

Sweeney Student Emergency Fund at Delaware Law School

Scope of Funding

The Sweeney Student Emergency Fund (SEF) at Delaware Law School provides one-time grants to currently enrolled law students facing urgent financial hardship due to **unforeseen** circumstances. (The law school reserves the right to allow for an additional grant in its discretion on a case-by-case basis.) The fund is intended to support students' continued academic progress and well-being by addressing short-term financial emergencies that cannot be reasonably resolved through loans, aid programs, or personal resources.

Eligibility

To be eligible for emergency funding, applicants must:

- Be currently enrolled in a degree-granting law program at Delaware Law;
- Have an immediate financial hardship due to an emergency or unexpected incident;
- Not have previously received funding from the SEF;
- Be enrolled in Direct Deposit for expedited disbursement; and
- Demonstrate that other funding options have been exhausted (students are not required to apply for loans).

Application and Review Process

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by a committee of law school administrators, or as designated by the Dean of the Law School. Students must submit a complete application including documentation of the expense with a narrative explanation about the situation giving rise to the need for emergency funding and ways the student sought to address/resolve the financial need. Applicants may be contacted for additional information or to schedule a meeting. Decisions are typically communicated within two weeks.

Grant Conditions and Disbursement

Grants are typically awarded up to \$500 and are disbursed via check or Direct Deposit (if set up). (Law School Administration has the discretion to increase such amount, up to \$1,000.) Funds must be used for the specified purpose and receipts may be required. Grants may be taxable and students are responsible for reporting income. Misuse of funds or falsified information may result in disciplinary action.

Eligible Expenses

Examples of eligible expenses include:

- Emergency medical expenses;
- Temporary housing due to displacement;
- Replacement of crucial academic technology due to damage or theft;
- Travel costs related to a family emergency;
- Safety-related needs (e.g., changing locks);
- Sudden loss resulting in lack of funds for food or basic living expenses; and
- Such other expenses as deemed eligible by the law school under the circumstances.

Ineligible Expenses

Examples of ineligible expenses include:

- Tuition, fees, textbooks, and health insurance;
- Non-essential utilities or furniture;
- Entertainment, recreation, or non-emergency travel;
- Expenses incurred by someone other than the student;
- Costs associated with post-graduation employment;
- Loan repayment or credit card debt;
- Routine medical care or elective procedures; and
- Such other expenses deemed ineligible.

How to Apply

To find the application for the student emergency fund, students need to log into MyWidener and search for "emergency" and then select "Student Emergency Application" in the "emergency" block. Students must submit an online application form, providing information that clearly describes the emergency and the financial need. After an initial review of the application, the committee will request specific supporting documentation. Students may apply no more than twice per academic year. (Awards will typically be limited to a one-time grant with discretion for Law School Administration to consider a second-time grant under certain circumstances.)

Contact/Questions

For questions or to discuss eligibility, students should contact the law school's Financial Aid Office (DelawareLawFinAid@widener.edu) or the Office of Student Affairs (DelawareLawSA@widener.edu), and someone from those offices will direct the inquiry to the proper person or committee. Additional support may be available through student counseling and wellness services.

Repayment

Emergency grants do not require repayment. However, students are encouraged to consider donating to the fund in the future to help support their peers, or consider donating later as an alum of the school. Also, any emergency funding provided will be documented and maintained by the Financial Aid Office in accordance with federal guidelines and the Federal Student Aid Handbook.