

EMERGENCY AID: A LITTLE HELP GOES A LONG WAY

**Critical help for Retention and Graduation
OSFA
2017-2018**

EMERGENCY AID LAB

In April 2017, the University of Washington-Seattle joined a national effort to tackle emergency financial aid, led through the Emergency Aid Lab (EAL). Supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the EAL consists of an Innovation Cohort made of five institutions, as well as a much larger Community of Practice.

UW-Seattle and UW-Tacoma are part of the innovation cohort, and get direct support to fast-track designing and developing more comprehensive emergency aid support for students.



OUR EA WORKING GROUP

- > **Financial Aid:** Kay Lewis, Tim Wold, Megan Davis, Laurne Terasaki
- > **HFS:** JoAnna Olson
- > **OVPSL:** Felipe Martinez
- > **OMA&D:** Kristian Wiles
- > **University Advancement:** Tomitha Blake, Mackenzie Hoy
- > **Student Body:** Antonia Dorn



WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- > Supporting students is our priority.
- > Increase in housing/living costs, evidence of food insecurity; college is not just about tuition and books.
- > Making higher education attainable no matter what resources you/your family have.
- > Money management and student loans tend to be high-stress topics.
- > Students cannot succeed academically if they are worrying about basic needs being covered.



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- > Student-centered approach.
- > Treat every case on an individual basis; do not assume a student's struggles/strengths.
- > Use welcoming, inclusive and non-judgmental language.
- > Lower the barriers to get students in the door.
- > Consider the long view—the whole picture—the emergency is just one symptom of what's going on.
- > Do the leg-work for the student—they are stressed, use our back channels for them, don't refer from office to office.
- > Understand that some cases are more complex and may not be solved with the resources we have to offer; empathetic support can still help students persist.



OUR EA INITIATIVES

Since April 2017, our team has been working on a number of projects to build a robust emergency aid system

- > **Triage Team:** supports students and resolves cases
- > **Advisory Board:** guides and informs Working Group
- > **Campus Analysis Survey:** supportive but unaware
- > **Short-Term Loan Survey:** room for improvement
- > **EA Website:** moved from Seattle to tri-campus layout
- > **EA Request Form:** low barrier, self-identifying
- > **Policy Analysis:** be the change!
- > **Proactive Approach:** work upstream



EMERGENCY AID WEBSITE

The website contains information for all three UW campuses and all students are able to access the aid request form.

W UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Students / Parents / Faculty & Staff / Alumni

EMERGENCY AID / BOTHELL / SEATTLE / TACOMA

EMERGENCY AID

Home > Emergency Aid

We understand life can be unpredictable. Unexpected costs and needs can cause significant stress and impact your academic success and personal well being. That's why the **three campuses of the University of Washington** have Emergency Aid to support currently enrolled UW students.

Emergency Aid assists students who are experiencing unexpected financial hardships that may disrupt their education or prevent them from earning their UW degree, including:

- Emergency medical/dental costs
- Housing and living expenses
- Family emergencies
- Natural disasters
- Loss of income
- And more...

Aid may come in a variety of forms, including grants, loans and/or campus and community resources.

Learn more about emergency aid resources on each campus:

[Bothell](#) [Seattle](#) [Tacoma](#)

EMERGENCY AID REQUEST FORM

If you are in need of assistance, please submit an Emergency Aid request form to get connected with resources and support.

[COMPLETE FORM >](#)

On the website:

- Students can find resources on and off campus, as well as submit a request for emergency aid.
- Describes the types of expenses that may be considered an emergency.



EMERGENCY AID REQUEST FORM

Emergency Aid Request

Emergency Aid is intended to assist students who face unexpected costs that impede their ability to continue and succeed academically and personally while enrolled at the University of Washington. If you are experiencing difficulty paying for time-sensitive expenses, including medical bills, housing/rent, food, transportation fees, or other basic necessities, please fill out the following form and, if you choose, include a brief summary of your circumstance. Currently enrolled students may be eligible for some form of assistance.

If you are submitting this form during business hours and would prefer to talk to someone in-person, financial aid counselors on your campus may be available to meet with no appointment necessary.

Upon submission of this form, a professional staff member from your respective campus will be in contact within 24-48 hours (excluding weekend days) to discuss the best ways to support you. The staff members who respond to these requests are dedicated to supporting students in times of immediate need. Your information will be kept confidential within this small group of staff members.

Your Information

First Name :*

Last Name :*

Student ID Number :*

Campus :*

Email :*

Phone Number :

Your Circumstance :

1. Students submit the form, which alerts Tim and Laurie.
2. They then send it to the Triage Team (or UWT/B staff) who input notes if they have any info on the student.
3. Triage Team does “behind the scenes” work.
4. 24-48 hour response time between form submission and first contact with student.



TRIAGE TEAM

- > **Health & Wellness:** Amanda Myhre
- > **HFS:** Ashlee Norris
- > **OMA&D:** Raul Anaya, Kristian Wiles
- > **OVPSL:** Felipe Martinez, Sean Ferris
- > **Financial Aid:** Kim Fee, James Flowers, Tim Wold
- > **Student Fiscal Services:** Marisa Martin
- > **Undergrad Academic Advising:** Dan Feetham

Using an online database, the team can track information and progress toward resolution for each case they are involved in.



