STUDENT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT (SEAG) PROGRAM

2021-23 PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Workforce Education

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

PO Box 42495

Olympia, WA 98504

SBCTC.edu

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges reserves the right to make changes to this document due to, but not limited to, federal, state, or local legislation or policy changes.

Deadlines and Milestones

Milestone	Dates (subject to change)
Applications available in OGMS	April 15, 2021
Applications due in OGMS	May 13, 2021
Applicants notified of approval status	Mid-June 2021
Allocations begin	July 1st, 2021
Quarterly Program Reports	October 30, 2021 January 31, 2022 April 30, 2022 July 31, 2022 October 30, 2022 January 31, 2023 April 30, 2023 July 31, 2023
Year-end Summative Reports	July 31, 2022 and July 31, 2023

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Table of Contents

Overview

The Washington State Legislature established the Student Emergency Assistance Grant (SEAG) Program in the passage of 2SHB 1893 during the 2019 legislative session. The SEAG Program, administered by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), allows Washington Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs) to provide monetary assistance to students experiencing unforeseen emergencies or situations that affect the student's ability to attend classes.

A CTC applying for this competitive funding opportunity must demonstrate need, which may include showing demographic data on student income levels, students experiencing homelessness or food insecurity, and other results from basic needs assessments. The CTC applicants must also:

- ensure that students' access to emergency aid funds will be as low barrier as possible;

- allow flexibility in who may apply for funds and include students who may not necessarily meet the definition of "financial need" but who may be experiencing emergency situations;

- and indicate how the CTC will prioritize the disbursement of emergency aid funds.

The CTC may not require a student to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to receive the SEAG, but the CTC must require students seeking assistance make their requests in writing. The CTC must use program funds to provide monetary aid to students to assist them in, for example, purchasing food, and paying for transportation, child care, or other goods or services needed in order for the student to continue attending classes.

In selecting CTCs to participate in the SEAG Program, the SBCTC will consider a CTC's demonstration of need and the resources and programs already in existence at the college.

The SBCTC will facilitate submission of the required annual reports to the Legislature by December 1st of each year. SEAG Program colleges will comply with all reporting requirements to assist the SBCTC in this effort.

Applicant Guidelines

Who May Apply

All Washington State Community and Technical Colleges are encouraged to apply. Applicants must demonstrate student need for emergency supports, the ability to implement a low-barrier process for students to access support and commitment to connecting students in need to other college and community resources. Consortium applications will not be considered.

Program Period

This is a two-year funding cycle. Programs will be funded from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023. This means there will not be a fiscal year (FY) 2022 competition; applicants chosen to receive an award in FY21 will be renewed for an additional allocation in FY22 as long as program requirements are met.

Page 4

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
2021-23 STUDENT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES // April 2021

Funding

Funding for approved applications will be allocated to colleges for each fiscal year. For FY22, funding becomes available July 1, 2021 and expires June 30, 2022. Funds do not extend beyond the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2022). Work with your college's business office to access these funds. Funding for FY23 becomes available July 1, 2022 after the State Board confirms program requirements are met for FY22.

The total amount of SEAG Program funding available for the system is $4,000,000 per year and a total of $8,000,000 for the 2-year funding cycle. All CTC's that meet the minimum application requirements will be funded.

Colleges should calculate their 2-year budgets by assessing students' needs, evaluating existing available resources and identifying what additional resources are required to better support students' requests for emergency assistance. There is no maximum funding request limit. Colleges can anticipate the average allocation will be roughly $115,000 per year. Some colleges may need less and some colleges may need more, especially any colleges applying as districts. SBCTC will take great care to utilize SEAG Program funding to award college applications based on demonstrated need and reserves the right to adjust actual allocations, as needed. The review panel reserves the right to scale proposals as needed. Funding is subject to the amount of available resources.

How to Apply

Access the 2021-23 Student Emergency Assistance Grant (SEAG) Program application through the Online Grant Management System (OGMS).

If you do not have an account, contact your organization's Security Contact for access. If you already have an account, you will need your Security Contact to give you permission to access the grant.

Submit completed applications to SBCTC through OGMS no later than May 13, 2021, at 11:55 p.m. SBCTC staff are available for assistance until 4:00 p.m. on May 13, 2021.

