

FINANCIAL AID REPACKAGING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA DURING COVID-19

Safety protocols put in place as a result of COVID-19 have forced UC campuses to reduce the number of students living and learning on campus, and required more students to live at home with their families or in nearby communities. UC's financial aid policy accounts for the total cost of attendance, of which housing expenses are a major factor. Therefore, a change in living situation could entail an adjustment to a student's financial aid package.

The cost of living on-campus is typically higher for students than living off-campus in local communities or at home with family ("commuters"). All types of total cost of attendance estimates include allowances for rent, food, books and supplies, personal expenses, and transportation. Some costs, like transportation, are higher for students living at home, while most other costs, like rent, are typically much lower.

State and federal financial aid rules require campuses to confirm a student's housing situation and other expenses. When a student moves from on-campus to off-campus housing, their financial aid package will likely decrease. When campuses adjust financial aid due to a change in housing expenses, they attempt to maintain to the extent possible the same net cost to the family, or cost to the family after financial aid.

Financial aid packages will be revisited when students move back to campus. If a student feels that the campus has categorized their housing situation incorrectly, they can request a review. Furthermore, if any circumstances have impacted their ability to pay for school, students can request a review of their financial aid package by contacting their campuses financial aid office (see campus financial aid office websites for instructions).

It is worth noting that adjustments to financial aid due to COVID-19, do not entail reductions to UC's financial aid program, but are instead a redirection of funds. Some campuses have used the reallocated financial aid to lower the net cost for all needy students, and others to respond to appeals from students whose families were affected by job losses due to COVID-19, to provide technology support, or to offer aid to late applicants.

While the University has a limited amount of funding for financial aid, the total amount of financial aid available to undergraduates is unchanged and continues to be available for students who need it most.

For questions about University of California financial aid, go to ucal.us/applyaid