

Mental Health Early Action on Campus Funding FAQ  
Updated 03/29/23

**As I have been reviewing the guidance concerning the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act, a question surfaced on whether all of the aspects are strictly for students or would employees at the college also be included in the funds spent on activities? Could funds be used to provide direct mental health services to faculty or staff?**

The language of the legislation of the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act specifically calls out use for identifying and providing support services for students. This is not to say that some of the work you might do could not also potentially benefit others on campus by creating greater awareness of mental health overall and resources or providing training for faculty or staff, but the actual mental health services provided should be focused on the students.

**We want to spend funds on virtual counseling services to help with student mental health. We would start an annual contract in March and go to next March. Is it acceptable to spend the FY 23 allocated dollars for a contract that would go into FY 24?**

Yes, as long as the funds are expended in the timeframe of the grant, it is fine that the actual service extends into the next fiscal year.

**We hope to hire a campus mental health counselor. Once hired, we will need to find a place for them on campus. Is it acceptable to use the mental health funds for office renovations or small construction? We may have to either build a wall to separate rooms or build a small office in a current storage area.**

The intent of the funds is to provide direct support for students, so paying for an additional counselor with the funds is perfect. Regarding the modifications to your existing space, since modifying the space would be necessary to allow confidential space for counselors to work (which is needed to work toward the 1:1250 ratio) the funds could also be spent for this type of small project.

**We are needing to equip our Counseling Support Center to support additional staff in order to support the clinical benchmark. For example, we need to purchase furniture for an additional office. I want to make sure expenses such as that would be acceptable.**

Equipping your existing Counseling Support Center to create additional counseling space through the purchase of furniture or equipment is an acceptable use of these funds. Creating usable space to work toward the 1:1250 counselor ration would also help promote the sustainability of counseling on campus.

**We are working hard to utilize the funds this fiscal year, and I have a question about the implementation of the Act. The partial funding does not allow us to fully implement all aspects this fiscal year. Should funding continue at the requested level, we have a plan to fully implement in FY24. Can you tell me what the expectation is around the degree of implementation with the partial funding?**

It is understandable that the single appropriation is unlikely to be sufficient for fully implementing the Act. The expectation for this year's funding is that you work on at least one component of the Act that the college has not yet fully implemented. For each institution, this will likely be based on capacity to implement or scale the requirements of the Act during the timeframe for spending the funds.