

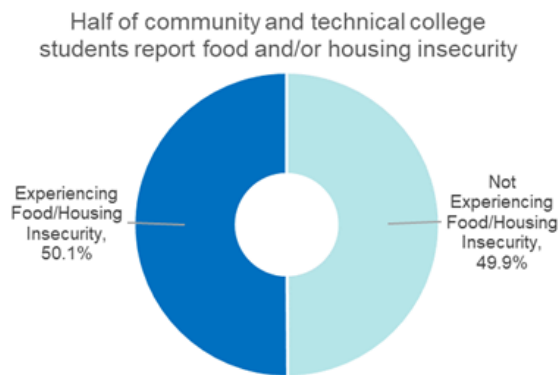
# EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR STUDENT BASIC NEEDS

JANUARY 2023



## Prevalence of Student Basic Needs Insecurity

A fall quarter 2022 statewide basic needs survey of college students revealed that half of the responding students from community and technical colleges had recently experienced food and/or housing insecurity.<sup>1</sup>



- 39% -- Experienced Food Insecurity in past month.
- 38% -- Experienced Housing Insecurity in past 12 months.
- 13% -- Experienced Homelessness in past 12 months

Among students who reported experiencing food and/or housing insecurity:

- 60% had accessed public resources
- 21% had accessed campus resources

*Before, we weren't in the safest environment, my daughters were always scared and crying. Now, with the help of the case manager, I am able to live safely, go to my classes, and buildup my income for a better future for my daughters. -- Student, SSEH South Puget Sound*

## Focus on Two Emergency Support Programs

Two student support programs are dedicated to providing emergency funding, resource access, and case management to students experiencing basic needs challenges to help students remain enrolled. Both programs are committed to providing low-barrier, equitable access to resources for students in need. The programs rely on partnership with other public and community services and strive to leverage available programs and funding to help connect students to resources for which they are eligible.

## Student Emergency Assistance Grant Program

The Washington State Legislature established the Student Emergency Assistance Grant (SEAG) Program as a pilot in 2019 through passage of 2SHB 1893 and expanded the program in ESSB 5092 committing \$8 million per biennium from the Workforce Education Investment Account beginning with the 2021-23 biennium. As of FY23, 26 community and technical colleges participate in the program.

## Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness Pilot Program

The Washington State Legislature enacted the Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness (SSEH) Pilot with 2SSB 5800 (2019). The program was expanded with SHB 1166 (2021) and then again with a budget proviso (2022). The SSEH Pilot provides grants to colleges to identify and support students facing homelessness and students who aged out of the foster care system. The pilot expires July 1, 2024. Effective FY23, the program has grown to include 27 community and technical colleges.

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## Students Served Academic Year 2021-22 (FY22)

- 4,177 students received Student Emergency Assistance Grants (26 colleges)<sup>2</sup>
- 1,975 students received accommodations through Supporting Student Experiencing Homelessness pilots (8 colleges)<sup>3</sup>

## Accommodations Provided

A core function of Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness pilots is providing case management and resource referrals to eligible students; 1,321 SSEH students received more than 2 case management contacts during the year. The program provides direct housing accommodations as well as assistance with food, transportation, health-care, technology, laundry, and other intersecting basic needs.<sup>3</sup>

FY22 Number of Accommodations provided by SSEH CTC Pilots



*As a result of this support, I am passing my classes and on track to finishing my goals without fear of homelessness. – Student, SSEH Lower Columbia*

\$4.5 million was awarded through Student Emergency Assistance Grants in FY22. In order of prevalence, the top categories of requests were for Housing, Transportation, Food, Utilities, Books, and Technology.

- 15,369 requests were made for emergency grants, and the average amount per request was \$3,523.
- 7,762 requests received funding, although many were partially funded; the average amount awarded per request was \$580.

Sources:

1. Basic Needs Security Among Washington College Students: Washington Student Experience Survey Report (January 2023). This student survey of basic needs was administered September - November 2022. Results shared here represent the 4,855 valid student responses received from 26 participating community and technical colleges. <https://wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023.BasicNeedsReport.pdf>
2. 2SHB 1983 Student Emergency Assistance Grant (SEAG) Program Legislative Report (December 1, 2022).
3. Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness (SSEH) Quarterly Reports from participating FY22 colleges.
4. SBCTC Data Services analysis of outcomes and enrollment persistence based on ctc.link data.

Nearly \$50 million in Emergency Grant requests went unfunded through SEAG.



College staff serving both programs report that the loss of pandemic financial assistance left students in difficult financial situations as they had come to rely on such funding to meet their needs. They saw the impact in terms of an increase in emergency assistance requests and the dollar amounts requested.

Housing insecurity is the primary presenting issue for the SSEH program, and emergency requests for Housing also represent the highest number of requests and dollars requested through the SEAG program. However, program data confirm that basic needs issues are not one-dimensional, and that students have overlapping challenges with food, transportation, health, childcare, and other fundamental basic needs.

## Supporting Basic Needs Supports Enrollment

Addressing basic needs challenges for students contributes to their ability to remain enrolled and pursue their educational, personal, and workforce goals.

A high percentage of students completed the quarter (earned credit) in which they received assistance<sup>4</sup>:

- 85% Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness
- 91% Student Emergency Assistance Grants

At least 536 students who received support from these programs during FY22 have since earned a credential, including Applied Baccalaureate, Associate, and Workforce degrees; a range of Certificates; and High School completion.

*I need money for my study materials like textbooks, transportation, and things I need for my clinical lab (stethoscope, etc.). I think this will go a long way in helping me to keep in school [...and] in helping get other materials I need for my nursing program. – Student, SEAG Pierce*