

PANDEMIC CHILD ASSISTANCE FUND GUIDELINES

The **Pandemic Child Assistance Fund** ("Fund") was developed to provide financial support to KU employees and graduate student employees who have experienced a change in circumstances associated with the cost of their child's education and supervision needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds have been made available through federal emergency relief dollars.

The financial assistance provided through the Fund is intended to help defray some of the additional expenses families have incurred for the fall semester of the 2020 academic year due to the cancellation of in-person instruction for children between kindergarten and eighth grade. Specifically, these funds are meant to mitigate costs associated with mandated remote (virtual) or hybrid education for their children. The financial assistance will likely only cover a portion of expenses. The Fund is not a loan and the funds do not need to be repaid.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Current staff member, faculty member, Graduate Research Assistants (GRA's 032000), Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs 0S1000), Graduate Assistants (GAs 031000, 031110), or Residential Graduate Assistants (0S4400) at the KU Lawrence and/or Edwards campus, AND;
- Have proven guardianship of a child or children within their household between kindergarten and 8th grade for the 2020-21 school year, or is a guardian for a child with a disability in high school requiring supervision and care, AND;
- Have experienced increased expenses due to providing remote education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., internet and technology costs, tutors, educational pods, and/or additional childcare expenses).
- Approved applicants who are not actively employed at KU at the time of disbursement are no longer eligible to receive funds.
- Those holding student hourly, affiliate and volunteer positions are not eligible.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Fund is to help defray financial expenses for eligible KU families who are faced with an increase in child expenses due to the imposed transition from in-person to online school for children in grades kindergarten through 8th grade, or for a child with a disability in high school requiring daytime supervision & care that would typically be provided by the school. Such changes to in-person instruction at the elementary and middle school levels during the fall 2020 semester to either fully online or a hybrid model have created a hardship for working families who have had to quickly find alternative solutions for education, technology, and supervision needs for their children.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA & LIMITATIONS

Applications shall be completed online beginning Wednesday, September 23rd; and must be submitted no later than **Sunday, October 4th at 11:59 p.m.** If the employee is unable to submit the application online, Human Resources Management (HRM) representatives can assist the employee or the employee's representative in applying for funds. In those cases where assistance is needed, please reach out to HRM no later than Friday, October 2nd at 4:30 p.m. Applications after the October 4th deadline will not be accepted.

All applications will have an initial review through HRM. Any applications requiring further review will be submitted to the Review Committee. Applications that meet the requirements shall be approved for funding. Funds will be distributed as a one-time, non-taxable payment. The amount of funds will be determined by the total number of approved applicants. Funds will be equally distributed to approved applicants.

HRM or the Review Committee may request additional information or documentation from the applicant before making a final decision. When a request is made for additional information than what the applicant has provided, the applicant has one week to provide the requested information or to provide a justifiable explanation as to why it cannot be provided. If the applicant does not provide the requested information (or a justifiable explanation as to why it cannot be provided) within the one-week time period, the application may be denied.

There is a limit of one application and one payment per household, despite the number of children residing in that household. A household is defined as primary residence of dependent child, who is in kindergarten through eighth grade or a child with a disability in high school who requires supervision. Only those who have incurred expenses in the fall semester of the 2020 academic year as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and their school district's change from in-person to online and/or hybrid learning, may apply. Each applicant must attest to the validity of the information submitted through the application.

REVIEW COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

The Fund shall be directed by a Review Committee consisting of five members and is appointed as follows:

- One Chair of the Review Committee shall be appointed by the Vice Provost for Operations.
- Four KU Lawrence Campus ("KU-L") representatives appointed by the designated Chair.
- One KU Edwards Campus ("KU-E") representative appointed by the Dean of the Edwards Campus and the School of Professional Studies.
 - At least one representative shall serve on behalf of Human Resources Management (HRM).
 - At least one representative shall serve on behalf of faculty.
 - At least one representative shall serve on behalf of graduate students.
 - One General Counsel (GC) employee shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting member of the Review Committee, and shall be responsible for legal oversight for the actions and decisions of the Review Committee.