RESOLVING STUDENT EMERGENCIES

Generally, a one-time payment or financial aid repackaging to bridge a temporary financial gap due to an unforeseen event.

Factors to consider:

- > Is this truly a one-time emergency, or a glimpse into future financial difficulties?
- > Has there been an unexpected change in their life? Personally, in their family, or otherwise?
- > Have they accepted all financial aid, including loans?
- > What other support services may they need? Academic advising, counseling, food pantry, etc.



STUDENTS WITHOUT FAFSA/WASFA

- > International Students—OSFA has very few resources for international students, but we will try to help students in financial crisis.
 - The Triage Team will need to work with Student Life, ISS and others to see if we can help with short term funding, help student return home or provide food security funds.
- > OSFA can help with short term loan, food security grant, but they need a FAFSA for US citizen/perm resident, WASFA for undocumented students or the international aid needs analysis form for other expenses.
- > Refer to on/off-campus resources or private funds.

CASE STUDY 1

UW-S, Non-resident, undergraduate, senior year

“My mom and I were **victims of the fires** raging in California. We've **lost the house and everything in it**. My mom's business operated out of the house so our source of **income is now gone**. We have little to no resources left except for what the community is providing. She is currently seeking refuge in other people's houses who have not yet been affected by the fire. My mom is trying to figure out insurance, but the system is being overwhelmed with the amount of claims. I've paid this quarter's tuition out of fear of penalty but it seems that that amount is dearly precious now and possibly can't be paid again for next payment period. We have taken out loans each year of my study and now we face a reality where we might not be able to pay that back later on now that my family has no foreseeable sources of income.”



CASE STUDY 1 – RESOLUTION

- > Student traveled to CA (plane ticket from family friend) after the fire.
- > She received the food security grant, \$100.
- > Referred to the Counseling Center.
- > Upon her return from CA, she had her mother's completed income revision request for new Expected Family Contribution of \$10,000.
- > Senior year; A&S department used their Dean's discretionary funds to assist the student in tuition.
- > Student was awarded \$4000 in scholarship funds for living costs. Other loan is available if needed.



CASE STUDY 2

Resident, Senior, UWT

"I am a senior and have been **homeless** since September; this displacement has nearly **paralyzed me with anxiety** and is **affecting every aspect** of my life-my academics/no internet/no shower, no work space etc. I lost my apartment in August/it was full of mold and the rent was going up- and have not been able to find a place for **my son and I** to live because of the amount of money that landlords want upfront to move. A friend who is letting us stay with him this week however, after that I am not sure what we are going to do. I am a **first-generation college student** and a mere 8 months away from graduation/moving on to law school. I honestly do not know how I am going to survive it homeless. I am a **disabled student** and do not have much more in me emotionally. I am in a **constant state of crisis** and I cannot remember the last time my chest did not hurt."



CASE STUDY 2 - RESOLUTION

- > Student is at loan and Pell maximums
- > Perkins was disbursed before program ended (2017) and has additional eligibility for Perkins.
- > Student met with UWT financial aid staff. Awarded additional Perkins to meet need.
- > Later awarded UW-T EA funding of \$400 (standardized amount) to help find safe housing.



CASE STUDY 3

UW-S, Resident, Undergraduate, Junior

“I have been struggling to pay for **rent and food** this quarter, I have tried low income housing and Foods stamps, but I am not covered due to working less the 20 hours. I have **tried many resources**, but have not received any help. I have used my savings for rent and food these past months and need some help. I am a **Junior**, but I believe this might be my **last year attending** due to this situation. It is a **big stress** and has caused my **lack of grades** this last year due to the same experience. I am a **first generation minority student** it has been a tough transition, I do not want this to affect my education and leave UW for work. I am halfway done and I will get back on my feet once I get a job with much more hours. I was told about this opportunity by a professor and would appreciate any assistance if that is possible. Anything can help Thank you.”



CASE STUDY 3 – RESOLUTION

- > Student got connected with EOP to submit a supplemental grant to reduce direct loans.
- > Food pantry was offered.
- > EOP staff will follow up on this case for the winter and spring to make sure student continues enrollment.



MID-YEAR REPORT

- > From October 2017 - March 2018**
 - 107 unique student cases**
 - 75% of students' primary concern was housing/food**
 - Half of the students met directly with a team member for advising/counseling**
- > Over \$120,000 was disbursed via grants, scholarships, loans, food security grants, and short-term loans.**
- > 53 of 58 students registered for the next quarter (Fall 2017 → Winter 2018)**



FUTURE PROJECTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

- > Communications Plan**
- > Student Engagement - Focus groups**
- > Policy Analysis and Conversations**
- > Data & Assessment**
- > Continuing a tri-campus effort**
- > Continuing to iterate and improve website and online form**

CONNECT WITH US

EMAIL - EMERGAID@UW.EDU



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- > What are your observations about the issue presented (housing, food insecurity, cost of living)?**
- > What did you know – or notice – about these issues prior to this morning’s forum?**
- > What information stands out from this presentation? What is a key learning or take-away for you?**
- > What are your ideas about how we should address these issues on campus?**
 - Based on your ideas, what would you recommend as a next step?**
 - Are you interested in continuing this conversation after this forum?**

