

***Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund:
Funding for New Jersey’s Public Institutions of Higher Education
amid COVID-19 Pandemic***

On April 14, 2020, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos [announced](#) that nearly \$3 billion would be made available to governors to ensure education continues for students of all ages impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund, authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, is a flexible emergency block grant designed to allow governors to decide how best to meet the needs of students, schools, postsecondary institutions and other education-related organizations in their states.

Governor Phil Murphy decided to make New Jersey’s GEER funds available to public institutions of higher education for grants to help ensure continued educational services for students amid the unprecedented public health emergency through the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE). A total of \$68.3 million will be awarded to New Jersey’s public colleges and universities.

What can the funds be used for?

There is flexibility in how the funds are used, including for costs incurred due to the pandemic. Generally institutions of higher education can use the GEER funds to support students and faculty for continuity of operations during the period of disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This could include costs to cover salary of faculty and staff, maintain student services, or otherwise continue institutional operations. GEER funds may be used to cover the costs of expenditures incurred on or after March 13, 2020, when a national emergency was declared.

How will funds be distributed?

Grants to institutions will be based on an OSHE-developed allocation rationale that incorporates priority populations from the New Jersey State Higher Education Plan, “[Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education.](#)” This includes institutions’ share of Pell recipients, underrepresented minority and overall enrollments. These priority populations have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and as such, institutions serving larger proportions of these student groups were prioritized. The funding will be divided between New Jersey’s senior public institutions and community colleges.

Will the funds need to be spent by a certain deadline?

GEER funds must be spent within one year of receipt.

Who can I contact for more information?

Please feel free to email OSHE@oshe.nj.gov if you have any questions.