Disclaimer

SBCTC reserves the right to refrain from awarding funds to any or all applicants. Additionally, SBCTC reserves the right to add additional award requirements to applicants meeting minimum criteria to receive funds but that are deemed to be higher risk awardee. Additional requirements may include, but are not limited to, additional reporting requirements or additional monitoring to assess the applicant's ability to adhere to program requirements. Any additional requirements will be outlined for individual applicants prior to applicants accepting any resulting funding.

SEAG Program Principles and Requirements

Model Emergency Assistance Programs

The following principles should be incorporated in the design of the SEAG Program at each college:

Trust Students

Granting money to students without requiring documentation to verify need requires a significant

amount of trust. Colleges will need to actively listen to and validate the experiences of students. Students who are systemically disadvantaged and choose to seek assistance from your college are also being challenged to display a level of trust that may be perceived as a risk. Trust in students and their autonomy is essential in building student trust in your college.

Be Timely

Financial crises can derail a student's future in a matter of days. A key component to the SEAG Program is creating a process that works quickly and efficiently, so there is not a disruption in the student's learning or academic progress. This may mean thinking creatively to streamline inter-departmental processes that may normally require more time.

Create a Network of Support

Creating a network of support for students in need is one of the most important goals of the SEAG Program. Financial assistance is just one aspect of retention. The intention of this program is to provide immediate financial support to students who are experiencing an emergency that may impact their ability to attend classes, focuses on studies or even remain enrolled in college; it may not solve the student's underlying situation or additional needs. Colleges need a plan to support students beyond this financial assistance to help remedy underlying causes of need and to support the students' resilience and persistence in college. This may mean collaborating with social service agencies, nonprofits, school districts, or other community-based programs in addition to services already offered within the college. In addition to providing students with funds to address immediate needs, colleges should connect these students to other supportive services and programs.

Be Free from Bias or Discrimination

College SEAG Program staff should demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), cultural competency, and a dedication to students' rights to be treated fairly and humanely without discrimination of race, sex, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, etc. Grant decisions should be fair and free from bias or discrimination. Staff should be dedicated to preserving the dignity of students who access these funds.

Track Outcomes/Provide Follow-up

Colleges will be required to report on a minimum set of data elements related to student and program information. Colleges should consider additional data collection elements that will be beneficial for formative evaluation to direct program redesign needs and summative evaluation to guide program outcomes reporting and recommendations to the legislature. Consideration should be given to the process of data collection in a way that maintains the low-barrier intentions of this program. Building relationships with students and connecting them to other support service staff at your college may increase your ability to collect follow-up information to ensure the student's emergency has been resolved and provide outcomes data for the effectiveness of the program.

Leverage Available Resources

Colleges should leverage available college and community financial resources to most effectively impact student success. Colleges are also encouraged to connect students in need to college and community support services and programs to provide ongoing or additional support.

Organizationally Structure to Enhance Access & Student Support

Colleges should design placement of dedicated SEAG Program staff in a way to ensure equitable access and enhanced connection to other student supports and services. Opportunities to access the SEAG Program should include additional options to face-to-face/on-site options, including online, phone and satellite campus access points. Dedicated staff should work as a team to create and implement streamlined processes for accommodating student needs. Staff should be committed to working across departments, be passionate about issues of student retention and success, have the ability to connect students to other student services and support programs, and have the capacity to work on the SEAG Program.

SEAG Program Administration

The following policies and procedures are requirements for the SEAG Program:

- Access to SEAG funds will be low barrier and not require students to complete the FAFSA application

- Ensure all students needing emergency assistance are eligible for SEAG funding including students that may not meet the traditional definition of "needy student"

- Students must submit SEAG requests in writing and be supported in completing their written request (See Appendix A)

- Processes must be established to collect at least the minimum student and program data elements required for monthly and year-end reporting (See Appendix B)

- Colleges must engage in meaningful follow-up with students to document whether the emergency was resolved or not, etc. (See Appendix C)

- A plan for prioritization of fund disbursement must be identified

- Must ensure access to SEAG funds at all times, even in the absence of key personnel

- Must ensure equitable access to SEAG funds by employing targeted and general outreach efforts and allowing for multiple access points

- SEAG funds cannot go towards a students' college tuition and fees

- SEAG funds may be used for book expenses only when other funding sources are exhausted

- Emergency aid must be considered a grant and students must not be required to reimburse college

- Must continue to accept SEAG requests after funds are exhausted, include unfunded requests in program reporting and connect unfunded students to other resources

SEAG Program Delivery Model

The following process elements are suggested for program delivery.

