

SMU Student Emergency Fund (SEF)

The SMU Student Emergency Fund (SEF) includes staff from the Office of Student Advocacy and Support, Financial Services, Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, and Enrollment Services, and is part of a campus wide network of student support services. We work collaboratively with Student Success and Retention, DASS, The Dr. Bob Smith Health Center, Athletics, International Student & Scholar Services, and other partners to ensure students have access to both short-term resources and long-term community support.

SEF awards may be available to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate credential and/or degree seeking students who experience an emergency. **An SEF need is defined as an unforeseen, short-term issue that requires financial resources to solve, and, if not addressed, could prohibit a student from remaining enrolled and persisting toward completion or graduation.** Students should make every effort to exhaust all other available resources prior to applying for the fund. If funds are granted, they do not need to be repaid.

Who is Eligible?

- Undergraduate, graduate, and professional students are eligible to apply
- Students who are enrolled during the semester that SEF is requested
- Students who are active in a credential and/or degree granting program
- Students with an immediate, temporary financial hardship related to an emergency, accident, or unexpected critical incident
- Students who may not be able to continue with their education without financial assistance due to the emergency
- Staff members who are employed by SMU full-time are not eligible for the SEF

Eligible Expenses

The Student Emergency Fund is designed for expenses including but not limited to:

- Books and other essential academic expenses
- Prescriptions and other costs related to emergency medical care
- Short term rent and/or utilities (such as electricity and water)
- Travel costs associated with the death or illness of a family member
- Temporary housing needs
- Replacement of essential personal belongings following an emergency
- SEF funds cannot be used to pay for tuition or fees charged to the SMU Student Account

Students may only access the Student Emergency Fund twice in their SMU career, but some funding tiers only allow one-time access. *Please note that other financial resources, such as those available through the Office of Financial Services, must have been considered, are determined to be insufficient, or are not available in the timeframe needed by the student.*

Application Process

Students who have unexpected financial hardship can start the application process by submitting a Caring Community Connections (CCC) submission: www.smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc

Please select “economic hardship” at the bottom of the page.

Once the CCC submission is received and eligibility is confirmed, the student will receive a Student Emergency Fund application link. The application should be completed in full, and students must provide

documentation to support the request. Documentation may include but is not limited to, documentation of the crisis (as applicable), bills or invoices for payments to be made (as applicable). Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

The Student Emergency Fund committee will review a student's request and the student will be notified of the decision and any subsequent next steps within 5-7 business days. Once a decision has been made, a representative from the Office of the Dean of Students will contact the student via email with next steps, or with referrals to other potential assistance options. If a student is granted funds, it could take up to 5 business days for funds to be accessible.

Conditions

- Award amounts will vary based on request
- Rent assistance can only be paid directly to the information/name that appears on the W9
- The award amount is based on the individual student's needs and not family needs. Exceptions may be made for some dependent care.
- Fund cannot be used for expenditures incurred from something other than an emergency
- Debt payments such as credit card payments or bankruptcies will not be considered for monetary assistance
- Funding cannot be used for tuition and fees

****The Student Emergency Fund would not be made possible without the generous support of the SMU community's donations. If you are interested in giving to this fund, please contact the Office of the Dean of Students 214-768-4564 or by email at deanofstudents@smu.edu.**