CARES Act

What is the CARES Act and how does it affect higher education institutions?
The federal government recently passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which allocated funds to higher education institutions across the nation through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. The distribution of these funds to higher education institutions are managed by the U.S. Department of Education.

CARES Base Awards

What criteria was used to determine which students received funding?
Institutions must use the guidelines provided by the U.S. Department of Education in order to be eligible to receive the CARES Act funds. In addition, the Minnesota State system office provided additional guidance to all Minnesota State colleges and universities on student eligibility within our system institutions.

All Century College students enrolled in Spring 2020 semester were considered for eligibility for CARES Act funds, except for the below populations of students determined not eligible per the eligibility criteria from the U.S. Department of Education and Minnesota State.

Which student groups are NOT eligible for CARES Act funds?
The below groups of students are not eligible to receive CARES Act funds per the eligibility criteria of U.S. Department of Education and Minnesota State:

- students enrolled exclusively in online courses in Spring 2020 semester prior to the COVID-19 emergency
- students not eligible to file a FAFSA:
  - non-U.S. citizen or not an eligible noncitizen,
  - concurrent enrollment high school students,
  - postsecondary enrollment option students (PSEO)
- students assessed senior citizen tuition rates,
- students enrolled in non-credit courses,
- student incarcerated,
- students withdrawn from Spring semester courses and not enrolled as of March 6, 2020, or
- employees whose full tuition is covered by Minnesota State Tuition Waiver.

How much CARES Base Award funds did students receive?
Eligible students with a FAFSA on file received an award of $575, regardless of their Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Eligible students without a FAFSA on file received an award of $100.

Students who received the CARES Base Award got a Century College email with information about their award amount. Students can also see their CARES Base Awards in their Account Detail (eServices > Bill and Payments > View Account Detail > Century College Spring 2020).

Can I still submit a FAFSA to get a larger CARES Base Award?
No. The CARES Act funds were determined based on student data reported in April 2020. Century College fully committed our funds using the data available at that time. There are no remaining funds to allow for re-awarding CARES funds.

Can I receive a CARES Act award at Century College if I am a visiting student?
Visiting students will receive CARES Act funds from their home institution based on their home institution awarding criteria. A large number of students enroll at multiple Minnesota State colleges/universities but can only receive a single CARES award. Minnesota State institutions have communicated with one another to determine which college/university would provide the CARES Act funds to individual students and which school would cancel the CARES Act award when the student already received it at another institution.
How will I get my CARES Base Award money?
CARES Base Awards were posted to student accounts on Tuesday, May 5, 2020. The funds will be transferred to BankMobile, the external system Century College uses to distribute funds to students, on Wednesday, May 6, 2020. Depending on banking rules, students will have access to their CARES Act funds between May 6 and May 11, 2020.

What if I don’t have direct deposit set up with BankMobile?
Students who currently do not have direct deposit set up with BankMobile should take immediate action to visit the BankMobile web page for more information and to set up a direct deposit preference. If you do not take the steps to set up an account with BankMobile, your funds will be significantly delayed. For students who do not set up a direct deposit through BankMobile, a paper check option is available but students should note that it will delay your ability to receive and use these funds immediately.

Please contact the Century College Business Office at busoffice@century.edu if you cannot set up a BankMobile account or if you do not receive your award within the next 5 to 10 business days.

What can CARES Act money be used for?
Any educational expenses related to the disruption of their Spring 2020 classes when higher education institutions converted face-to-face courses to distance education and virtual formats. The funds must be used to cover expenses related students’ cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare.

CARES Special Circumstances Grant Awards

What is the basic eligibility to apply for CARES Special Circumstances Grants?
Students must have received a CARES Base Award to be considered for the CARES Special Circumstances Grant. The request for this need-based emergency grant funds for special circumstances must be related to COVID-19 disruptions.

What terms can I apply for a CARES Special Circumstances Grant?
Spring 2020 semester COVID-19 related expenses (March – May 2020) and Fall 2020 semester COVID-19 related expenses (August – December 2020). Expenses related to Summer 2020 semester (June-July) are not eligible for the Special Circumstances Grant. CARES Base Awards are meant to cover current and anticipated COVID-19 expenses, so students may use CARES Base Awards for summer expenses.

Where do I find an application to apply for a CARES Special Circumstances Grant?
Link to application: CARES Special Circumstances Award Application

This is a short application designed to capture important information in a condensed format. Although students may want to meet with their assigned advisor or counselor for assistance in filling out the form, there is no requirement to meet with an advisor/counselor or Century College staff member in order to submit an application. Students can submit their application by completing the form and submitting the form with the required documentation via email to finaid@century.edu.

How much can I apply for (maximum amount granted)?
A maximum of $500 can be awarded for Spring 2020. Students may also request an additional $500 for Fall 2020.

What is the process to get a CARES Special Circumstances Grant?
Student should complete an application describing their special circumstances (no advisor or counselor meeting is required) and provide supporting documentation. Completed application and supporting documentation should be emailed to finaid@century.edu. Applications will be reviewed by a committee. Student will receive an email with the committee decision and next steps via their Century College email. If the grant application is approved, the email will indicate the amount approved. Funds will be disbursed through BankMobile.

What is the deadline to apply for a CARES Special Circumstances Grant?
The deadline to apply for a Spring 2020 CARES Special Circumstances Grant is Sunday, May 31, 2020 Please note that grant funds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis so students are encouraged to apply early. Some applications may be not approved due to the availability of funds and not due to the application itself.