Page 7

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
2021-23 STUDENT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES // April 2021

Identify Students with a Financial Emergency

Students will most likely approach a faculty member, academic advisor, or other staff when a crisis first occurs. Colleges must have a plan in place to create a student-centered, proactive "front line" to identify and refer students to the SEAG Program. This "front line" cannot be centralized into one role; multiple supportive staff across departments must be able to refer students to this program when there is potential for these funds to benefit them. Dedicated SEAG Program staff should be placed where they are best equipped to connect the student to additional college and community resources. Ideally, students will be walked or "handed off" to the appropriate office where they can receive services.

In addition to a front-line response plan, colleges must also develop and employ an outreach plan that includes both general and targeted efforts. General outreach includes such efforts as providing flyers or identifying the program on the college website. Targeted outreach includes identifying and notifying individual students who may need support in the future, including students already receiving other funding and direct service supports, at a certain income level, or those experiencing food or housing insecurity, or homelessness.

SEAG Request Process

The application process must be as low barrier for the student as possible. Multiple access points should be developed to increase equitable access to SEAG funds. Although the most beneficial access point is an in-person conversation, students should also be able to submit a written request online, at off-campus locations, or begin the process with a phone call. Colleges will need to develop a template for written requests (See Appendix A for a sample SEAG request form). In order to create a less burdensome process for students, college staff are encouraged to walk students through submitting their written requests. When discussing needs with the student and assisting them with the written request, staff should discuss additional resources that could be helpful for the student. Colleges will need to establish processes for collecting required and other beneficial student data while maintaining a low-barrier process (See Appendix B for minimum data requirements).

SEAG Request Review & Decision Processes

The college must establish an application review process. The process must define who will make the decision (a single person or a committee), include a decision-making rubric or criteria for prioritization of available funds, and identify how often a student can reapply or any award limits. Emergencies can escalate quickly, so the review and decision process should ensure a timely response to students. This process should also not be hindered in the absence of key personnel, so a back-up plan is required.

Notification

Students must be notified of SEAG funding approval or denial. Notifications must clearly identify next steps. If the student was not recommended for the SEAG funds, the notification must include an explanation of the decision and referrals and resources that may help alleviate the situation.

Disbursement

Colleges must establish a disbursement process that ensures students will receive SEAG awards within a maximum of 4 business days of the submission of the application (a shorter timeframe is

preferred and could be critical to addressing the emergency). Sample forms of disbursement include: 1) a check written directly to the student, 2) a check written to a third-party vendor, or 3) a gift card/pre-paid credit card.

Follow-up

Colleges must follow up with the student at least once within 10 days, and then again within 45 days. Follow-up should include a comprehensive referral to campus and community resources in addition to ensuring the student received their funds. A key aspect of this follow-up is to collect information around whether or not the emergency was addressed and the funds alleviated the immediate barrier to college attendance. A student survey should be administered and include evaluative questions around the impact of the grant program (See Appendix C for a sample).

If a student was not chosen to receive an emergency grant, the office must still follow up with them within 10 days of receiving their denial notification. This would be a good time to refer the student to other programs within your institution or in the community, if those referrals have not already been made.

Application Review Process

The State Board will provide a review committee with applications meeting the minimum criteria. The review committee will make recommendations to the State Board based on the evaluation criteria established. The State Board will confirm final approval. Colleges will be notified via OGMS regarding proposal status by mid-June 2021.

Application Guidance

In preparing the application please consider the following items:

- Review committee members come from a variety of professional backgrounds. Please do not assume committee members are familiar with Washington State Community & Technical College initiatives, resources, policies, processes, funding or acronyms.

- Consider the amount of detail needed to provide a compelling reason for the committee to recommend funding your program. Ideal proposals provide the detail needed to understand how you will design and implement your program, while not distracting committee members with non-related information.

- While there may be some questions that appear duplicative the questions are built in such a way to allow for information to build upon previous detail. Copy and pasting from earlier answers is not recommended.

