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Financial Aid Options

2016-2017

Undocumented Students

Washington House Bill 1079 – In-state Tuition

In 2003, Governor Locke signed House Bill 1079 allowing undocumented students to pay in-state tuition in the State of Washington. To be eligible for in-state tuition, a student must meet the following requirements:

1. live in Washington State for three years immediately before receiving a high school diploma,
2. graduate from a Washington State high school,
3. sign the affidavit stating they will file to adjust their status as soon as possible, and
4. acceptance into a public college in Washington.

The Affidavit (in appendix) that undocumented students are required to sign is a confidential statement verifying that he/she qualifies to pay resident tuition, and that he/she will seek legal permanent residency when legally permitted to do so. If an Affidavit is not provided or available, the HB1079 student should ask a trusted relative, friend, teacher, or counselor to request it from the institution he/she plans to attend. The Affidavit is also available at <http://www.registrar.wsu.edu/Registrar/Content/affidavitHB1079.pdf>.

To enroll in college a student must go through the following steps:

1. Complete the admission and scholarship applications from the college or university the student plans to attend.
2. Fill out and sign the Affidavit. This should be available at any public high school, college or university in the state.
3. *States that offer in-state tuition for undocumented students:*

California, Colorado Connecticut, Florida, Kansas, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin

Submit the admission, scholarship applications, and Affidavit to the college/university by the deadline stated by the institution. Like Washington, a total of 18 states offer in-state tuition. However, as will be explained in the following sections, severe financial limitations of undocumented students still complicate their ability to afford tuition. As of today only California, Minnesota, New Mexico, Texas, Oregon and Washington provide some state funding assistance (state financial aid).

NOTE: HB 1079 does not rectify students' immigration status.

DREAMERS

Term used to define children (some now adults) who are cast in limbo because they were brought into the country as children without proper authorization. In many cases, English is their primary language and they remember little, if anything, about the country they left. Many of these students self-identify as DREAMERS for three reasons: (1) they dream of seeking legal status in the country they now call home, (2) they dream of obtaining their dream careers, and (3) to reconsider the impact of the DREAM Act on achieving the two previous goals.

Deferred Action For Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

On June 15, 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security announced that individuals who came to the United States as children and meet several key guidelines may request consideration of deferred deportation action for a period of two years, subject to renewal, and would also be eligible for work authorization. Deferred action is a discretionary determination to defer removal action of an individual as an act of prosecutorial discretion. Deferred action is NOT a law, and it does NOT provide an individual with a path to permanent residency, citizenship or federal financial aid.

Applicants may request consideration of deferred action for childhood arrivals if they:

1. Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;
2. Came to the United States before reaching their 16th birthday;
3. Have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007, up to the present time;
4. Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making the request for consideration of deferred action with USCIS;
5. Entered without inspection before June 15, 2012, or their lawful immigration status expired as of June 15, 2012;
6. Are currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and
7. Have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, three or more other misdemeanors, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety. Individuals can call USCIS at 1-800-375-5283 with questions or to request more information on the deferred action for childhood arrivals process or visit www.uscis.gov.

It is important to inform students that current DACA regulations require students to reapply every two year.

COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP

The College Bound Scholarship program was recently modified to include students who have applied for and received DACA status. The program provides financial assistance to low-income students who want to achieve the dream of a college education.

In order to be eligible for the College Bound Scholarship program, students must sign up when they are either 7th or 8th graders. The deadline to sign up is June 30 of the students' 8th grade year. This early promise of financial aid is intended to alleviate the financial barriers that prevent low-income students from considering higher education as a possibility.

The scholarship covers tuition (at comparable colleges), some fees and a small book allowance.

Students must agree to the College Bound pledge in order to apply when they are ready for college.

When students apply for the program, they promise to:

- Graduate from a Washington high school with a GPA of 2.0 or higher.
- Not be convicted of a felony.
- Apply to an eligible college and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) to determine Income eligibility.

Requirements To Receive and Retain The Scholarship

In order to receive and retain the scholarship, participants must:

- Graduate from a Washington State high school; GEDs do not qualify.
- File the FAFSA or WASFA each year to determine income eligibility.
- Enroll in college within one year of high school graduation.
- Use the scholarship within five years of high school graduation. (College Bound is a four-year scholarship).
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen with proper documentation.
- Students with DACA status, who meet residency requirements may also receive the scholarship.