

NOTE: This guide is intended for informational purposes. Students and other interested parties should carefully consult the guidance, regulations, and requirements issued by the administering federal agencies and university's financial aid office for authoritative information on eligibility, amounts of assistance, and other matters related to the programs outlined herein.

RESOURCES FOR HAWAII'S COLLEGE STUDENTS

ON MARCH 27, 2020, CONGRESS PASSED AND THE PRESIDENT SIGNED INTO LAW THE CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT, WHICH PROVIDES EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR K-12 SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, STUDENTS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

THIS "COVID-19 RESOURCE GUIDE FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS" PROVIDES MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SEVERAL PROVISIONS INCLUDED IN THE CARES ACT THAT DIRECTLY RELATE TO COLLEGE STUDENTS, INCLUDING FOR THOSE RECEIVING FEDERAL STUDENT AID.



MAZIE K. HIRONO
• A VOICE FOR HAWAII IN THE U.S. SENATE •

EMERGENCY CASH GRANTS TO STUDENTS:

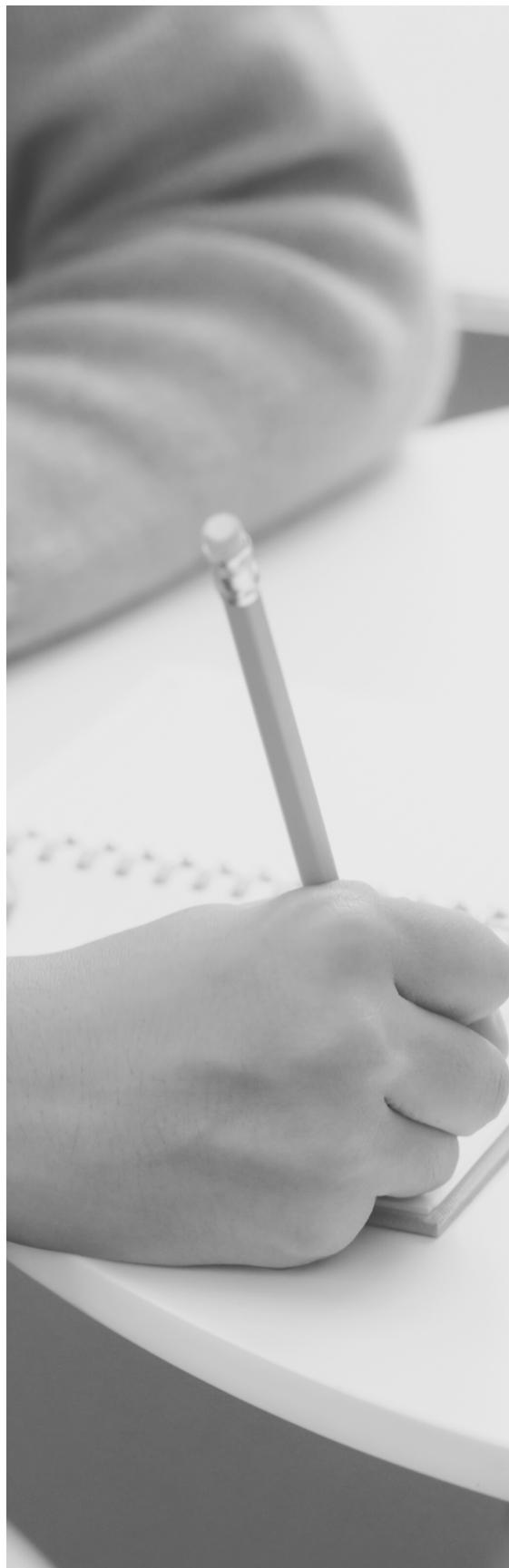
The CARES Act created an Education Stabilization Fund and allocated approximately \$30 billion in relief for education programs and activities. Within this fund, the CARES Act included \$14 billion for a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) to provide assistance for institutions of higher education and students—including through **emergency cash grants to students** to provide assistance for expenses like food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care.

Institutions are responsible for distributing cash grants to students, and will develop their own processes and priorities for awarding this aid. Locally, Hawaii students should contact their school's financial aid office directly regarding questions about how to receive these grants.

Contact information for Hawaii schools is located on the State Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' website here:
<https://cca.hawaii.gov/hpeap/main/emergency-cash-grant-contact-list/>.

View a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the emergency student cash grants here:
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opec/heerfstudentfaqs.pdf>.

Learn more about the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund here:
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opec/car-esact.html>.



FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS:

The CARES Act also provided relief for borrowers with **federal student loans**, including federally-held Direct Loans, Federal Family Education Loans (FFEL), and Federal Perkins Loans. From March 13, 2020 through September 30, 2020, the federal government has suspended monthly payments on these loans. In addition, the interest rate on federal student loans is set to 0 percent, meaning that you will not accumulate any interest during this time. Your loan servicer will suspend all interest and payments without any action required from you.

Unfortunately, the CARES Act does not include relief for private student loans. However, some private lenders have implemented forbearance options that will allow borrowers to postpone monthly payments, and others are waiving late fees and forgoing negative reports to consumer reporting agencies. Additionally, some private lenders also offer their own reduced payment options. Borrowers with private student loans are encouraged to contact their loan servicers to learn more about their options.