Application Approval Criteria

This is a competitive funding process. Applications must address the following minimum criteria to be considered:

- Demonstrated student need – includes demographic data on student income levels, students experiencing homelessness, food insecurity and/or other unmet basic needs;

- Equitable student access - ensures students' access to SEAG funds will be as low barrier as possible and demonstrate a commitment to equity and diversity;

- Inclusiveness – provides access for all students needing emergency assistance including those who may not necessarily meet the traditional definition of "financial need";

- Disbursement – demonstrates a commitment to an efficient review and decision process that ensure a minimum lapse of time between application and disbursement and indicates how the college will prioritize disbursement of emergency assistance funds;

- Commitment to Support beyond SEAG funds – demonstrates plan to connect student in need, regardless of SEAG funding, to additional campus and community support services and programs;

- Evaluation plan – details the plan to record student and program data, follow up with students and document effectiveness of the SEAG Program;

- Provides a complete application is submitted in OGMS

OGMS Requirements

The following is required to be considered a complete application in OGMS:

1. Demonstrated Need

   A. Provide detailed information about the demonstrated need for the SEAG program within your college including basic needs assessments, demographic information, projected number of students served, etc.

2. Capacity and Commitment to Leveraging Existing Student Supports

   A. Describe services already offered within your college to support students with emergency and more long-term basic needs.

      i. If your college already has an emergency assistance program, describe the existing program and explain how it differs from and/or will be enhanced by the SEAG Program.

      ii. What other support programs and services have your college established to support students' emergency and long-term basic needs?

      iii. Demonstrate how your college will ensure cross-departmental collaboration to connect students to the SEAG Program and additional student supports.

   B. Describe the staffing plan and departmental location(s) of the SEAG Program at your college. Include a description of program staff roles and time commitment to this work.

   C. Describe existing partnerships and referral agreements with external (community) resources and how these resources will be integrated into your plan to connect students to additional support services.

3. Plan of Operation - Provide details about your college's design for the SEAG Program.

Page 10

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
2021-23 STUDENT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES // April 2021

A. Describe your plan to identify and refer students to your SEAG Program, including how you will ensure equitable access to funding and additional supports.

B. Describe your outreach and marketing plans. How will you ensure marketing is in a manner that reduces stigma around the SEAG Program and outreach is both widespread and targeted to students that need assistance most?

C. How will you ensure timely disbursement of funds within 4 days or less of application? Please identify any circumstances that may postpone disbursement of funds.

D. Describe your SEAG Request Process.

    i. What options will students have to submit a request for SEAG funds?

    ii. What support will be provided to students to complete their submission?

    iii. Which staff will be involved in this process and what is your back-up plan to ensure this support is available?

    iv. How will the request process be as low barrier as possible and ensure equitable access for students?

    v. How will you ensure all students are eligible to apply - not just those who meet the traditional definition of "financial need."

E. Describe your SEAG Review and Decision Processes.

    i. How will you conduct your application review process?

    i. Which staff will be involved in this process and what is your back-up plan to ensure this support is available?

    ii. How quickly will the review and decision occur?

    iii. What criteria will your college use to make decisions about which applicants get funded? Include a decision-making rubric or criteria for prioritization of available funds.

    iv. What award limits will your college have for the SEAG Program and what will you do if a student requests more than that amount?

    v. How often can a student reapply?

D. Describe your SEAG Notification Process.

    vi. How will you notify applicants of award and denial decisions?

    vii. How quickly will the notification occur after a decision is made?

    viii. Which staff will be involved in this process and what is your back-up plan to ensure this support is available?

    ix. What is your plan to provide additional information to students about other support services and programs at time of notification?

F. Describe your SEAG Disbursement Process.

   i. How will funds be disbursed for each type of financial emergency you expect to see?

   i. Which staff will be involved in this process and what is your back-up plan to ensure this support is available?

G. Describe your SEAG Follow-up Process.

   i. How will your college follow-up with recipients to ensure that the emergency has been resolved and/or that they have been able to access additional assistance and supports?

   ii. How soon and how often will you follow up with students?

   iii. What is your plan to continue to connect students seeking SEAG funds to additional resources, support services and programs?

   iv. How will you conduct a student follow-up survey to gather information about the impact of the SEAG funds?

   v. Which staff will be involved in this process and what is your back-up plan to ensure this support is available?

