

Family Care Financial Resources for OU-Norman Graduate Assistants

The challenges arising from COVID-19 have made this a difficult time for all, but it is particularly hard for those graduate teaching assistants and graduate research assistants who, in performing their assistantships, have encountered unexpected family care costs.

In light of these challenges, the OU-Norman Graduate College, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, is making available a one-time relief payment to help support eligible graduate assistants, as defined below in Eligibility Requirements, who have incurred unexpected family care expenses. Graduate assistants who meet the below criteria are eligible for up to \$500 (\$300 for the first qualifying dependent; \$200 for an additional qualifying dependent, up to \$500 total, before taxes) for specified family care expenses so long as funds are available. This amount is unlikely to cover the full range or amount of expenses that GAs caring for family members are likely to face, but the hope is that this money will help GAs and their families manage added expenses.

These funds can be used to cover costs incurred with a caregiver of your choice, such as a care center or someone:

- In your personal network.
- Sourced through a private child-care center, parents' day out program, in-home care, or church program.
- Sourced through the OU Job Location Program: <https://connect.ou.edu/>.
- Sourced through [Rainbow Fleet](#).

Eligibility Requirements

- Be appointed as a graduate teaching assistant or graduate research assistant at the equivalent of .50 FTE or higher.
- Have at least one child kindergarten through the age of 12 OR have at least one family member who relies on the GA for primary care (e.g., a parent or child in the GA's care who has disabilities or health issues that require a caregiver's presence).
- Reported in 2019 an adjusted gross household income of less than \$75,000 as attested and signed on the [application form](#).
- Attest via the [application form](#) that their usual care arrangements for children kindergarten through age 12 or for the family member requiring a caregiver are no longer available or are intermittently disrupted because of COVID-19, such that the GA's ability to perform their assistantship responsibilities without incurring additional care costs is impaired or prevented during the during the period of August 19-December 31, 2020.

How to Apply

To submit an application for funds, you must complete and sign the [application form](#). If you have a bursar balance, funds may be applied to your bursar balance, freeing up monies for care expenses. If funds are distributed through payroll, the funds (after all required tax withholdings) will appear in the next possible paycheck after your submission. The final deadline to apply for this program will be **September 18, 2020**. **PLEASE NOTE: Limited funds are available, so individuals are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.**

We know that nothing will entirely alleviate the stress of this situation, but we hope that this program may help defray some of the unexpected costs that caregivers will encounter.