

AB540—IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' RIGHT TO ATTEND CALIFORNIA COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES



Since January 1, 2002, California's AB 540 allows qualified immigrant students to pay in-state tuition fees. Immigrant students cannot be denied access to colleges or universities based on their immigration status. AB 540 allows immigrant students who attend public colleges and universities (community colleges, CSU, and UC) to pay in-state tuition. Private colleges and universities do not fall under AB 540.

AB 540 DETAILS

This bill qualifies long-term California residents regardless of citizenship status, for lower "resident" fee payments at the California Community Colleges (CCC), the California State University (CSU), and the University of California (UC):

- * Students cannot be denied admission to a California college or university based on their immigration status.*
- * Students are not required to show a state issued ID and social security card to apply for admissions to a California college or university.*
- * Student are not required to pay out-of state, international, capital outlay, or penalty fees (which may be charged to out-of-state students) to enroll at a California college or university, if they qualify for AB 540.*
- * Student are not required to show proof of either 1) legal residency status or 2) be in process to obtain legal residency status.*

ELIGIBILITY

"AB 540" students are those students who may qualify for in-state tuition at public colleges and universities in California (California Education Code §68130.5). Regardless of immigration status, students may qualify for instate tuition within the UC, CSU, and CCC systems if they meet ALL of the following requirements:

- 1. Attend a California high school for three or more years;*
- 2. Graduate from a California high school or pass the GED; and*
- 3. Registered or currently be enrolled at an accredited institution of higher education in California; and*
- 4. If undocumented, file an affidavit with the college/university stating that they have applied for lawful immigration status or will apply as soon as they are eligible to do so.*

FAQs

Q: What does it mean to be undocumented?

A: An undocumented person is a non-citizen who entered the U.S. without legal immigration status or who stayed after the period he/she was authorized to be here.

Q: If I am undocumented, can I go to college?

A: YES, if you are an undocumented student you can go to any college or university in California as long as you are admitted/accepted.

Q: If I am undocumented, can I apply for financial aid?

A: As an undocumented student, you ARE NOT eligible for state and federal financial aid. Some colleges and private organizations may offer financial assistance. Visit your college's financial aid and scholarship offices to find out.

Q: Do I need to be in the legalization process to qualify for AB 540?

A: NO, both students that are already in the process and those that are not yet in the process qualify for AB 540. But remember that the affidavit that students sign says that they will start the process as soon as they are eligible to do so.