

## COVID-19 Resources

This page includes financial aid resources and information for students and families impacted by disruptions related to COVID-19.

### Special Financial Circumstances

Undergraduate students who have experienced or whose families have experienced substantial changes in financial circumstances should contact the Financial Aid Office to request a re-evaluation of their federal financial aid application. All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Please email the [Financial Aid Office](#) for more information.

### Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act

In March 2020, Congress enacted the CARES Act and was signed into law. The CARES Act included funding to provide emergency grants to students. At this time, UNMC has exhausted the emergency grant funding. For information on how UNMC distributed the funds, please see our [CARES website](#).

### Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA)

In December 2020, Congress enacted the CRRSAA and was signed into law. The CRRSAA requires that institutions prioritize students with exceptional need, such as students who receive Pell Grants, in awarding the Emergency Grants to students. In addition, the CRRSAA explicitly allows grants to be provided to students exclusively enrolled in distance education. These emergency grants may be used for any component of the student's cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or childcare. All CRRSAA emergency funds for students have been exhausted.

### American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act

On May 11, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) announces the student allocation of the third round of federal stimulus funding for higher education through the American Recovery Plan (ARP). This law provides additional funding for the Higher Education Relief Fund (HEERF). All ARP Act emergency funds for students have been exhausted.

### Student Health and Wellness

UNMC has [counseling and mental health](#) resources available for all students.

### Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program

The State of Nebraska is participating in the [Emergency Rental Assistance](#) Program. A program overview and the eligibility requirements can be found on their website.

### Food Insecurity

The [Maverick Food Pantry](#) remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting dietary and personal hygiene needs of students, faculty, and staff at UNO and UNMC. For students studying at our other campus locations, please review the listing of [Food Pantry Resources](#) in your area.

## SNAP Benefits for Students (COVID Relief)

A recent change in federal law has made some students temporarily eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP is a federal government program that provides nutrition benefits to qualified families. Under regular SNAP rules students enrolled in college at least half-time are typically ineligible. However, the recently passed Consolidated Appropriations Act temporarily expands SNAP eligibility to include students who either:

1. Are eligible for work-study during the regular academic year, or
2. Have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of \$0 in the current academic year.

This temporary expansion will expire 30 days after the COVID-19 public health emergency is lifted. For additional information, please visit the SNAP page through the [Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#). Students may apply for assistance through [AccessNebraska](#).

Note: You may be asked to document your eligibility for Federal Work Study (FWS) and/or \$0 EFC status. You can document FWS eligibility by taking a screenshot of your financial aid award screen in MyRecords or document your EFC by downloading your Student Aid Report (SAR). Please follow these [instructions](#) for downloading your SAR.

## Emergency Broadband Benefit – updated December 2021

As of December 31, 2021, the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program will become the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), a new longer-term program.

**Households enrolled in the Emergency Broadband Benefits Program as of 12/31/2021 will continue to receive their currently monthly benefit until 3/1/2022.**

What's Changing?

- The maximum monthly benefit will change from \$50 per month to \$30 per month for households not located on qualifying Tribal lands. The monthly benefit will remain at \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands.
- Households have new ways to qualify for the Affordable Connectivity Program such as: receiving WIC benefits or having an income at or below 200% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#).
- Households that qualified for the Emergency Broadband Benefit due to a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020 or by meeting the eligibility criteria for a participating providers COVID-19 program will need to requalify for the Affordable Connectivity Program. These households will receive additional details about the steps they need to take from the program administrator (USAC) or their broadband provider, in January 2022, and will be given at least 30 days to respond. They will continue to receive their full EBB benefit until March 1, 2022.

The [Emergency Broadband Benefit](#) (EBB) is an FCC program to help households struggling to pay for internet service during the pandemic. This benefit will connect eligible households to jobs, critical healthcare services, and virtual classrooms. The EBB will provide a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on Tribal

lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute \$10-\$50 toward the purchase price. The EBB is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

Eligibility for the Emergency Broadband Benefit (meet one of the following)

- Has an income that is at or below 135% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) or participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, or [Lifeline](#);
- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision, or did so in the 2019-2020 school year or 2020-2021 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating providers' existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

As of May 12, 2021, eligible households will be able to enroll in the program to receive a monthly discount off the cost of broadband service from an approved provider. Eligible households can enroll through an approved provider or by visiting <https://getemergencybroadband.org/>.

Please visit the Emergency Broadband Benefit [consumer FAQ's](#) for additional information.

### **Student Loan Repayment**

- On April 6, 2022, the 0% student loan interest rate and suspension of payments on federal loans owned by the [U.S. Department of Education](#) were extended until August 31, 2022.
- Eligible loans include Federal Direct Loans (including Subsidized, Unsubsidized, PLUS, Grad PLUS and Direct Consolidation loans). On March 30, 2021, the Department of Education extended these provisions to borrowers with Federal Family Education Loans (FFELP) as well. Please contact your loan servicer for additional information. While the Health Professions Student Loans and the Federal Nursing Loans qualify for both the 0% interest rate and suspension of payments, Federal Perkins Loans do not qualify.
- If you have questions regarding your federal student loans, please contact your loan servicer. You can find your loan servicer information by logging into [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) or calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-433-3243.

For further information regarding UNMC resources, please visit the [Keep Learning at UNMC](#) website.