he or she may fill out an attestation form at this [link](#). Once the student is determined to be eligible, the \$300 grant will be disbursed to him/her.

Students who have incurred expenses greater than \$300 may apply for further aid through the CARES Act Relief [application](#). These additional awards will range from \$250 to \$3,000 and will be calculated based on the supporting documentation the student provides in the application. To be eligible for the minimum amount of \$250, the student must be able to show that he/she incurred at least \$550 in costs/expenses. The \$300 standard award received initially would cover the first \$300 of the student's claim.

4. I only received \$300 in CARES Act Relief Aid, but I applied for more than that through the CARES Act portal. Why am I only receiving \$300?

After receiving student feedback, we have listened and made the decision to change the CARES Act fund disbursement. ULM realizes that students have incurred expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic that can't be easily documented. For that reason ULM will use one-half of its \$2.88 million in CARES Act student funds to disburse \$300 to every student eligible to receive the grant. ULM will use the other one-half of the CARES Act student funds to cover the additional expenses of those students who are submitting an application.

If you have submitted an application through the CARES Act portal, but have only received your initial \$300, please know that the grant committee is still working diligently to review your application and will soon be notifying you of any additional aid for which you might be eligible.

5. I am a part-time student. Am I eligible for CARES Act Relief Aid?

Yes, as a part-time student you are eligible for the CARES Act grant, assuming you meet all other eligibility criteria.

6. I am not eligible for CARES Act Relief Aid, but I have incurred COVID-19 related expenses during this health crisis. Are there any other opportunities for me to receive financial help from the university?

Yes. The ULM Foundation Office will be accepting applications for a separate ULM Emergency Relief Fund beginning mid-summer. Please continue to monitor your ULM email this summer for announcements regarding the opening of this fund.

7. I understand that one way to show eligibility to receive Federal Student Aid is to submit a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) application. How can I find out if I have submitted a FAFSA for 2019-2020?

You may check the status of your FAFSA through Banner Self-Service or the [FAFSA website](#).

If you have not already done so, you may submit a FAFSA by following the instructions on Financial Aid's [webpage](#). You may also view the eligibility requirements at this [link](#).

8. I just submitted my FAFSA for 2019-2020. How long will it take for ULM to receive it?

It will take 48 hours from the time the FAFSA is submitted to FSA (Federal Student Aid) for an ISIR (Institutional Student Information Record) file to be generated and sent to the university. The university will process the file within 3-5 business days of receiving it. The student may continue to monitor the status of his/her FAFSA through Banner Self-Service.

9. Is there another way to show that I am eligible to receive Federal Student Aid if I choose not to submit a FAFSA?

Students can show eligibility for Federal Student Aid by submitting the ["Eligibility to Receive Federal Student Aid" form](#).

10. What qualifies as an eligible expense when applying for additional CARES Act Relief Aid?

To be considered for additional CARES Act aid through the [application portal](#), the student must have an expense that is a direct result of disruption of campus operations due to the novel coronavirus. Covered expenses include food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child-care costs. Click [here](#) to view a list of possible covered expenses/costs.

11. I have expenses that I incurred before March 13, 2020 that I believe are COVID-19 related expenses. Can I use them in my application?

No. Based on federal guidelines, all supporting documentation must be dated on or after March 13, 2020. This is the date that President Trump declared a national emergency in regard to COVID-19.

12. What if I don't have supporting documentation to include on my CARES Act application?

In order for you to be considered for additional relief aid, you must attach supporting documents to your application in ULM's CARES Act portal. The documents you provide will be used by the awarding committee to determine your eligibility for the grant. All documentation must include the following, when applicable: your name, vendor/company/store name, date of expense/purchase, amount of expense, etc.

If you are truly unable to provide supporting documentation due to extenuating circumstances, you may provide a typed letter, signed and dated, that 1) explains your situation, 2) provides an itemization of the amount of aid you are requesting, and 3) tells why documentation is unable to be provided. Handwritten notes are not an acceptable form of supporting documentation.

13. Where do I send my letter of explanation?

You can upload your personal statement/letter of explanation to your Cares Act application. Please follow the instructions below:

- Log in to your Academic Works account. Click on the **"Applications"** tab on the left-hand side of the page. Scroll down to the **"Current"** section.
- You will see the application box for Cares Aid Relief Aid. Click on **"Update"**.
- If you would like to upload your letter with the extensions .doc, .docx, or .pdf, please choose the first box.
- If you would like to upload your letter as an image file with the extensions .jpeg, .jpg, or .png, please choose the second box.
- Select **"Miscellaneous"** item as your expense from the drop-down list and upload your personal statement.

14. Is there a minimum expense amount that I must have incurred in order to be eligible for additional aid through the CARES Act Relief portal?