If you have already made a payment on a federal student loan after March 13, you can request a refund from your loan servicer. However, if you are financially able to continuing making payments on your student loans, any payments made after March 13 will be directly applied to the principal which will help you pay off your loans faster. Learn more about suspended payments here: <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/about-us/blog/what-you-need-to-know-about-student-loans-and-coronavirus-pandemic/>.

Please note that some Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program loans are owned by commercial lenders, and some Perkins Loans are owned by the institution you attended. These loans are not eligible for the 0 percent interest benefit at this time. For any questions about federal student loan payments, contact your loan servicer directly here: <https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/repayment/servicers#your-servicer>.

The federal government will not ask for a fee to suspend your payments. There is no action required of you. If someone asks you for money to process this information, it is a scam and you should report them using the Federal Trade Commission's Complaint Assistant here: <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/>.

Learn more about loan forbearance for students, borrowers, and parents during the COVID-19 pandemic here: <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus>.

PELL GRANTS:

Pell Grants provide financial assistance to low-income undergraduate students, and these awards are generally available to students for up to 12 full-time semesters.

The CARES Act included provisions to provide students receiving Pell Grants with assistance. Specifically, CARES included provisions to make interrupted semesters due to school closures do not count against students with respect to their current and lifetime eligibility for the program.

Learn more about federal Pell Grant eligibility here:
<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/pell>.

PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS (PSLF):

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) allows student loan borrowers in certain public sector careers to receive loan forgiveness on certain federal student loans if they meet the program's requirements. Under CARES, suspended payments on federal student loans do not affect PSLF eligibility toward receiving loan forgiveness. If you have a Direct Loan, were on a qualifying repayment plan prior to the suspension, and work full-time for a qualifying employer during the suspension, then you will receive credit toward PSLF for the period of suspension as though you made on-time monthly payments.

Learn more about the PSLF program requirements here:
<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/ask-cfpb/what-is-public-service-loan-forgiveness-en-641/>.



FEDERAL WORK STUDY (FWS):

Federal Work Study (FWS) provides part-time employment opportunities for eligible undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

The CARES Act included provisions to allow institutions to continue paying students participating in FWS even if they are unable to meet their work-study obligation as a result of coronavirus-related interruptions, provided that the institution is continuing to provide educational services and is paying its faculty and staff. This flexibility applies only to students who have begun their FWS employment prior to the declaration of the national emergency (March 13, 2020) and may not exceed one academic year.

Learn more about the FWS Program here: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/work-study>.

Schools that participate in the FWS program are also required to pay the federal and institutional share of wages to students employed in community service jobs.

Learn more about the Department of Education's updated guidance on Federal Work-Study Community Service Waivers here: <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/042320FY2017CDRDeadlineModUpdateFWSCommRelatedCOVID19>.

SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITY GRANTS (SEOG):

The Supplemental Educational and Opportunity Grant Program (SEOG) provides grants for undergraduate students with exceptional financial needs, and is administered directly by institutions. Find out if your school offers SEOG by contacting your institution's financial aid office.

The CARES Act included provisions to provide colleges and universities with flexibility with SEOG to provide emergency financial assistance for undergraduate and graduate students to help cover the cost of unexpected expenses and unmet financial needs.

Learn more about the FSEOG Program here: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/fseog>.

ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS:

Congress recently approved **Economic Impact Payments** (“direct payments”) to provide assistance for individuals and families during this time. To date, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has issued more than 120 million direct payments to Americans across the country. These payments are based on income, filing status, and family size.

Under the CARES Act, college students claimed as dependents on their parents’ tax returns do not qualify for direct payments. Additionally, these students are not considered qualifying dependents for the purposes of the \$500 additional payment for dependents. However, students who cannot be claimed as dependents on their parents’ taxes may be eligible for direct payments.

More information about these payments is available on the IRS’s online Economic Impact Payment Information Center here: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payment-information-center>.

You can also read more online here: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/why-the-economic-impact-payment-amount-could-be-different-than-anticipated>.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS

OFFICE OF FEDERAL STUDENT AID: [WWW.STUDENTAID.GOV/CORONAVIRUS](https://studentaid.gov/coronavirus)

- o Federal Student Loan Servicers:

- <https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/repayment/servicers>

- o Frequently Asked Questions

- <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus#borrower-questions>

- o Resources for Schools and School Personnel

- <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus?src=feature>

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU: [WWW.CONSUMERFINANCE.GOV](https://www.consumerfinance.gov)

- o Getting a Student Loan

- <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/student-loans/>

- o Protect Your Finances

- <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/>

- o Frequently Asked Questions

- <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/about-us/blog/what-you-need-to-know-about-student-loans-and-coronavirus-pandemic/>

- o Food Assistance for Students

- <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/#food>

HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS: [HTTPS://CCA.HAWAII.GOV](https://cca.hawaii.gov)

- o COVID-19 Online Services

- <https://cca.hawaii.gov/covid19/>

- o Consumer Dial Information

- <https://cca.hawaii.gov/consumer-dial-information/>

HAWAII POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AUTHORIZATION PROGRAM (HPEAP): [HTTPS://CCA.HAWAII.GOV/HPEAP/](https://cca.hawaii.gov/hpeap/)

- o Transcript Requests

- <https://cca.hawaii.gov/hpeap/for-heald-college-students/>
