BEST PRACTICES-ADMINISTRATION
Emergency Aid Network

60×30TX
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

EA Net

Presenters

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Defining an emergency

An unexpected or unforeseen expense, event, or circumstance that could cause a loss of momentum toward student success.

Note: Typical unexpected or unforeseen expense, event, or circumstance categories might include: childcare, housing/rent, food, health care, transpiration, and utilities.

Planning

- Separate duties.
- Use a planning or steering committee.
- Determine how decisions will be made.

Flexibility

- Consider aid that goes beyond financial solutions.
    - Food pantry
    - Housing vouchers
    - Financial Literacy workshops
    - Childcare referrals
- Build flexible administrative structure.
- Build in flexibility for unusual circumstances.

Identifying a cause

- Are there underlying policies that cause students to have higher and immediate financial need?
- Can we pre-identify students who may need emergency funding? Can we provide special messaging and financial literacy outreach before an emergency occurs?

Program stewardship

- Identify which office(s) will be responsible for managing emergency aid services.
- Coordinate seamless collaboration.
- Collect data that tracks recurrence of requests.

Program stewardship (continued)

- Determine if any and what limitations (lifetime limits or limits per request should be imposed.

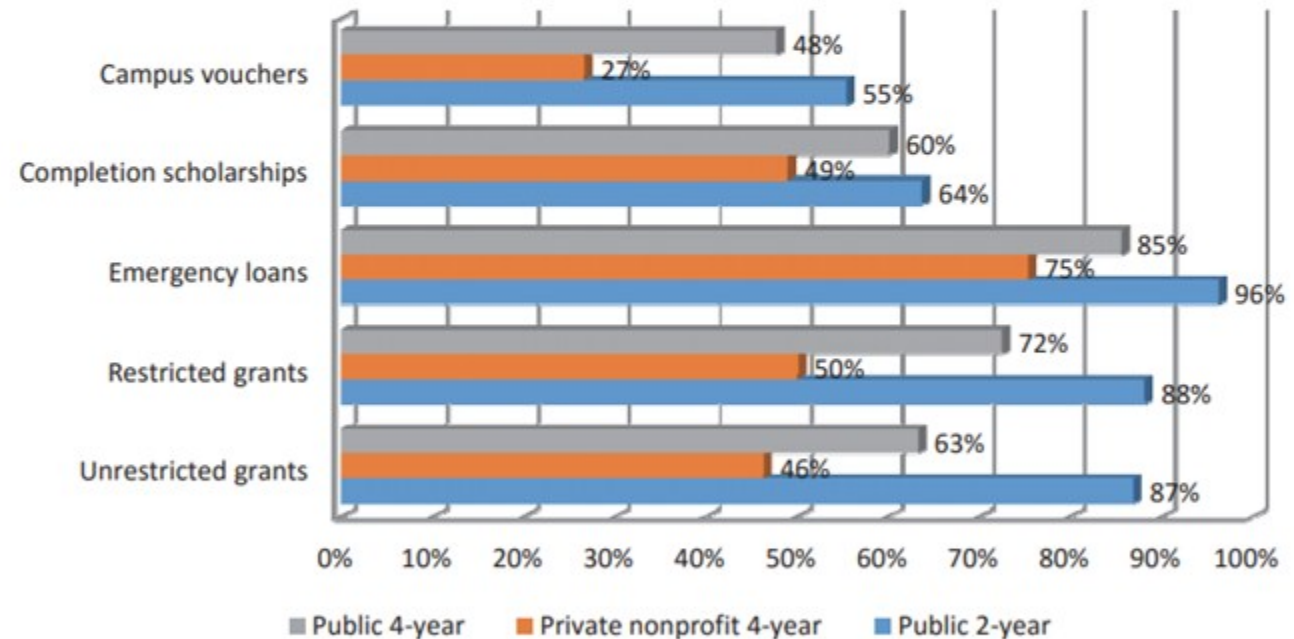| Limitation on Fund Usage	% of Programs Using Criteria
Lifetime limit	90%
Limit per request	80%
Limit per semester or term	65%
Other limitations	$1500 limit is stated but exceptions are made, limitations are handled on a case-by-case basis

Application process

- Establish which types of emergency aid will require an application and make the application process as simple as possible.

- Source: NASPA's Landscape Analysis of Emergency Aid Programs naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Emergency_Aid_Report.pdf

Figure 10 | Percentage of Institutions That Require an Application, by Type of Emergency Aid and Sector

Campus vouchers: 48%, 27%, 55%
Completion scholarships: 60%, 49%, 64%
Emergency loans: 85%, 75%, 96%
Restricted grants: 72%, 50%, 88%
Unrestricted grants: 63%, 46%, 87%

■ Public 4-year   ■ Private nonprofit 4-year   ■ Public 2-year

Application process (continued)

- On-line applications through current channels or portals eliminate barriers to understanding.
- An on-line application should not eliminate one-on-one counseling.
- Application should specify criteria.
- One application should exist for all emergency aid needs.
- Request documentation to confirm amount of need.

Award distribution

- Consider different methods of distributing aid.
  - Gift cards
  - Grants
  - Direct Deposit
  - Payment directly to debtor

Timeliness/efficiency

- Make intake process timely.
- Aid should be available within 48 hours of request.
- Streamline administrative functions for responsiveness.
- Pre-purchase food/gas and other store gift cards for quick and easy distribution.
- Pay third party bill directly to students rather than offering cash.

Staff/faculty training

- Educate back-up staff for continuity of business.
- Train faculty and staff across campus on the program and its benefits.
- Include how to identify students in need.
- Have a clear process for how to refer students.

Design/innovation

- Assessment of the program is imperative.
  - Pre- and post-assessment based on learning outcomes
  - Compare EA recipients to those with similar characteristics who don't request EA (persistence) and the general student body
    - Persistence
    - Retention
    - Graduation Rates
- Evaluate EA effectiveness from a student lens.
  - Surveys
  - Focus groups
- Conduct SWOT analysis with various stakeholders.

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Resources

- https://www.nasfaa.org/news-item/11506/Student_Aid_Perspectives_The_Case_for_Expanding_Emergency_Aid; Sara Goldrick-Rab NASFAA The Case for expanding emergency aid online article
- http://wihopelab.com/
- https://scholars.org/brief/improving-emergency-financial-aid-programs-help-students-stay-college january 8, 2016 improving emergency financial aid programs to help students stay in college
- https://home.mygreatlakes.org/mglstatic/community/forms/EG_Emergency_Grant_Closing_Report_2012-15_0216.pdf