Yes. Additional CARES Act awards will range from \$250 to \$3,000. Therefore, students should have incurred at least \$550 worth of eligible expenses to qualify for additional aid through the CARES Act Relief application. This means that a student who incurred a total of \$550 worth of eligible expenses will be awarded \$300 via the initial disbursement to students and then an additional \$250 through the CARES Act application process.

15. How soon after I submit my application will I find out if I have been selected to receive additional CARES Act funds?

Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please allow 2-3 weeks from the time you submit your application for the CARES Act Relief Fund Committee to review your application and notify you if you were selected.

16. I was awarded additional funds based on my application through the CARES Act Relief portal. How soon will I receive the funds?

Once you have accepted your award in Academic Works, the funds will be disbursed through Financial Aid. Following that disbursement, refunds will be processed the following Tuesday with funds available in your bank account Friday.

If you do not have a direct deposit set up, please contact Student Account Services (sas@ulm.edu or 318-342-5124) to set up a Bankmobile account.

17. I applied for a higher amount than I was awarded through the CARES Act application portal. Why?

Several factors may have come in to play when the committee decided your award amount through the application portal.

First, every requested award amount will be reduced by \$300 to account for the initial award that was given to students to cover any eligible expenses. So if the committee determines the student had \$800 in eligible expenses/costs, he or she would receive another award for \$500 (\$800 - \$300 = \$500).

Second, only those expenses that occurred as a direct result of disruption of campus operations due to the novel coronavirus are eligible for reimbursement. Therefore, the committee may have had to exclude certain expenses in your application due to those expenses being ineligible. Covered expenses include food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child-care costs. Click [here](#) to view a list of possible covered expenses/costs.

18. Can I receive the CARES Act grant even if I owe a balance to the university?

Yes. Regardless of the balance you may owe to the university, you will directly receive the full amount of the CARES Act grant for which you are eligible. The funds will be distributed to you either by direct deposit or via check to the current mailing address you have on file with the university.

For students who do not qualify for additional aid through the [application portal](#), the grant will be awarded as a one-time disbursement of \$300. However, for those qualifying for additional aid, the grant will be awarded in two installments: \$300 initially, plus the additional award amount at a later date.

19. How do I know that I have completed my application for additional grant aid and that it has been received by ULM?

Once you have successfully applied for additional CARES Act aid, click on the “**Applications**” tab on the left-hand side of the page. Scroll down to the “**Current**” section. You will see the application box for Cares Aid Relief Aid and “*Submitted for Review*” at the bottom of the box.

You will also receive an email from the ULM Scholarships Office ‘scholarships@ulm.edu’ with the subject line: “*Application Submission Confirmation*”.

20. I made a mistake on my submitted application or I need to add more supporting documents to my application. Can I make changes to it?

You may go back and change, correct, and update your application in the following way:

- Click on the “**Applications**” tab on the left-hand side of the page. Scroll down to the “**Current**” section.
- You will see the application box for Cares Aid Relief Aid. Click on “**Update**” to make any changes to your application.

21. How will I find out if I have been awarded additional CARES Act relief aid?

- After you have submitted your application, you will receive an email in your Warhawk email account from the ULM Scholarships Office ‘scholarships@ulm.edu’ that says “ULM Scholarships: Congratulations! You have been selected for the Cares Act Relief Award!”.
- You will also have to accept the offer by clicking on the link provided in the email.
- You can log in to your [Academic Works account](#) to check on the status of all the scholarships to which you have applied.
- A status of “Offered” under the *Needs Attention* category indicates that you have been selected for the grant. It will ask you to accept the award.
- A status of “Application Submitted for Review” under the *Current* category indicates that the scholarship is still under review.
- We encourage you to check the website and your Warhawks email regularly for status updates.

22. I need help uploading my supporting documents to my application.

If you need help uploading a document, please click [here](#).

If you need help uploading an image file, please click [here](#).

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS (regarding the CARES Act application portal):

23. What system requirements are necessary to complete the CARES Act application on Academic Works?

Academic Works supports only the current and the immediately previous major releases of Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari, and Microsoft Internet Explorer.

You may receive emails from Academic Works. To ensure proper delivery, add no-reply@academicworks.com to spam filters or safe sender lists.

24. What is my username for the CARES Act application portal?

You will use your Warhawk username for logging in to the portal. Your Warhawk username is the same as your email address. If your email address is 'user123@warhawks.ulm.edu', then your username is 'user123'. If you do not know your email address, you may use this [online form](#) to look up your username using your CWID.

25. I cannot remember my password for the CARES Act application portal.

Your password for logging in to the application will be the same password you use to access myULM, webmail, or Moodle. Please call the Helpdesk at (318) 342-3333 or email helpdesk@ulm.edu if you cannot remember your password.