SEMINOLE EMERGENCY RELIEF
FAQ FOR APPLICANTS

Who can apply for Seminole Emergency relief?

Current faculty and staff employed by Florida State University may apply for financial assistance. For purposes of this program, this includes post-doctoral fellow and associates. This program does not apply to volunteers, faculty on emeritus (i.e., unpaid) status or undergraduate or graduate student employees.

Undergraduate students and graduate students who are experiencing financial hardship should contact the Office of Student Financial Affairs for support.

When can I apply for aid through Seminole Emergency Relief, and what can be covered with awarded aid?

Seminole Emergency Relief funds are intended to be a temporary life-preserver, not an income supplement or an alternative to insurance, FEMA or other types of public aid. Seminole Emergency Relief offers support to colleagues facing unexpected, temporary financial hardship, such as with rent, utilities or other essential expenses or out-of-pocket costs as a result of sudden illness, family crisis (such as a house fire) or natural disaster (hurricane, flooding, tornado or sinkhole). If you find yourself dealing with a serious financial hardship as a result of such a life crisis, consider applying for Seminole Emergency Relief funds.

What constitutes “out-of-pocket” costs?

This could apply to a variety of financial costs directly tied to the effects of an unexpected life crisis, such as money spent on food, hotels, utility bills, rent or mortgage payments, car payments, tree removal, emergency day care due to extended school closures, etc. This would not include lost wages or lost income, nor would it include existing debts (i.e. existing past-due bills, credit card debt, etc.).

Do I have to repay a Seminole Emergency Relief grant?

Typically, you will not have to repay the amount awarded to you. The Seminole Emergency Relief program is designed to be a grant and not a loan. However, if you submit to your insurance company, FEMA or another disaster relief program a request for reimbursement for the same costs detailed in your Seminole Emergency Relief application and you are subsequently reimbursed for those costs, the university asks that you return the amount back to Seminole Emergency Relief. This way, even more faculty and staff can receive assistance and benefit from the program.

Can I apply multiple times and for different expenses?
The maximum amount an employee can be awarded is $1,000 in a calendar year. If you are awarded an amount less than the maximum and another crisis arises, you may submit a new application. However, the total cap of $1,000 per employee per calendar year remains.

**Can a Seminole Emergency Relief application request money to cover lost wages/income if I missed work due to an unexpected life crisis?**

No. This program is not intended to supplement income or cover lost wages due to missed work, as Seminole Emergency Relief is not a leave program or a salary replacement program. Instead, this program is designed to assist with unforeseen costs and bills directly related to an unexpected, temporary hardship. Applications requesting funds solely for unpaid leave will not be granted.

**What documentation is required to be submitted with the application?**

This will depend on the individual claim. However, you should provide any documentation that is relevant to the specific financial need and hardship you experienced as an unforeseen and temporary hardship. Consider submitting copies of bills/letters/paid invoices/receipts, photographs of home damage and proof of ownership of damaged items. If you have questions about what may be helpful to your application, you can email SeminoleEmergencyEmployeeRelief@fsu.edu for guidance specific to your situation.

**Can multiple family members apply if they are employed at FSU and meet the qualifications?**

Yes, as long as all family members are current FSU employees and are not requesting reimbursement for the same costs or expenses. The cap on $1,000 in a rolling year is per individual employee, not per family.

**How long should it take from application submission to receipt of funds?**

Applications will be reviewed as received. During large-scale events, such as a hurricane, funds may be limited and application awards will be made on a first-come, first-served basis. Awardees will be notified via email whether their application is accepted or denied, or if additional information is needed. Email notifications will contain additional details specific to each award.

**How can I receive funds (cash, check, gift card, direct deposit)?**

Typically, awards will be processed through the payroll system and will be directly deposited into the bank account on record with Payroll Services.

**Will Seminole Emergency Relief grants be taxed?**

Generally, Seminole Emergency Relief awards will be taxed as income and applicable payroll deductions will be made. However, if there is a large-scale disaster, an assessment will be made as to whether the Internal Revenue Code section addressing disaster relief payments may apply.
Under such circumstances, Seminole Emergency Relief funds can be excluded from income (and, as such, would not be subject to income, Social Security or Medicare taxes).

**What if I am awarded a grant that is later reimbursed by my insurance, FEMA or some other disaster relief fund?**

The university understands that it may not be clear in the middle of a crisis what costs may eventually be covered by insurance, FEMA or other disaster relief funds. If you are granted an Seminole Emergency Relief award for costs that are later reimbursed by another organization, we ask that you return the Seminole Emergency Relief funds. This way, more faculty and staff can receive assistance and benefit from the program.

**Who reviews and decides on the applications to Seminole Emergency Relief?**

A committee within University Human Resources will review the applications.

**Whom do I contact for more information or to ask questions?**

Seminole Emergency Relief for faculty and staff is administered through FSU Human Resources. We have created an email account specific to this program: [SeminoleEmergencyEmployeeRelief@fsu.edu](mailto:SeminoleEmergencyEmployeeRelief@fsu.edu). If you have details you would like to discuss, send an email with your name and phone number, and we will get in touch with you as quickly as we can.

**If my application is denied, is there an appeals process?**

No. Applications could be denied for a variety of reasons, including lack of funding, untimely submission, improper requests, refusal to provide additional information, etc. Applicants who are denied funds but who believe this may have been based on an error are free to email [SeminoleEmergencyEmployeeRelief@fsu.edu](mailto:SeminoleEmergencyEmployeeRelief@fsu.edu) to provide additional information. If mistakes are made, we will make every attempt to correct them; however, there is no right to appeal and no appeals process. To best secure your chances of being awarded a grant through Seminole Emergency Relief, make sure your application is complete, clear and detailed and provides as much relevant supporting documentation as possible.

**What happens if there is not enough money for people applying for aid?**

Seminole Emergency Relief is completely dependent upon donations. We hope that people will donate to Seminole Emergency Relief even when there are no large-scale events in the headlines. Unfortunately, some applications may be denied due to a lack of funds, not due to the content of the application.