4. Implementation Timeline

A. Provide a projected timeline for implementation and disbursement of SEAG Program funding. Describe any reasons why immediate implementation and/or disbursement of SEAG Program funding may be delayed.

5. Evaluation Plan

A. Describe your college's plan to ensure ongoing formative evaluation of your program including which personnel will be responsible for ensuring evaluations are conducted on a quarterly basis.

   i. Identify which data elements you plan to include in your formative and summative evaluations in addition to the minimum requirements identified in Appendix B.

   i. How does your college plan to evaluate equitable access to SEAG Program funding?

6. Supporting Documents

A. Assurances Document - All sections of the assurances document must be initialed and the completed document signed and attached in OGMS.

B. SEAG Request Form – Students must submit a request for assistance to be eligible for SEAG funding. We strongly encourage that colleges assist students in completing their request. Please attach the SEAG application/request form your college would like to use in OGMS.

   i. Sample Request Form is included in the SEAG Program guidelines (See Appendix A)

C. Student Follow-Up Survey – Applicants must conduct scheduled follow-up with students who

request SEAG funding to determine whether the emergency has been resolved or not. Please attach the form your college would like to use to document student follow-up in OGMS.

    i. Sample Student Follow-Up Survey is included in the SEAG Program guidelines (See Appendix C)

D. Budget - Applicants must submit a two-year budget using the provided spreadsheet and attach it to the application in OGMS.

    i. ~~Budget must not exceed $50,000 per fiscal year.~~

    ii. Administration costs may not exceed 10% of the total budget.

    iii. Indirect costs are not an allowable expenditure with these allocated state funds.

Reporting Requirements

Funded colleges must commit to submitting quarterly and year-end program reports as part of the formative and summative evaluation processes that will inform the legislature and guide program changes to better meet student needs.

The following reports will be due on the last day of the month following the end of the previous quarter. Please see the following detailed schedule of report due dates:

FY22 Quarterly Reports Due Dates	FY23 Quarterly Reports Due Dates
1. Summer Quarter - October 30, 2021	1. Summer Quarter - October 30, 2022
2. Fall Quarter - January 31, 2022	2. Fall Quarter - January 31, 2023
3. Winter Quarter - April 30, 2022	3. Winter Quarter - April 30, 2023
4. Spring Quarter - July 31, 2022	4. Spring Quarter - July 31, 2023

Expenditures Report

Using the Expenditures Report template supplied by SBCTC, funded colleges will track actual expenditures for quarterly and year-end reporting periods.

Students Served Report

Using the Students Served Report template provided by SBCTC, funded colleges will report, at minimum, the data elements outlined in Appendix B and submit this report via the WA State Secure Email Portal.

Formative Evaluation Report

Using the Formative Evaluation template supplied by SBCTC, funded colleges will share course corrections, technical assistance needs, key findings, and institutional learnings. Additionally, funded colleges must commit to conducting formative evaluation processes throughout the implementation

process and report shifts in program design during quarterly learning community convenings, reporting processes and directly to the SBCTC when necessary.

Year-end Summative Reports

Spring quarter reports will serve as the year-end reports and are due to the SBCTC by July 31, 2022 and July 31, 2023. At minimum, year-end reports will include aggregated data from the quarterly reports and a summary of institutional learnings. Colleges will also include student and staff testimonials concerning program access and effectiveness. The SBCTC will work with colleges to fulfill annual reporting requirements to the legislature by December 1 of each year and present recommendations to better serve students.

Colleges will also work with SBCTC to share lessons learned with the college system via printed materials, a web-based forum and/or in-person presentations. Colleges may also be selected to participate in information sessions with the legislature and provide testimony during legislative hearings as appropriate.

Open Licensing Policy Requirement

The SBCTC requires that all digital software, educational resources, and knowledge produced as part of this competitive funding be placed under the Attribution license from Creative Commons. This license allows others to use, distribute, and create derivative works based upon the digital works, while still allowing authors to receive credit for their efforts.

