

Wisconsin public, private higher education institutions to get more than \$176M in federal CARES Act funding

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*By Adam Kelnhofer
For WisPolitics.com*

Public and private institutions in the state are to receive more than \$176 million under the federal CARES Act's Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, according to data from the U.S. Department of Education.

The funds are meant to help address financial issues from the coronavirus pandemic, with about half of that slated for emergency student aid.

UW System campuses are to receive over \$94 million in funding from the CARES Act, tech colleges are to receive \$40.2 million and private institutions are getting \$42.3 million.

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Half of the money from the CARES Act for each school can be used for institutional costs, while the other half must be spent on students.

Institutional costs include things like budgetary shortfalls from enrollment decline. Universities can also use this portion of the funds to cover losses from pandemic related refunds to students for things like housing, dining, parking and transportation.

The student aid portion of the funds includes emergency grants for students, items

to improve the educational experience at the universities like laptops to loan to students and refunds for room and board.

However, the CARES Act does not allow universities to pay themselves back for refunds issued to students before the CARES Act was passed using the student aid portion of the funds. This is an issue because most UW System schools have already issued refunds for room and board and most have already purchased additional IT equipment to transition to remote learning.

All UW System schools will be receiving funding. The System has projected a loss of nearly \$170 million in the spring semester alone. Many schools have already begun furloughs, and layoffs could occur to trim costs.

UW-Madison, which serves just over 45,000 students, will receive \$19.7 million from the CARES Act. The university has distributed at least \$5.8 million of that to students in need of emergency aid funds, according to the UW-Madison Office of Student Financial Aid. Today is the deadline for UW-Madison's students to apply for emergency aid. Madison's application notes the university may only be able to guarantee \$250 per applicant in grant funds.

UW-Milwaukee, which serves over 26,000 students, will receive nearly \$17 million from the CARES Act. The university created a new CARES Emergency Grant designed to serve students who have been financially impacted by the pandemic so they can take advantage of the roughly \$8.5 million set aside for that purpose. Tuesday is the deadline for students to apply and be guaranteed to receive at least some of the money.

UW-Milwaukee is aiming to send out student aid grants by May 18 in order to give students time to fill out a FAFSA form if they have not had the chance to do so yet, according to UWM Media Relations Manager John Schumacher.

UW-Whitewater, recipient of the third-largest allocation of CARES Act funds for UW System schools, will receive a total of \$8.2 million. This amount is meant to be split between institutional costs and student emergency aid funds, according to the U.S. Department of Education. The school serves more than 13,000 students.

Other UW System schools receiving over \$6 million each include:

- UW-Eau Claire, \$7.1 million;

- UW-Lacrosse, \$6.8 million;
- UW-Stevens Point, \$6.3 million;
- UW-Oshkosh, \$6.2 million.

The state's 16 tech colleges are in line to get \$40.2 million in total from the CARES Act.

Milwaukee Area Technical College will receive the largest amount of funding from the CARES Act of all technical colleges in Wisconsin. MATC will get \$8.5 million in total.

Madison Area Technical College will receive \$5.5 million, the second-largest portion of relief aid allocated for technical colleges in Wisconsin.

Both schools serve just over 33,000 students each.

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, which has roughly 28,000 students, can expect to receive \$3.7 million, the third-largest amount of CARES Act funds for technical colleges in the state. The school has given over \$1.8 million of the money to students so far with around \$900,000 remaining from the student aid portion of the CARES Act funds.

Five other tech colleges are set to receive more than \$2 million each:

- Chippewa Valley Technical College, \$2.8 million;
- Gateway Technical College, \$2.6 million;
- Fox Valley Technical College, \$2.6 million;
- Western Technical College, \$2.4 million; and
- Blackhawk Technical College, \$2.2 million.

All other Wisconsin technical colleges will receive less than \$2 million each.

Private colleges will also receive a portion of the overall CARES Act pie, with U.S. Department of Education data showing a total of \$42.3 million across 49 institutions.

Marquette University will get \$6.6 million in total from the CARES Act, the most for any Wisconsin private university. Students eligible for Pell Grants automatically received grant money from Marquette in early May, students who are eligible for federal funds under Title IV can apply for a grant and the university made \$350,000

available for a separate Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant.

Other notable CARES Act funding for private universities includes:

- Herzing University, \$4.3 million;
- Concordia University, \$3.7 million;
- Carthage College, \$2.7 million;
- Carroll University, \$2.4 million; and
- Milwaukee School of Engineering, \$2.3 million.

See a list of schools receiving funding:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oep/allocationstableinstitutionalportion.pdf>

See more on the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oep/caresact.html>