

5 MYTHS

ABOUT COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDING



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As federally funded programs, COVID-19 relief grants are governed by all parts of the Uniform Guidance.

COVID-19 relief funds can be used to cover the cost of employee benefits.

Grants from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief II Fund (ESSER II) and ESSER III can be used *only* for the same types of expenses allowed under ESSER I.

Schools funding a position using CARES/CRRSA/ARPA dollars may change the position's funding source to another Federal grant after the legislation expires.

The usual Federal grant documentation standards do not apply to COVID-19 relief funds.



FACTS

Although COVID-19 relief funding is exempt from most Uniform Guidance requirements, three provisions apply. They are the Uniform Guidance requirements related to Internal Controls, Subrecipient Monitoring and Management, and the Single Audit Act.

Federal guidelines allow for nearly all employer-paid benefits, in addition to salaries, to be reimbursed using COVID-19 relief funding. The regulations do NOT allow any form of bonus pay, although hazard pay is allowable in very limited circumstances.

Each ESSER fund has progressively expanded the list of fundable activities covered by the grant. However, these changes do NOT apply retroactively; for example, the new activities covered by ESSER II cannot be paid for using ESSER I funds.

Once the relevant legislation expires (September 30, 2022 for CARES, September 30, 2023 for CRRSA, and September 30, 2024 for ARPA), the position must be discontinued or funded by other sources, such as State or local funds.

When it comes to CARES, CRRSA, or ARPA funds, personnel and expenditure documentation standards remain in force. Additional requirements--such as reporting time and effort separately for *each grant*--are also in effect.