Please take the time to read the license at Creative Commons. If awarded Student Emergency Assistance Grant Program funds, you must agree to allow the SBCTC to distribute the digital software, educational resources, and knowledge created through this funding under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License available at the website above. Creative Commons (CC) is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to making it easier for people to share and build upon the educational and scientific work of others, consistent with the rules of copyright.

Appendix A - Sample SEAG Request Form

Student Emergency Assistance Grant
Request for Funds

Name:
SID:
Phone:
Email:

Page 14

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
2021-23 STUDENT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES // April 2021

Amount Requested:

Type of Need:
☐Housing/Rent ☐Automobile ☐Gas ☐Public Transportation ☐Child-related ☐Health-related
☐Groceries ☐Meal/Nutrition ☐Utilities ☐Books ☐Other:

Personal Statement:
Please describe the emergency related to this request. Include any information that can help us understand why you are requesting SEAG funds.

How does this emergency impact your ability to complete this quarter of college?

Do you foresee any factors OTHER than this emergency that may impact your ability to complete this quarter of college? Please explain.

Please circle which best describes your situation.

How likely are you to drop out or take a break from college at this point in time?

Extremely Likely   Very Likely   Likely   Not Likely   Not at all Likely

If you were to receive emergency grant funds, how likely are you to complete the current quarter?

Extremely Likely   Very Likely   Likely   Not Likely   Not at all Likely

If you were to receive SEAG funds, how likely are you to enroll in this college next quarter?

Extremely Likely   Very Likely   Likely   Not Likely   Not at all Likely

By signing this document, I commit to using the student emergency assistance grant for its intended purposes, outlined in this application. I also agree to allow college staff and/or staff from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to contact me to follow up on my progress after the application is submitted. I verify that all information provided in this application is true and verifiable.

Student Signature_____ **Date** _____

Note to colleges: The request form should also document the decision process and final decision.

Appendix B - Program Data Collection

Student Information

While maintaining the low-barrier intention of this program, colleges will attempt to collect the following information for evaluation of student need and development of program reports and recommendations for further resource assistance. Student Identifier (SID) numbers will be used to collect additional student demographic information available in the data warehouse.

Student Identifier (SID)

Family Status

Number of Dependents

Employment Status

Housing Security Status

Food Security Status

SNAP Recipient

Program Information

At minimum, the following data elements must be collected and included in your monthly and year-end reporting:

Program Data:

- Number of requests

- Number of first-time and repeat requests

- Number of approved requests

- Number of denied requests

- Total amount of SEAG funds requested

- Total amount of SEAG funds awarded

- Average SEAG award amount

- Number of requests by request/need type

- Total amount of other emergency assistance funds awarded by source

- Number of students connected to other support services by program

Request and Award Data by Student:

- Student Information (noted above)

- Amount requested

- Amount disbursed

- Request/need categories

    - Disbursement method (check, gift card, vendor payment, etc.)

    - Time Lapse between application and decision

    - Time lapse between decision and award disbursement

The SBCTC reserves the right to adjust required data elements for quarterly and year-end reporting in collaboration with SEAG Program Colleges to effectively report findings and recommendations to the legislature.

Appendix C - Student Follow-up Survey

At a minimum, the following elements should be included in a student follow-up survey. Additional questions may be added. Results will be aggregated to provide additional information for our reporting requirements.

Before receiving Student Emergency Assistance Grant funds, how likely would you have left or taken a break from attending college?

EXTREMELY LIKELY   VERY LIKELY   LIKELY   NOT LIKELY

After receiving Student Emergency Assistance Grant funds, how likely will you leave or take a break from attending college?

EXTREMELY LIKELY   VERY LIKELY   LIKELY   NOT LIKELY

On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being the lowest level of satisfaction and 10 being the highest, how satisfied are you with the Student Emergency Assistance Grant process?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Comments:

Which statement best reflects the current status of the emergency that you listed on your Student Emergency Assistance Grant request (circle one or more)?

My emergency is completely resolved.
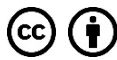
My emergency is somewhat resolved.

My emergency is not resolved at all.

My emergency will never be resolved.

If your emergency is not resolved, what will it take to be resolved?

Did someone at the college help you connect with **additional resources?**

If yes, have you accessed or attempted to access any of the resources that you were referred to **by the staff member,** and **what were they?**

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