

U.S. Department of Education Releases New HEER Guidance



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On Friday, March 19, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) released new [guidance](#) for the Higher Education Emergency Relief (HEER) Fund, which includes increased flexibility for the use of funds.

The guidance states that colleges are permitted to use HEER II funds received from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) and the HEER III funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to cover costs incurred on or after March 13, 2020, which is the date when the COVID-19 national emergency was declared. The March 13, 2020, date supersedes the ED's initial guidance under the Trump Administration, which only allowed HEER II funds to be applied to costs incurred on or after December 27, 2020.

The updated guidance also includes the following resources:

- **HEER Fund Lost Revenue FAQs.** This new set of [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) describes how institutions may calculate and account for the amount of lost revenue they have incurred as a result of COVID-19.
- **Updated FAQs for CRRSAA (a)(1).** These [FAQs](#) contain conforming updates to allow for expenditures incurred back to March 13, 2020, as well as the addition of new FAQs, including guidance on whether HEER funds may be used to support non-degree seeking, non-credit, dual enrollment, and continuing education students, among others.
- **Updated FAQs for CRRSAA (a)(4).** As with the (a)(1) FAQs, these [FAQs](#) are conforming edits to allow recipients of (a)(4) Proprietary Institution Grant Funds for Students to reimburse themselves for financial aid grants to students made as far back as March 13, 2020, where those grants were not covered with prior Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds.

This new guidance applies to all HEER grant funds, including unspent CARES Act funds, CRRSAA funds, and ARP funds.