CHILD ASSISTANCE FUND REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Melissa Smith, Chair

*Director of Strategic Initiatives
Operations*

Michael Chavez, M.S.E.

*Assistant Director
Undergraduate Advising Center*

D.A. Graham

University Ombuds

Ombuds Office

Jeffrey Hall, PhD

*Professor & Associate Chairperson
Department of Communication Studies*

Abby King

*Accommodation Specialist
Human Resources Management*

Mike Leitch, Ex Officio

*Senior Associate General Counsel
Office of the General Counsel*

Cathryn McKnight

*Program Director for Community Engagement & Business Development
Lifelong & Professional Education, Edwards Campus*

TERM

The Review Committee shall serve until such time that all funding has been distributed or the program is discontinued. The Review Committee will convene the week of September 21 and will set forth the necessary actions to begin accepting applications immediately.

DECISIONS BY THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

If there are any applications requiring further review due to special circumstances, as determined by HRM, those applications will be forwarded to the Review Committee for further review.

REVIEW OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There may be rare instances where an employee's circumstances fall outside of the guidelines as outlined, but still has a need to receive this funding. In these instances, the employee's application will be directed to the Review Committee for review. To the extent possible, the identity of the applicant will remain anonymous. Circumstances may occur in which an anonymous review is impossible or impractical, in which case the identity of the applicant may be revealed to the Review Committee. In this event, personal information concerning the applicant will be treated as confidential.

The Review Committee will review special circumstances applications and award financial assistance by a majority vote of the appointed members of the Review Committee. At least three appointed members must approve in all cases. Review Committee decisions are final, and not subject to appeal. In the case of a tie, the Review Committee chair shall cast the deciding vote. The Review Committee chair shall issue in writing the decisions of the Review Committee to the HRM.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any member of the Review Committee who has applied for financial assistance or who otherwise knows they have a conflict of interest due to family or business association must disclose the conflict to the Review Committee chair and their vote will not be counted toward any points of decision specifically regarding those instances.

TIMELINE

All applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, October 4, no exception. The Review Committee will first convene the week of September 21 with the intent of finalizing all necessary action items in order to launch soon thereafter. The full timeline for the project is as follows:

- **September 21**
Review Committee convenes to discuss responsibilities associated with the review process.
- **September 23**
Distribute communications regarding the fund and open the application process.
- **September 23 – October 4**
Application period
- **October 5-8**
HRM reviews all applications and determines which may need to go to the Review Committee for review of special circumstances.
- **October 8**
Application review finalized by the Review Committee.
- **October 9-14**
Applicants are notified of their acceptance status and award amount. Financial Services will begin processing payments.
- **October 16-23**
Payment disbursement (estimate).

ACCOUNTING AND RECORDKEEPING

The total amount of the disbursed funds to each household shall be determined by the amount of funding awarded to the initiative from federal pandemic relief dollars AND the total number of approved applicants. Recordkeeping of the applicants will be through HRM. HRM will maintain records that document Fund requests and the decisions of the Review Committee, including the name, the distribution amount, and any associated documentation. HRM shall send a “Notice of Ineligibility” to those who apply for funds but do not meet eligibility criteria, a “Notice of Award” to those awarded funds by the Review Committee and a “Denial of Award” to those not awarded funds by the Review Committee.

DISTRIBUTIONS AND TAX IMPLICATIONS

The final amount to be allocated to each applicant will be communicated by email upon the conclusion of the application review period. The final amount will be determined by the total federal dollars received, which will be divided evenly among the total number of approved applicants. The funds will be paid through the KU financial system (in the same way travel reimbursement payments are made). The date of payment may be delayed by up to two weeks if additional information is requested. It is anticipated that all payments will be distributed no later than October 31, 2020.

Any funds allocated to the employee will be non-taxable income and will be paid through the Financial system (not from the payroll system).