

The Citadel's COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund Program

The Citadel's COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund program is designed to provide limited financial assistance to eligible employees who are experiencing extreme economic hardship due to the COVID-19 crisis. Situations should be short-term or temporary in nature, and not chronic. The situation may involve a member of the employee's immediate family which has a direct impact on The Citadel employee. For the purpose of this program, immediate family is defined as the legal spouse (including common law) and dependents (as defined by IRS guidelines).

Events that may be considered under this program may include (but are not limited to):

- Personal/family crisis involving an extreme financial need
- Unexpected medical expenses which exceed insurance provisions resulting in economic hardship
- An uninsured loss due to a disaster (natural or man-made) which resulted in economic hardship

Items that are typically not covered include: bail, child care, debt consolidation, divorce, garnishments, general dentistry, judgments, litigation, medical needs for which charity hospital care is available, non-essential items (such as cable TV, cell phones, credit card payments or internet service), non-receipt for child support, or poor financial planning, or travel expenses for funerals. Employees will be referred to an appropriate source (i.e., EAP program, community agency, consumer credit counseling, etc.) if their situations do not qualify.

Employee emergency fund payments are classified as gifts considered non-taxable compensation. The current gift award limit is \$1,000. The maximum gift amount may fluctuate based on the number of employees in need and funding available. Awards may be made for lesser amounts, depending on the situations and funding. Eligible employees can apply more than one time in a calendar year but will only be awarded up to the maximum amount. Once the maximum amount is reached, the employee can no longer apply until the next calendar year. Continuation of the program will be based on available financial resources.

Requests made on the COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund Application may be either partially or fully funded depending on the situation. Employees are not required to pay back these gifts; however, they are encouraged to do so, since this will help replenish the funds for future requests. If a gift is paid back, it will be treated as a charitable contribution and may be deductible for tax purposes.

A small COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund Committee has been established to review requests and make funding decisions. The committee is comprised of appointed representatives from the Staff (1), Faculty Senate (1), and (1) at-large member designated by the President.

Employee names and other identifying information will be redacted from all application documents before they are given to the committee in order to maintain employee confidentiality.

The [COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund](#) is funded through The Citadel Foundation. Funding is derived from employee and donor contributions associated with the fund and other philanthropic programs.

Eligibility for Program Consideration

All active Citadel employees are eligible for consideration, regardless of their employment status.

How to Apply

1. The application must be completed in full to be considered for financial assistance. Documentation must also be attached to the application upon submitting for review. Incomplete applications will be returned, which can cause delays.
2. HR will redact personal identifying information from application materials and then forward them to the committee for review.
3. Whenever possible, the COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund Committee will make funding decisions within three (3) Citadel work days. However, funding decisions may take up to ten (10) Citadel work days, depending on the circumstances presented. If additional information is required, the employee will be contacted by Human Resources. Once a decision has been reached, the employee will be notified; first by phone, then by e-mail.
4. If the application has been approved, a check will be generated by The Citadel Foundation, as quickly as administratively possible. The employee will be notified when the check is available for pick-up or mailing.
5. In the event an application is not funded, or not funded to the level that the employee requested, the employee has the option to submit a new request. If the COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund Committee does not approve the application the second time, then the matter will be closed.
6. Complete the [COVID-19 Employee Relief Fund Application](#).

For more information, please email hr@citadel.edu.